

Eric Clapton



<http://www.gibson.com/Products/Electric-Guitars/Les-Paul/Gibson-Custom/Eric-Clapton-1968-Les-Paul.aspx>

Group 2

Lauren Hartmann, Sarah Youssef,
Benjamin Markham, and Suyog Dahal

Overview

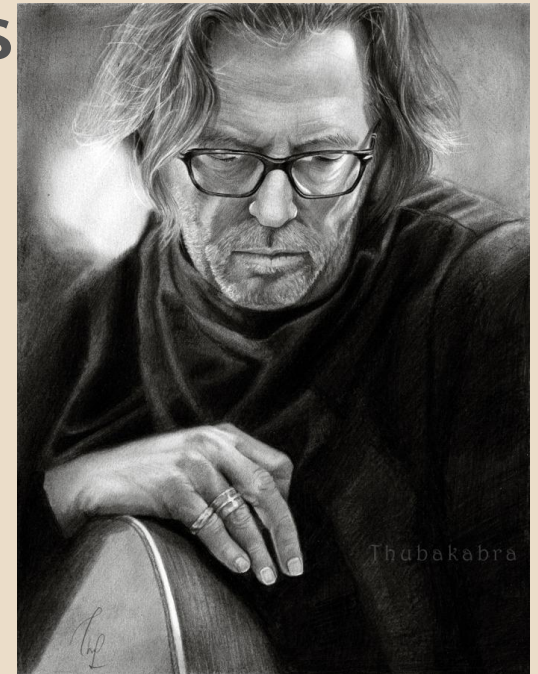
- ❖ Artist Biography
- ❖ Musical Influences
- ❖ Musical Style
- ❖ Other Music at the Time
- ❖ Musical Analysis
- ❖ Clapton's Influence
- ❖ Legacy
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<http://www.ericclapton.com/eric-clapton-biography?page=0%2C2>

Why We Chose Eric Clapton

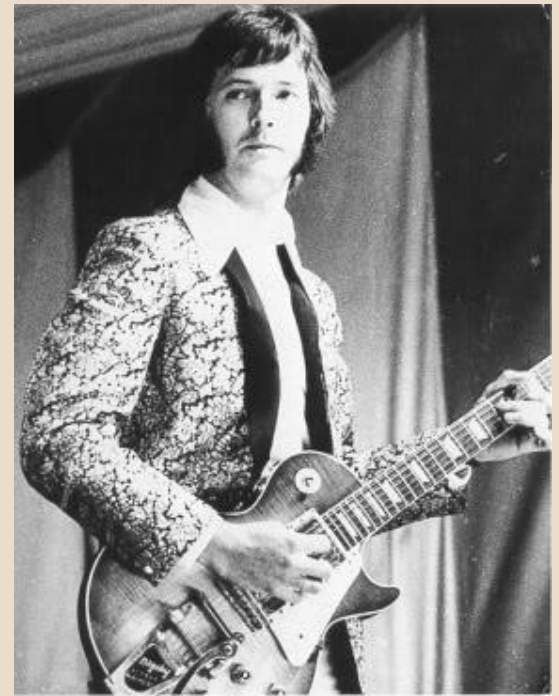
- ❖ We chose Eric Clapton because he is considered one of the most important and influential guitarists of times.
- ❖ We were interested to learn about how his personal life and choices influenced his musical style.



<http://thubakabra.deviantart.com/art/Eric-Clapton-333962401>

Eric Clapton's Early Life

- ❖ Born Eric Patrick Clapton on March 30, 1945
- ❖ The son of an unmarried couple, Patricia Molly Clapton and Edward Walter Fryer.
- ❖ Edward Walter Fryer was a Canadian soldier stationed in England during WWII. Before Eric was born he returned to his wife back in Canada.
- ❖ It was difficult on Patricia to raise Eric on her own. Her parents, Rose and Jack Clapp were the primary caregiver of Eric, and raised him as their own.



<http://www.seymourduncan.com/forum/showthread.php?127804-quot-So-and-so-played-THIS-guitar-quot>

Eric Clapton's Early Life



Eric Clapton (left) with his mother, Patricia Clapton (right).
As a child he was told that Patricia was his sister.

<http://www.eric-clapton.co.uk/interviewsandarticles/hisfatherseyes.htm>

- ❖ He was brought up in a musical household
 - His grandmother played the piano
 - His mother and uncle always had big bands playing throughout the house
- ❖ At the age of 9 he found out the truth about his parents
 - Was affected tremendously by this truth and began to be moody and distant.
 - Has never met his father since knowing the truth

Eric Clapton's Early Life

- ❖ Received his first guitar when he was 13 years old
 - He did not know how to play it and set it aside
- ❖ When he was 16 years old he was expelled from Kingston College of Art for lack of progress and not submitting work.
 - He was too busy playing the guitar and listening to the blues
- ❖ Joined his first band, The Roosters, when he was 17 years old.



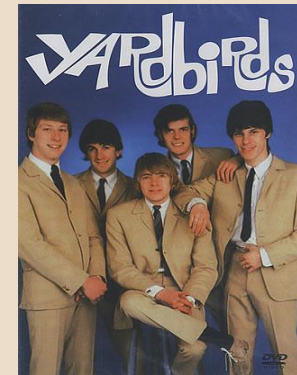
The Roosters

<http://www.angelfire.com/hi/Clapton/1963.html>

Eric Clapton's Career

- ❖ Joined the Yardbirds in October 1963
 - Keith Reif and Paul Samwell-Smith recruited him
 - Clapton earned the nickname “Slowhand”

- ❖ Clapton joined the Bluesbreakers
 - John Mayall invited him to the band
 - Clapton received the nickname “God” that came from a graffiti wall that said “Clapton is God”
 - Left the band in July 1966



<http://www.rottentomatoes.com/celebrity/yardbirds/>



<http://celebzter.com/music-with-matt-clapton-for-christmas/>

Eric Clapton's Career

- ❖ After leaving the Bluesbreakers, Clapton joined Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker and formed Cream.
 - Band was together for two years. Disbanded on November 26, 1968
- ❖ Clapton formed Blind Faith, after the Cream's break-up
 - Disbanded after one album and a horrible tour
- ❖ Later formed Derek and the Dominos
 - Band drifted after failed attempt on their second album and tour

Eric Clapton's Love Life and Family

- ❖ Married Pattie Boyd on March 27, 1979
 - Prior to the time, she was married to George Harrison
 - Harrison knew that Clapton had feelings for his wife
 - Due to Clapton's love songs about her
 - Clapton "swapped" his girlfriend for Boyd with Harrison
 - Boyd left Clapton in September 1984; officially divorced in 1988
 - Left him due to numerous infidelities, and drug and alcohol abuse



<http://www.beatlelinks.net/forums/showthread.php?t=43622>

Eric Clapton's Love Life and Family

- ❖ Remarried to Melia McEnery on January 1, 2002
 - Met in Columbus, Ohio at an after party
 - They have three young daughters: Julie Rose, Ella May, and Sophie
 - They are still married to each other



<http://specials.msn.com/a-list/entertainment/famous-may-december-romances?imageindex=4>

Eric Clapton's Love Life and Family

- ❖ Eric Clapton has an older daughter named Ruth Kelly-Clapton
 - Mother was Yvonne Kelly
 - Eric and Yvonne had a relationship in the mid-1980s
 - Ruth is now married to Dean Bartlett and has a son
- ❖ Clapton also had a son named Conor
 - Conor died on March 20, 1991 when he fell out of a window of his mother's (Lory Del Santo) apartment which led to "Tears in Heaven"



© NEWSPICS LTD

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2037149/Eric-Clapton-s->



<http://www.expressen.se/noje/eric-clapton-skriver-om-sonens-dod/>

Eric Clapton's Drug Addiction

- ❖ Clapton's childhood had affected him greatly, especially when he found out the truth about his parents
- ❖ After their first major hits, the members of Yardbirds began to get involved in drugs and alcohol, which led to tension within the group causing them to split
- ❖ By the 1970s, Clapton lost several close friends due to drugs and alcohol issues.
 - Clapton was especially affected by the death of Hendrix
 - As a result, he had a serious heroin addiction for about three years
 - Recovered from his heroin addiction but was still significantly affected by alcohol

Eric Clapton's Drug Addiction

❖ Battling his alcohol addiction

- Had thoughts of committing suicide to stop his addiction
- He admitted to his manager that he needed help
 - Was flown to Hazelden Treatment Center in Minnesota for rehabilitation.
 - Relapsed and continued drinking for years. However, he went back to Hazelden for more treatment.
- Credits Alcohol Anonymous for keeping him sober for over 25 years!
 - Still attends regular AA meetings

❖ Founded Crossroads Centre Antigua as an International Centre for Healing

- This Centre helps their clients on their journey towards their recovery from drug dependencies.

“My vision was to create a Centre of the highest caliber to treat people of the Caribbean and throughout the world.”

-Eric Clapton

(Crossroad Centre Antigua, n.d.).

Musical Influence: Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee

- ❖ Sonny Terry was a blind blues musician
 - Known for his energetic harmonica and singing style
- ❖ Brownie McGhee was a blues singer & guitarist
 - Sonny & Brownie started collaborating in 1942, after Sonny's original partner, Blind Boy Fuller, passed away. The two became an overnight success.
- ❖ Clapton remembers the first Blues song he heard on the radio as “Whoopin’ the Blues” by Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee.
- ❖ Clapton claims “That’s where it started for me”, “It got me on a level nothing else did ... I got what they were trying to do.”



[http://userserve-ak.last.fm/serve/500/67768860/Sonny+Terry+
+Brownie+McGhee+PNG.png](http://userserve-ak.last.fm/serve/500/67768860/Sonny+Terry+%26;Brownie+McGhee+PNG.png)

Musical Influence: Muddy Waters

- ❖ One of Clapton's most important influences.
- ❖ Muddy Waters was famous for his blues rooted playing style.
 - Considered the “Father of modern Chicago blues”
- ❖ Clapton knew Muddy Waters personally. Was like a father-figure.



http://media.npr.org/assets/img/2011/08/17/gettyimages_111573021_wide-10fe41c0e056b2c0658fb5d8b6e77a8baeb12a0e-s6-c30.jpg

Musical Influence: Muddy Waters

- ❖ Clapton says “Muddy was there at a time when really the music was getting to me”
 - Clapton spent a lot of time trying to imitate Muddy’s tone. He would imitate his slide playing and even finger shapes to learn chords.
- ❖ Had the opportunity to play along with Muddy as a guitarist.
- ❖ Returned the favor by hiring Muddy Waters to open one of his American tours in the 1970s.



(Block, 2007).
(Palmer, 2010).

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/42/Muddy_Waters_\(blues_musician\)-cropped.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/42/Muddy_Waters_(blues_musician)-cropped.jpg)

Other Early Musical Influences

❖ Robert Johnson

- Clapton gravitated towards Johnson's ability to write songs with passion and clarity. A difference Rolling Stone claims you can hear in his 60s vs. 70s music. Covered his song "Crossroads".

❖ B.B. King

- Brought the blues to the mainstream
- His style influenced many up and coming musicians at the time, including Clapton
- Joined Clapton in 2000 to produce the Grammy Award winning *Riding with the King*

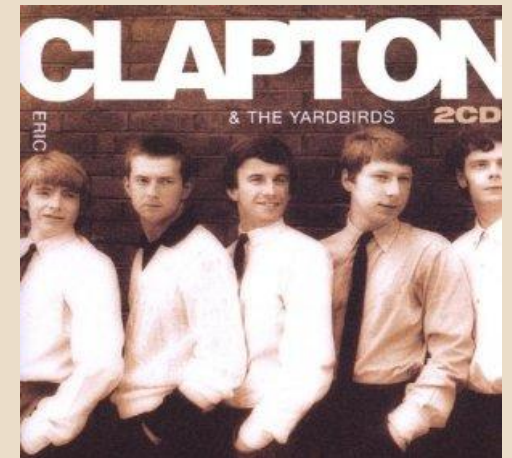


(Fricke, 2010) and (Kemp, 2014).

<http://www.guitarlessons.com/wp-content/themes/gITemplate/images/guitarist/blues/bb-king-7.jpg> &
http://media.npr.org/assets/img/2011/05/07/johnson_wide-6982949a5e6d936d40d1c45f19251d60c37e7a45-s6-c30.jpg

Musical Style: Blues Rock (Too Pop for Clapton)

Clapton's first successful band that he joined was The Yardbirds in 1963. They had many commercial hits together, such as "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" and "For Your Love". Clapton decided to leave The Yardbirds after no more than two years because of their commercial pop sound.



(Bio, 2014)

<http://www.amazon.com/Eric-Clapton-The-Yardbirds/dp/B000FQIU42>

Musical Style: Blues Rock

Later in 1965, Clapton joined John Mayall & the Bluesbreakers. They recorded an album the next year called *The Bluesbreakers with Eric Clapton*. This is what established Clapton as one of the greatest guitarists of that time period. This album is considered by some to be the greatest blues album of all time, and Eric got the nickname “God” for his guitar skills. However, he soon left John Mayall & the Bluesbreakers as well.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blues_Breakers_with_Eric_Clapton

(Bio, 2014).

Musical Style: Blues Hard Rock

Clapton then teamed up with bassist, Jack Bruce, and drummer, Ginger Baker, to form rock's first power trio, Cream. Cream relied heavily on the skill of Eric Clapton in order to take on both the lead and rhythm guitar parts. They performed original takes on blues classics as well as modern blue tracks. Clapton pushed the boundaries of blues guitar. Cream achieved international superstar success, but they also broke up.

(Bio, 2014) and (Unterburger, 2014).



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cream_\(band\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cream_(band))

Musical Style: Failure & Concept Album



After the Cream breakup, Clapton formed Blind Faith, but they broke up after one album and a failed tour. Next in 1970, Clapton formed Derek and the Dominos. They composed and recorded a seminal album in rock history: *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*. It was a concept album about Clapton's desperate affection for Pattie Boyd who was the wife of Beatles' George Harrison. The album was critically acclaimed but a commercial failure. This led to Clapton's heroin addiction.

http://www.guitarworld.com/100_greatest_guitar_solos_14_quotlaylaquot_eric_clapton_duanne_allman

(Strauss, 1994).

Musical Style: Layla

Though the album *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs* was not a commercial success, it did produce the now famous title track “Layla”.

Layla features guest Duane Allman (another great guitarist) on slide guitar.

The iconic piano movement of Layla is featured on the 1990 film “Goodfellas”.

In 1992, on MTV Unplugged, Eric Clapton recorded an acoustic version of Layla, in which famously started it off by saying “See if you can spot this one.” The acoustic version of Layla won the 1992 Grammy for Best Rock Song.

(Guitar World Staff, 2013).

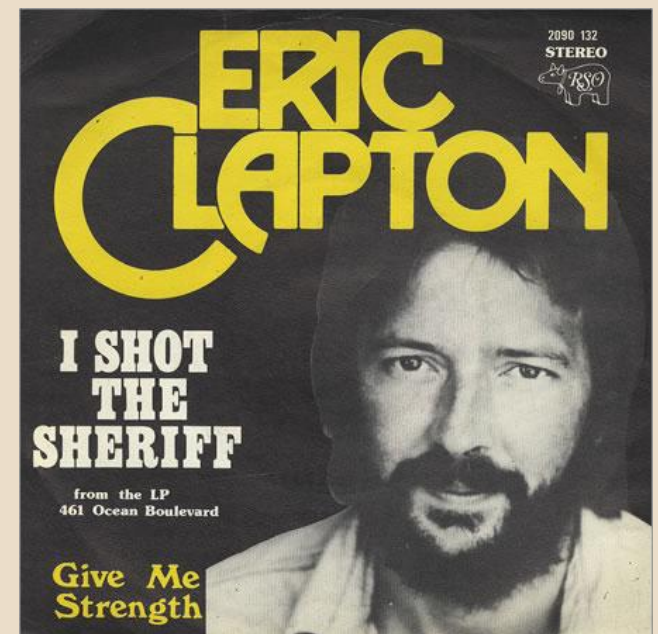


Clapton on MTV's Unplugged in 1992

<http://topyaps.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Eric-Clapton.jpg>

Musical Style: Solo Career & Some Reggae

After beating his drug addiction, Clapton began his solo career in 1974. He released his first solo album, *461 Ocean Boulevard*, that included a reggae cover of Bob Marley's "I Shot The Sheriff" on it. This became one of his most popular singles. This began his remarkable solo career where he released many notable albums.



<http://eil.com/shop/moreinfo.asp?catalogid=106455>

Other Music of the Time: Led Zeppelin

Eric Clapton's former band member from The Yardbirds, Jimmy Page, went on to form another group with singer Robert Plant; bassist and keyboardist John Paul Jones; and drummer John Bonham, called the New Yardbirds. Later re-named Led Zeppelin.

Active from 1968 - 1982, the band released 9 albums. In doing so the band has received much acclaim, being called "the biggest band of 70's" by Rolling Stone, and "as influential in that decade [the 1970s] as the Beatles were in the prior one", by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/sevenages/assets/artists/led-zeppelin/gallery/1.jpg>

Fricke, David. (2010)
Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. (n.d.)

Other Music of the Time: Jimi Hendrix

The guitar playing style of Jimi Hendrix was of great influence to Eric Clapton in the late 1960s, they were also good friends.

Eric bought Jimi a left handed Stratocaster as a gift. The night he planned to give it to him(at a concert) was the night Jimi died.



<http://mysoulsonice.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/jimi-hendrix-eric-clapton-1967.jpg>

(Stout, 2007).

While My Guitar Gently Weeps

Knowing that it would make John and Paul take his song more seriously, George Harrison asked his friend and respected guitarist, Eric Clapton, to play lead guitar on the Beatles song “While My Guitar Gently Weeps.”

Due to music contract politics, Clapton was not given performance credit on “The Beatles” (more well known as “The White Album”)

The guitar solo on “While My Guitar Gently Weeps” is considered by many to be one of the great examples of Eric Clapton’s abilities



<http://cdn8.openculture.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/eric-clapton-george-harrison.jpg>

(Songfacts, 2014).
(Fricke, 2010).

Musical Analysis: *Tears in Heaven*

link to video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxPj3GAYYZ0>

Background Info:

- ❖ Song was written about the loss of his son, Conor.
- ❖ Song reached #2 on *Billboard Hot 100* singles chart.
- ❖ Song was used in the movie *Rush*.

Genre: Soft Rock

Length: 4:34

Released: 1992

Written by: Eric Clapton and Will Jennings

Musical Analysis: *Tears in Heaven*

Instrumentation: Acoustic Guitars, Slide Guitar, French Horn, Keyboard, Shakers, Triangle, and Kanga Drums

Meter: Quadruple; 4/4 time signature

Beat Subdivision: Duple

Texture: Homophonic, Melody and Accompaniment

Tempo: Slow; approx. 76 beats per minute

Form: Macrostructure: AABA

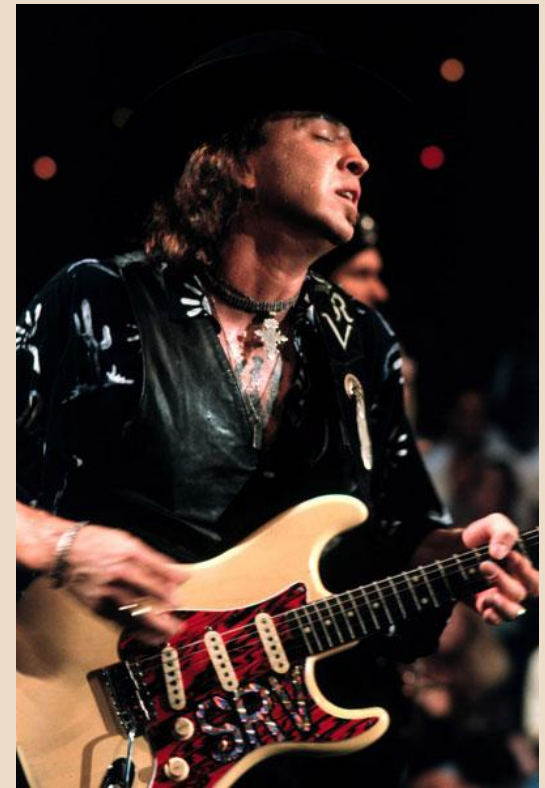
Microstructure of “A” verse: aabc

Microstructure of “B” verse: dde bc

Eric Clapton's Influence: Stevie Ray Vaughan

❖ Stevie Ray Vaughan

- Influenced by Clapton's blues style
- Vaughan's band in 1990, Double Trouble, opened for Clapton at multiple concerts
- Had jam sessions on-stage with Clapton, and was also invited to play "Sweet Home Chicago" to close out the set.

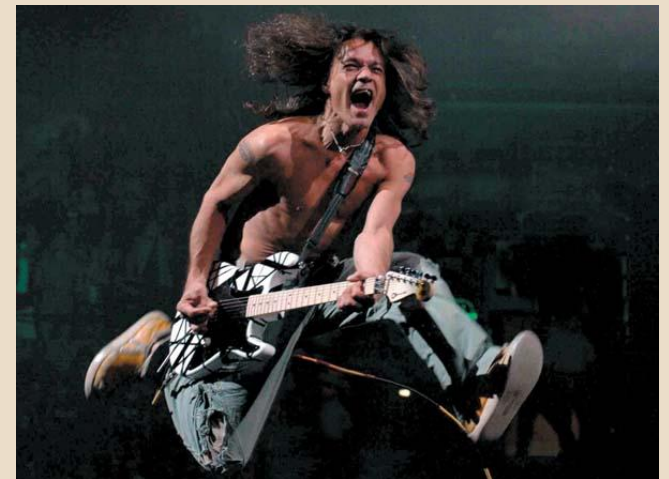


<http://srvaughan.altervista.org/austin.jpg>

(Hopkins, 2011).

Eric Clapton's Influence: Eddie Van Halen

- ❖ Eddie has often stated that his main influence is Eric Clapton.
 - In an interview he says “I realize that I don't sound like him, but I know every solo he's ever played, note-for-note, still to this day.”
 - His favorite Clapton solos were in Cream's live versions of “Spoonful” and “I'm So Glad”



<http://www.guitarlessons.com/wp-content/themes/gITemplate/images/guitarist/rock/eddie-van-halen-3.jpg>

Eric Clapton's Influence: Eddie Van Halen

In Eddie Van Halen's remarks on Eric Clapton, he states:

“Eric Clapton is basically the only guitar player who influenced me... ...I respect him for everything he's done and is still doing - but what inspired me, what made me pick up a guitar, was his early stuff. I could play some of those solos now - they're permanently imprinted in my brain. That blues-based sound is still the core of modern rock guitar.”

(Fricke, 2010).

Eric Clapton's Legacy

- ❖ First musician to be inducted three times to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
 - Yardbirds (1992), Cream (1993), and as a solo artist (2000)
- ❖ Referred to as most influential and important guitarist of all times
- ❖ Has won 18 Grammy Awards
- ❖ *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked him #2 on Top 100 Guitarist of All Time
- ❖ Awarded Commander and Officer of the Order of the British Empire (CBE and OBE)



<http://www.eonline.com/photos/1602/20-years-of-winners-grammy-awards/239018>

Conclusion

Eric Clapton's music career has spanned over 50 years and he has undoubtedly been influenced by and influenced many other music artists



<http://tba.seatgeek.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Eric-Clapton.png>

Throughout his lengthy 5 decade career, Eric Clapton has been able to have success through his unique playing style and music. Many music genres have faded into and out of mainstream popularity in that time, including many subgenres of rock, R&B, country, disco, hip-hop, and electronic music. In spite of what is “popular” at the time, Eric Clapton has not followed music trends and has stayed true to his own unique songwriting and guitar playing style that combines the blues with rock and roll.

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*** means non-internet source**

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