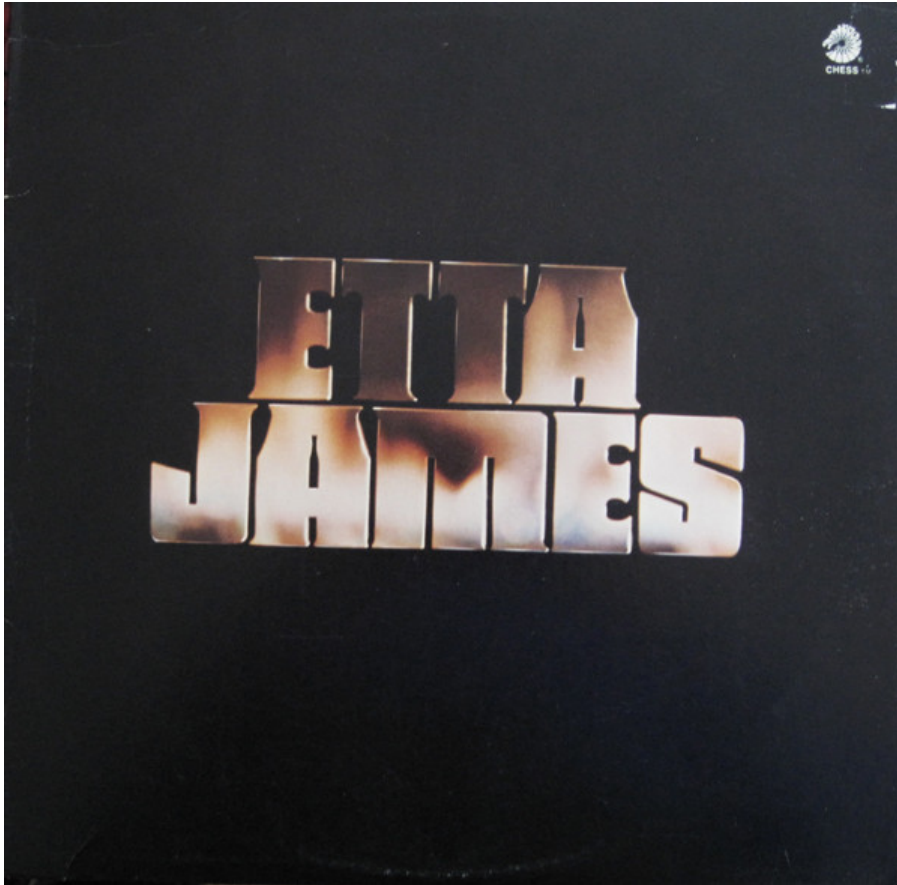


Throwback: Etta James-All The Way Down



Etta James was a well-established R&B singer by the time of her 1973 solo album. She started having hits at 16 after she was discovered by Johnny Otis in 1954. When the '70s arrived she worked with famous rock producer Gabriel Mekler and took a different musical direction. "All The Way Down" was on this album and Mekler was one of the three co-writers of the song. James's struggles with heroin and alcohol addictions were heard in her brassy tone and the autobiographical lyrics. The story about shiny cars, seeking stardom and drugs was something her audience already knew was part of her life.

The strings and funk elements supplemented the groove within an arrangement reminiscent of Curtis Mayfield's *Superfly* soundtrack that came out the previous year. Etta James had successfully traveled into a new sound and the album received

a Grammy nomination for Best R&B Vocal Performance Female. She did not get to enjoy the accolades because of her addiction which eventually sent her to a hospital for treatment in 1974. “All The Way Down” was one of James’s most difficult truths in song and the recording proved to be an artistic triumph that still gets people excited in 2023. Etta James is one of the artists currently in the [Country Music Hall of Fame’s](#) exhibition examining the influence of R&B on Nashville.

In 2012 We Said Goodbye

Click photos for video



Jimmy Castor Funk Pioneer



Johnny Otis Godfather of
R&B



Etta James The Matriarch Of The Blues



Clare Fischer Master Arranger



Belita Woods Soul Singer



Don Cornelius Soul Train Founder



David Peaston R&B singer



Whitney Houston Pop Queen Actress



Dick Clark Media Mogul



MCA One third of pioneering rap group The
Beastie Boys Film Director Activist



Ms. Melodie Member of Boogie Down
Productions



Donald "Duck" Dunn Bass of Stax
Records



I.G. Off NYC Underground Rap Star of the '90's



Chuck Brown King of Go-Go



Donna Summer Queen Of Disco



Faruq Z. Bey Detroit jazz innovator



Robin Gibb One-third of the Bee Gees



Fontella Bass "Rescue Me" singer



Jayne Cortez Master Poet Activist



Dave Brubeck Progressive Jazz Leader

Etta James Mourned by Rhythm & Blues Foundation as Memorial Contributions Continue Her Legacy and Help Artists in Need



PHILADELPHIA — As legendary blues singer Etta James is laid to rest tomorrow in Los Angeles, the Rhythm & Blues Foundation wishes to express its sorrow at the loss of "our friend and Rhythm & Blues Pioneer" and its deep appreciation to her family, which is asking for all donations to be made out to the organization. All contributions in her memory go to the Doc Pomus Fund to help artists in need of financial or medical assistance.

A recipient of the R&B Foundation's first Pioneer Awards ceremony in 1989, Etta James also served on the Board of Directors of the Rhythm & Blues Foundation during the formative years. A statement from Damon Williams, Chairman of the R&B Foundation reads:

“Etta's lifelong contributions to Rhythm & Blues music have paved the way for generations of artists, and we are grateful to her family for furthering her impact by selecting our organization as the recipient of memorial contributions to help our mission to preserve and celebrate the music and its artists. Etta James was a one-of-a-kind artist with a one-of-a-kind voice; she was an absolute Rhythm & Blues Pioneer. Etta was part of the fabric and spirit in which the Rhythm & Blues Foundation was built on. Awarding Etta James the Rhythm & Blues Foundation's Pioneer Award in 1989 was one of the finest moments in our mission to celebrate the legacy of Rhythm & Blues artists. Our hearts go out to Etta James' family and her long time manager, Lupe De Leon.”

The Rhythm & Blues Foundation is the only non-profit organization solely dedicated to preserving Rhythm & Blues music and celebrating the artists who create it. www.rhythm-n-blues.org.

The Rhythm & Blues Foundation's Pioneer Awards Program has recognized over 150 legendary artists whose lifelong contributions have been instrumental in the development of Rhythm & Blues music. The award honors the career achievements of solo artists, vocal groups, songwriters and producers who are nominated and selected by members of our board of directors. As part of the Pioneer Awards, most recipients receive an honorarium. Since 1989, the Pioneer Awards Program has given over \$1.5 million to worthy honorees and will continue to celebrate legendary Rhythm & Blues artists.

Contributions to the Rhythm and Blues Foundation can be sent to:

Rhythm & Blues Foundation
P.O. Box 22438
Philadelphia, Pa. 19101

R.I.P. Etta James

[youtube]ADDigK8LwyE[/youtube]

Etta James, the R&B and blues singer known for singing “At Last” died this morning at a hospital in Riverside, California due to complications from leukemia. The Los Angeles native started her career as a teenager when she started The Creolettes. Johnny Otis met the group and helped them get a deal with Modern Records. They changed their name to The Peaches and in 1955 James had her first hit song with [“Dance With Me, Henry”](#) co-written by Otis, James and Hank Ballard. She had another hit with the song [“Good Rockin’ Daddy”](#) and then she left the group and signed with Chess Records in 1960. It was during her years at Chess that she had a string of successful singles with Harvey Fuqua and as a solo act. [“If I Can’t Have You”](#) and [“Spoonful”](#) were duets.” It was during this time period that she recorded “At Last” in addition to [“A Sunday Kind Of Love,”](#) [“I Just Want To Make Love To You,”](#) [“The Fool That I Am,”](#) [“Don’t Cry Baby”](#) were solo hits. She released the live album, *Etta Rocks The House* in 1963. After a couple of years away from the music scene she reemerged in 1967 after recording at the Fame Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama. [“Tell Mama”](#) and the blues classic [“I’d Rather Go Blind”](#) come from this time period. *Etta Is Betta Than Evah* and *Deep in the Night* were her last recordings for Chess Records in 1978. James came back to her music career in 1987 when she made an appearance in the Chuck Berry documentary “Hail! Hail! Rock n Roll.” In 1992 she was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of

Fame. A tribute recording to Billie Holiday titled *Mystery Lady* was released in 1993 and earned her a Grammy. *A Rage To Survive* was an autobiography co-authored with David Ritz and hit store shelves in 1995. She ultimately won 6 Grammys including the Lifetime Achievement honor and also received induction into the Blues Hall of Fame and the Rockabilly Hall of Fame. Her fame rose in 2008 when Beyonce portrayed her in the film "Cadillac Records" which was a loose retelling of the Chess Records story. James' last recording is 2011's *The Dreamer*.