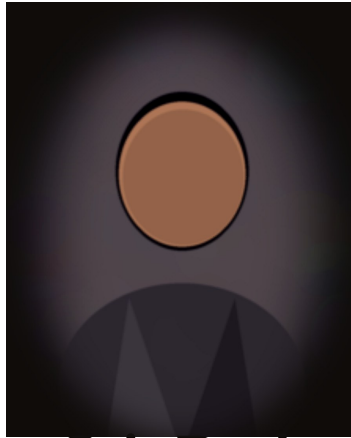




Otis Rush

April 29, 1934 - September 29, 2018

Chicago, Illinois

Otis Rush - American blues guitarist and singer whose left-handed, upside-down string attack helped define West Side Chicago blues and taught rock guitarists how longing could bend - died in Chicago, Illinois, on September 29, 2018. He was eighty-four. Born April 29, 1934, in Philadelphia, Mississippi, he moved north as a teenager, found the city's clubs, and cut Cobra Records sides in the late 1950s that still sound like open wounds set to a slow burn.

"I Can't Quit You Baby," "All Your Love (I Miss Loving)," and "Double Trouble" gave later bands a vocabulary of sustained notes and minor-key ache; Clapton, Page, and a generation of British and American players studied the vibrato as if it were scripture. Rush played with a cowboy hat and a tenor cry that never begged for pity. A 2003 stroke ended his stage life; he spent the remaining years as a quiet Chicago elder while the records kept touring without him.

Chicago was home when complications from that stroke finally closed the book. He died there, leaving a sound that still makes amplifiers sound lonely on purpose.

Mississippi cotton country taught the blues' first grammar; West Side rooms taught electricity. He strung guitars "wrong" and made the wrongness into a signature.

He died in Chicago on September 29, 2018. Somewhere a slow bend is still hanging in the air after the band has stopped.

Rush's gift was vocalized guitar - making steel strings speak like a human throat. Notice Nearby keeps the death date so September 29 remembers the Mississippi-born Chicago master who taught the blues to stretch.

Services

Died in Chicago, Illinois, September 29, 2018. Blues guitarist and singer; West Side Chicago blues; I Can't Quit You Baby; Double Trouble.

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