Big Joe Turner

Group 2
Rhea Christenson
Katharine Anton
Tianyu He
• Born Joseph Vernon Turner Jr. on May 18, 1911 in Kansas City, Missouri
• Age 4 his father died of a train accident
• raised by his mother, grandmother, and sisters
• began singing in church choirs and on street corners with friends
• snuck into clubs at a young age, his size made him appear older
• Became a bartender at Sunset Cafe where jazz pianist Pete Johnson played
• Joe sang uptempo blues over Pete's boogie-woogie piano
• declined an offer from John Hammond to go to NYC to play with the Basie Band without Pete
a few months later, Hammond brought Pete and Joe out to NYC to play

two years later Hammond brought them out again to appear on Benny Goodman's radio show "Caramel Caravan"

soon after they cut their first recordings "Roll Em Pete" and "Goin' Away Blues" in Vocalion studios

1940 Pete and Joe were signed to Decca records
• they spent the next years recording and touring both together and separately, domestically and internationally
• Joe went on to work with the labels National, Imperial, and Atlantic
• He continued to record albums and perform live until the 1980s when his health began to take a toll
• He had diabetes and also suffered from a stroke, confining him to a wheelchair, he passed away on November 24, 1985
• Pete sang at Joe's funeral and passed away only 4 months later
Music Style

- A "blues shouter" meaning that he was able to sing unamplified with a big band, while still retaining clarity and control

- Used traditional blues lyrics with different beats, to create his own style of music

- The first artist to mix R&B and boogie-woogie, the result being jump blues
Music Style

• Wrote and sang songs that were risque with metaphors to sex and new slang words that appealing to a party crowd

• At the end of his career he wrote songs that were able to crossover into the pop market.

• "Corrine Corrina" was #2 on the R&B charts and #41 on the Pop charts
Music Style- Evolution

• Helped to popularize jump blues and boogie-woogie through his songs

• The song "Roll 'Em Pete" was one of the earliest examples of the use of a "back beat"

• "Shake, Rattle and Roll" not only enhanced his career, but changed popular music by introducing many new listeners to R&B
Jump Blues Introduction

Jump Blues

Jump Blues refers to an uptempo, jazz-tinged style of blues that first came to prominence in the mid- to late '40s. Usually featuring a vocalist in front of a large, horn-driven orchestra or medium sized combo with multiple horns, the style is earmarked by a driving rhythm, intensely shouted vocals, and honking tenor saxophone solos -- all of those very elements a precursor to rock & roll. The lyrics are almost always celebratory in nature, full of braggadocio and swagger. With less reliance on guitar work (the instrument usually being confined to rhythm section status) than... jump blues was the bridge between the older styles of blues -- primarily those in a small band context -- and the big band jazz sound of the 1940s.

Famous musicians:

Louis Jordan, Big Joe Turner
Who influence Big Joe Tur

- Andy Kirk
- Bennie Moten
- Count Basie
- Jimmy Rushing
- Eubie Blake
- Fats Waller
- James P. Johnson
- Jelly Roll Morton
- Meade "Lux" Lewis
- Scott Joplin

Most of them are Jazz, Blues, R&B musicians.
Influences to Other Musicians

How "the grandfather of rock n' rock" influences followers:

• Bill Haley
• Elvis Presley
• Chuck Berry
• Jerry Lee Lewis
• Fats Domino
• Carl Perkins (King of Rockabilly)
• Otis Blackwell (Composer of Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis)
"Shake, Rattle and Roll" is a song that helped launch a new sound people were starting to refer to as 'rock n’roll.' It was penned by Jesse Stone under his songwriting alias Charles E. Calhoun, would later be recorded by Bill Haley & His Comets, Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Sam Cooke, Fats Domino, Jerry Lee Lewis and Doc Watson.
Influence: "Shake, Rattle and Roll"

Bill Haley -"the father of rock n' roll"
Cover version of "Shake, Rattle and Roll" with rewritten lyrics became a great hit in 1954.

Both original version and versions sold over one million copies.
Influence: "Shake, Rattle and Roll"

- Elvis Presley

Elvis Presley recorded the song twice. Both versions by Elvis mixed Haley's and Turner's lyrics with a faster-paced version of Haley's arrangement.

He was influenced by both Billy Harley and Joe Turner.
Joe Turner's Music Style Influences

• Chuck Berry (picture): influence by jump blues, R&B developed his guitar style
• Jerry Lee Lewis: boogie-woogie style piano, shouter
• Little Richard: boogie-woogie style piano, shouter
• Fats Domino: boogie-woogie style piano
Political Influence

• Big Joe Turner was active from 1920-1970

• 1920's
  o Prohibition

• 1930's-
  o Prohibition ended
  o Great Depression
  o WWII begins

Prohibition march
Political Influence

• 1940's
  o Pearl Harbor
  o Race Riots
  o Broadway shows begin
  o Civil Rights movement

• 1960's
  o Social revolution
  o Civil Rights concludes
  o Swinging sixties

Martin Luther King Jr.
References


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