

40 Years Ago Today Jimi Hendrix Died

[youtube]7cuU7925GYI[/youtube]

40 years ago today Jimi Hendrix died under suspect circumstances in London. He became the leading member of a death triumvirate of '60's rockers that included Janis Joplin the next month and Jim Morrison the following year. Like so many geniuses who die young, Hendrix's dialogue was unfinished and leaves a lot of questions about his artistry. One can only wonder what Led Zeppelin's career would have been like had Hendrix lived. The band more than likely would have still sold well but without as much authority. Would Fishbone be better understood? Would Black people who rock in general have had a better stab at MTV and Warner Brothers? Without having to contend with his flesh and an extended legacy it's been easier for people to laud him sentimentally but not deal with the threat his creative power posed to all corny boardroom sponsored rock acts. Thankfully men like Prince, Vernon Reid and Lenny Kravitz have reminded people that Black men innovated rock guitar. Rappers have used him as an overall standard of greatness. But again, where would this segregated rock world be today if he had lived? Michael Jackson managed the integrated audience Jimi wanted and Jimi would have been the one to play the solo on "Beat It." R.I.P. Mr. Hendrix.