

RICKY NELSON: 1940-1985

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Rolling Stone

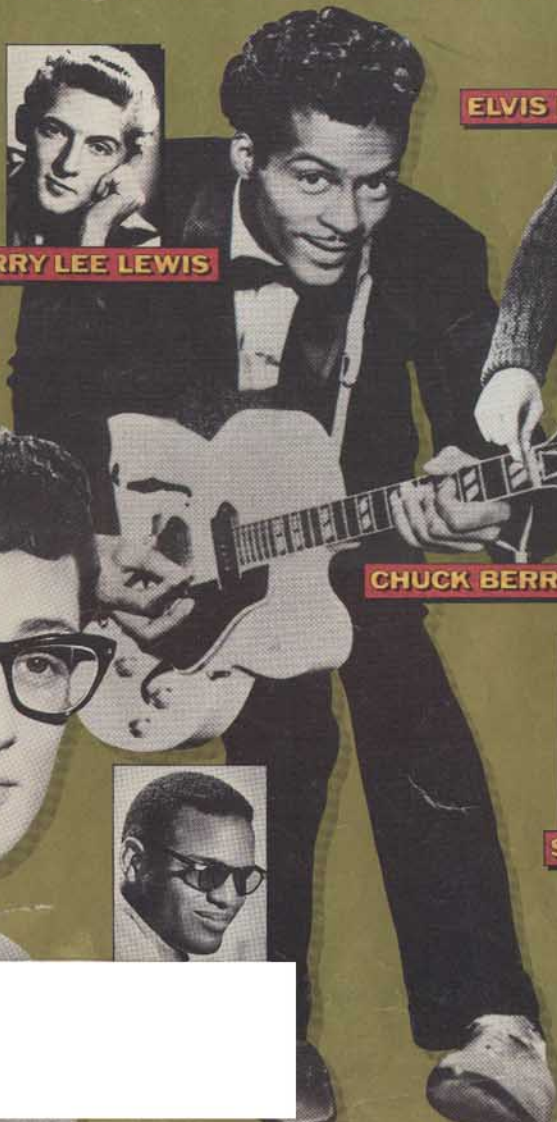
THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME



FATS DOMINO

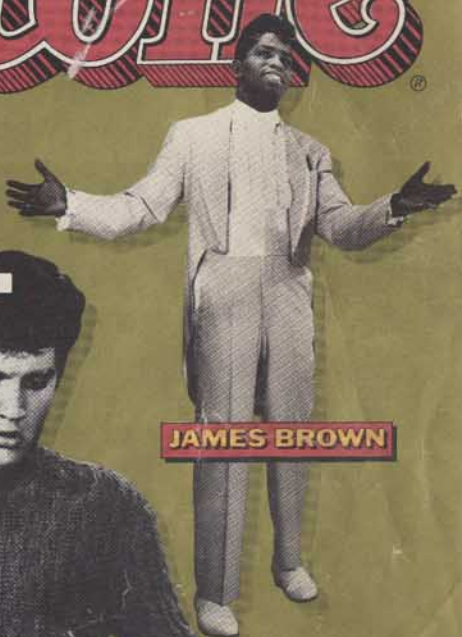


JERRY LEE LEWIS



CHUCK BERRY

ELVIS PRESLEY



JAMES BROWN



LITTLE RICHARD



SAM COOKE



THE EVERLY BROTHERS



THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME

A T LAST

, rock & roll – the sound heard round the world for three decades – has its own hall of fame. Rock history is full of innovators, superstars and unsung heroes who transformed this primitive, propulsive devil music into a force for major cultural and social change. Now the establishment of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the induction this year of its first ten members enables fans, musicians and the music industry to pay formal tribute for the first time to rock's pioneer artists and their historic achievements.

Rock & roll is a living art, one that is refined and reinvented every day in big arenas, tiny clubs, sophisticated studios and cold, damp garages all over the world. It is fitting then that of the initial inductees to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame – Chuck Berry, James Brown, Ray Charles, Sam Cooke, Fats Domino, the Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard and Elvis Presley – all but three are still alive and, in some cases, actively performing. And certainly Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly and Sam Cooke, long after their passing, continue to inspire, in style and spirit, new rock & roll generations.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation was established in 1984 “to recognize these artists and their achievements in a dignified, uncommercial way,” according to foundation chairman Ahmet Ertegun. The first step was the creation of the hall of fame itself. The foundation – a nonprofit group led by prominent music-industry executives whose president is Sire Records chief Seymour Stein – created a list of forty-one hall-of-fame nominees. From that list, approximately 200 pop-music experts (among them, top critics and record producers) voted to select the first ten inductees.

The foundation also inaugurated special awards to acknowledge the contributions of important nonperformers and early influential blues, country and gospel artists. Initial inductees in these categories are Sun Records producer Sam Phillips, DJ Alan Freed, country singer Jimmie Rodgers and bluesmen Robert Johnson and Jimmy Yancey.

In the near future, the foundation plans to house a permanent hall-of-fame display in the first proper rock & roll museum. Ideally, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame museum will also feature a complete archive of rock & roll recordings and print material as well as films and videos. Cities under consideration for the museum include Cleveland, Memphis, Philadelphia, Chicago and New Orleans. “We’re not going to make this a rock & roll Disneyland,” says Ertegun, the chairman of Atlantic Records. “We have an obligation to the world of rock & roll, the artists and the fans, to make this a dignified place they can be proud of.”

– *David Fricke*

THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME

FOREFATHERS

Five men who had a major impact on the development of rock & roll are being honored in special categories established by the Hall of Fame Foundation for non-performers and early influences.



DJ ALAN FREED was one of rock & roll's first heroes — and villains. He played black R&B records for white teenagers as early as 1951 on his 'Moondog Rock 'n' Roll Party' on Cleveland's WJW and presented integrated concert bills. Later, as a top DJ in New York, he spread the rock gospel via television, films and his all-star shows at Brooklyn's Paramount Theater. But as a result of payola scandals, he was blackballed within the business. He died a broken man in 1965.



JIMMIE RODGERS, the Singing Brakeman, made records only from 1927 until he died of tuberculosis in 1933. But in those seven short years he laid the basic foundation for rock & roll by mixing rural black blues with traditional folk and hillbilly music in Depression-era hits like "Blue Yodel" and "Brakeman's Blues."



SAM PHILLIPS' Sun studios in Memphis may be the birthplace of rock & roll. Phillips produced historic blues and rockabilly for his Sun label, including five hit singles by a young white Southerner, Elvis Presley, that changed pop music forever.



Mississippi Delta singer and guitarist **ROBERT JOHNSON**, who died at age twenty-seven in 1938, influenced not only fellow bluesmen; his gritty, harrowing blues also cast a spell over future rockers like Eric Clapton and the Rolling Stones.



Chicago boogie-woogie pianist **JIMMY YANCEY** gave rock its roll. Born in 1898, Yancey didn't live to see the rock & roll explosion, but the rhythmic thrust of his melodic right hand over the propulsive "walking" bass of his left was a seminal influence on great pianists like Professor Longhair and Ray Charles. Yancey died in 1951.