



## B.B. King Reader's Theatre (9 – 12)

Daddy was Albert Lee King and named me Riley B. The "B." didn't stand for anything. – B.B. King, *Blues All Around Me*, with David Ritz

B.B. King 2 I grew up on the plantation in overalls. That's all I had to wear. I swore to God that if I lived to be a man, I would have other types of clothes to wear. I have a few pairs of jeans, but I don't wear them around the stage. – interview with Ted Drozdowski

B.B. King 3 I grew up in a segregated society and I learned I can get things done much better by talking to a person with an even temperament. I find just talkin' straight to a person, giving them the facts, they usually pay attention and listen at least somewhat. – interview with Ted Drozdowski

All This is my belief. I believe that I'm never any better than my last concert.

B.B. King 4 I believe that each night I do a concert or do a show it's like an audition, 'cause I remember the days when it was. If you played a night and somebody came in the next night and played better than you, you didn't come back.

B.B. King 1 - 4 So I still have that mentality if that's a word to use. That if these people didn't like me, what would I be doing. Probably plowing. – B.B. King, *B.B. King Treasures*, B.B. King with Dick Waterman

Voice 14 B. B. is king. His heart-and-soul music has inspired me ever since I was a little boy. I truly believe he has influenced generations of singers and musicians. To me he's one of our great masters. – Stevie Wonder, quoted in *Blues All Around Me*, B. B. King, with David Ritz

Voice 14 You know, I think B. showed a degree of adaptability that was acceptable to very, very few of the blues singers. He had a commitment to self-improvement that was not unique, but uncommon in any field, and particularly in the blues field.

Voices 13 - 14 He was dedicated always to improving himself and his position, from the very beginning, from the very start of his career in music. – Peter Guralnick, in *B.B. King Treasures*, B.B. King with Dick Waterman

All Without a doubt, B.B. King has influenced more rock and blues musicians than anyone else in history.

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- Voices 7, 8, 9      There is simply no one else with more raw passion or eloquence...There are reasons why he's been loved and revered for so long – it's the dignity and heart he brings to his life as well as his music.  
– Bonnie Raitt, quoted in *Blues All Around Me*, B.B. King, with David Ritz
- Voices 4, 5, 6      The elements of B's art that struck me as a kid are the elements that sustain me as an adult – the piercing sound of his guitar, the full-throated sincerity of his singing, the deep grooves in which he moves, and his towering emotional commitment to his audience.  
– David Ritz, *Blues All Around Me*
- Voices 1, 2, 3      Sincere expression, beginning in speech, is the basis of B's music. I love hearing the patterns of speech in his music and the patterns of his music in his speech. The two are deeply intermingled and wonderfully complimentary.  
– David Ritz, *Blues All Around Me*
- All      Without question, blues is America's greatest music. Without the blues we would not have rock and roll, country, gospel, jazz.
- Voices 13 - 14      All of the musical forms that we think of as major American musical forms would not be recognizable without the blues. It is the linchpin of modern music and American music.  
– Bill Ferris, former chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities as quoted in *B.B. King Treasures*, B.B. King, with Dick Waterman
- All      The most important figure in the blues is B.B. King.
- Voices 10 - 12      He wears his legacy well because he doesn't look on himself as someone who is anything other than an honest, caring human being. I think this is one reason people absolutely adore him.  
– Bill Ferris, *B.B. King Treasures*, B.B. King with Dick Waterman
- Voices 1 - 9      He is really a humble man who has been given a gift, and thoroughly enjoys sharing it.
- Voices 10 – 14      Why is he more of an icon today than ever? The answer is simple.
- All      When you give more in life than you get, and you have an enormous amount to give, life gives back to you.  
– Floyd Lieberman, B.B. King's manager, *B.B. King Treasures*