

Etta James Dies

Written by Pat Graham

Saturday, 21 January 2012 08:23 - Last Updated Wednesday, 27 March 2013 01:36

Provided by Bob Corritore - Etta James January 25, 1938 - January 20, 2012. How many people have fallen in love while listening to the song "At Last" or shed a tear when listening to "I'd Rather Go Blind" or danced with delight and empowerment when the song "Tell Mama" would come on? That was the power of the legendary Etta James who died today after a long struggle with numerous health issues. She was 73. Etta represented the human condition and all of its imperfections of which she could sing about with an experienced vulnerability that would seem to cut straight to your heart. Born Jamesetta Hawkins in Los Angeles, Etta began singing in church at age 5.

She would launch a professional music career under the name "Peaches" while still in her early teens. In 1955 she teamed up with producer/musician/ bandleader/talent scout Johnny Otis to release "The Wallflower" which rose to #1 in the Rhythm & Blues charts. Throughout the 1950s she made many spectacular recordings for Modern Records and in 1960 she signed with the Chess label's subsidiary Argo Records. It was during her Chess period that some of her most beloved hits were released. Along the way she became addicted to heroin which led to some bumps in her career but she kicked the habit in 1974 and rebuilt her amazing career. She would open for the Rolling Stones, win Grammy and Handy Awards, sing the national anthem at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, be inducted in the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame in 1993, and unquestionably solidify her stature as a true music legend. In 2008 the movie Cadillac Records featured Beyoncé portraying the Etta James character during the Chess Records years. Beyoncé's version of Etta's "At Last" from that movie would win a Grammy. Sadly, Etta James publicly criticized Beyoncé for singing "At Last" at the inaugural ball for President Barack Obama. The last few years found Etta dealing with many health issues including blood infection and leukemia. Through all of her trials and tribulations, Etta James will be remembered for all time as a singer who, perhaps better than anyone else, could become the song. We thank Etta James for the gift of her music and her unstoppable spirit and grit which will live on forever through her many timeless recordings. To read the Yahoo news article on Etta's passing click <http://music.yahoo.com/news/legendary-blues-singer-etta-james-dies-calif-163709371.html>.

Here are some examples of Etta's wonderful music:

"I'd Rather Go Blind" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YApNirMC9gM>

"At Last" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1uunRdQ61M

"Good Rockin' Daddy" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GV6_ro22Swk

"The Wallflower" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZFyKBQ7evY>

"The Pick-Up" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOtmVy5zFt4>

"I Just Want To Make Love To You" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Pu_AdU_NQg

"Tell Mama" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVqsvCclGnk&feature=fvst>