King, Freddie (1934-1976) Encyclopedia Article

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Of the three "Kings of the Blues" (Albert and B. B. are the others), Freddie King had arguably the most influence on early rock 'n' roll. The youngest of the three unrelated guitarists, Freddie had hits as early as 1961 that had an enormous impact on the California surf music of Duane Eddy and the Ventures. He was also a key early influence on British band leader John Mayall and young guitarists Eric Clapton and Peter Green.

King came from the Texas blues tradition of T-Bone Walker and Lightnin' Hopkins, but moved to Chicago at age 16, where he fell under the spell of Eddie Taylor and Jimmy Rogers. King joined Magic Sam and others in founding the west side sound, a more percussive and up-tempo alternative to the blues played on the south side by older musicians such as Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf. King's initial success came on the Federal/King label in Cincinnati, where his instrumental recordings, including "Hideaway" and "The Stumble," served as a dictionary of licks for aspiring guitarists.

Further Reading:

Humphrey, Mark. "Freddie King: The Texas Cannonball." *Guitar Player.* August, 1995, 99-106.

Obrecht, Jas, editor. *Blues Guitar: The Men Who Made the Music.* San Francisco, GPI Books, 1990.