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Jimi Hendrix

Jimi Hendrix was a musical phenomenon. Born in Seattle, WA in 1942 he grew up in an unstable household with his original parents which forced him to live his childhood with his grandmother. According to www.jimihendrix.com at the age of 16, Jimi was thrown out of high school for holding a white girls hand in class. This threw Hendrix to the streets where he played in a teenage rock band until he voluntarily joined the army as a paratrooper but was later discharged due to injury and left him without any direction. Jimi decided to pursue his passion for music and the world was asleep at his feet, all he had to do was be himself.

Other musicians emulated him and wanted to be him. Here was a man so unusual, so significant and such an abnormal human occurrence, he marveled musicians around the world, and he was black. When he created the Jimi Hendrix Experience no one had any idea of what this black man could give them. Hendrix simply fused the blues with an electric rock. One segment of Rolling Stone magazine stated that "Hendrix's loud sound and melodic lyrics were mixed brilliantly and unleashed a signature sound that guitarist Eric Clapton had been trying to obtain for many years."

His stage performances were the most extraordinary. The remarkable nature of Hendrix was the effortless power of presence he had when he was called to perform. He played the guitar with his teeth, over his head, and at times was so drifted from reality he set his guitars a flame. My father once saw the masterful guitarist in the late seventies and exclaimed "His music, his performance, himself, was an inspiring sense of mystery and wonder." Not just Jimi's stage presence was unreal, his rugged fashion started new trends throughout the whole music scene. Dressed in old military jackets, wearing exotic colors such as purple, headbands with LSD dripping from the brim, excessive jewelry, all culminated a man who looked worn out and hadn't slept in weeks. Sure, the seventies were a time of experimentation with drugs; however, the drugs were a minor catalyst to the bizarre antics of Hendrix, and a stepping stone to the conscience levels his concerts would take people on.

Jimi Hendrix built the bridge to close the gap of blues and rock by making the electric guitar dangerous. He made it dangerous to the point that it almost was the sound of loud gunfire that rang everywhere. Even though the electric guitar itself always has been dangerous, it represents endless collaboration, and Jimi used tools along with a natural style that just manifested into something beautiful. Hendrix was colorful, yet humble, and gave the fans this erotic sense of spirituality. The drug addictions were just apart of the trade and even more so a deeper look into the sadness of

Jimi's mind. Lyrically, he exposed the hardships of losing and feeling down which are the keystone elements for blues. Hendrix just tied those feelings into an adrenaline rush of loud electric power. It was Jimi's imagination that was the key ingredient to his lyrics and the rest of him was painted with an extra terrestrial science fiction theme.

"Even Castles made of sand, fall into the sea, eventually" represented knowledge of a life that Jimi only knew himself, and through his own demise he met his moment of truth. Jimi was a man built far before his time and he captured a time period of existence that rapped his people and their souls. Through his individualism and brilliant musical gifts, Jimi Hendrix became a legend. His legendary status will live on for years and he is not just a black man, but a man who will live amongst gods in a man's world.

Sources Cited

www.jimihendrix.com

Townshend, Pete "Jimi Hendrix: Greatest guitarist of all-time" Rolling Stone. pg. 62