Collins, Albert (1932-1993) Encyclopedia Article

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Contents

Collins, Albert (1932-1993) Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Collins, Albert (1932-1993).....3

Collins, Albert (1932-1993)

Guitarist Albert Collins helped modernize blues and bring it to a new audience, blending classic traditions with rock and funk into his high-energy delivery. Born in Leona, Texas, Collins's early influences included T-Bone Walker, John Lee Hooker, and family friend Lightnin' Hopkins. He was also influenced by jazz organists Jimmy Smith and Jimmy McGriff, and saxophone players Arnett Cobb and Illinois Jacquet. Collins's first recording success was the instrumental single "Frosty" recorded in 1962. He signed with Imperial Records in 1968 and moved to the West Coast, where he inspired Robert Cray, Johnny Winter, and Janis Joplin. Collins reached the height of his powers with Chicago's Alligator Records in the 1980s, recording the Grammy Award-winning *Showdown* album with Cray and fellow Texan Johnny Copeland in 1985. He signed with Virgin Records in 1990 and recorded three more albums before his death from lung cancer.

Further Reading:

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Whiteis, David. "Albert Collins: Ice on the Telecaster, Fire on the Belly." *Down Beat.* May 1991, 24.