

Rock

Rock 'n' Roll originated in the United States in the late 1940s and early 1950s, combining elements of blues, rhythm and blues, and country music in a style known for a heavy beat and simple melodies. A classic rock band has two electric guitars (one lead and one rhythm), bass, and drum kit. Early jazz led to the classic rock era of the late 1960s, with offshoots including folk rock, country rock, jazz rock, heavy metal, punk rock, and alternative rock.

Rock in Missouri

Rock music in Missouri, as in other parts of the country, became the music of the younger generation as electric blues, R&B, and country musicians took on the new style with its strong beats and melodic hooks. In Kansas City, one of the early pioneers was Big Joe Turner, a blues shouter who turned to Rock 'n' Roll in the 1950s, most notably with his 1954 song "Shake, Rattle and Roll," and who was inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. In St. Louis, the big name was Chuck Berry who moved from Rhythm & Blues to Rock 'n' Roll with a string of hit songs often in collaboration with pianist Johnnie Johnson, and who entered the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in its first year, 1986. For his 60th birthday in 1987, Berry was honored by his rock peers in the documentary *Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll!* that was based on two concerts at the Fox Theatre in St. Louis featuring Keith Richards, Eric Clapton, Etta James, Linda Ronstadt and Johnnie Johnson.

Rock radio stations throughout the state, sales of rock recordings at many record stores, television appearances of rock stars on through *American Bandstand* and MTV, local clubs and concert halls presenting local and regional rock bands, concerts in indoor halls and arenas, and outdoor concert venues featuring major acts like the Beatles at Busch Stadium in St. Louis in 1966 – all served to make rock music the major music genre in Missouri and the entire United States for decades.

Rock Bios

Chuck Berry

Charles Berry (1926 - 2017), nicknamed the "Father of Rock and Roll," was born in St. Louis where he grew up in the "Ville" neighborhood, had a strong interest in music and attended Sumner High School. He played the blues in his teens and began playing with local bands, and developed a guitar style and showmanship influenced by blues musician T-Bone Walker.

In 1953 he joined the Johnnie Johnson Trio, starting a longtime collaboration with the pianist who has his own place in rock music history. Johnson's band played a mix of blues, rhythm and blues, ballads and country, with Berry playing guitar and singing the vocals.

As a leader, his first hits were "Mabellene," "Roll Over Beethoven," "Rock and Roll Music," and "Johnny B. Goode." He had two major run-ins with the law and spent three years in a reformatory as a teenager and three years in prison as an adult. After his release in 1963, he had more hits, including "No Particular Place to Go," "You Never Can Tell," and "Nadine."

He continued to tour extensively, often travelling solo and playing with local bands. Part of his showmanship included his famous "duck walk." Chuck Berry was a major influence on future rock musicians, has been included many "greatest" lists, and entered the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986, the year it opened.

Big Joe Turner

Joseph "Big Joe" Turner Jr. (1911 - 1985) was a blues shouter from Kansas City, Missouri whose long career stretched from the 1920s to the 1980s. His music made the transition from big bands to jump blues to rhythm and blues to rock. He had great success with "Shake, Rattle and Roll" in 1954, but the song had even greater success in a version with slightly cleaned up lyrics by Bill Haley & His Comets. Elvis Presley also covered the song. Turner's other hits included "The Chicken and the Hawk," "Flip, Flop and Fly," "Hide and Seek," "Morning, Noon and Night," and "Well All Right." He appeared on the television program *Showtime at the Apollo* and in the movie *Shake, Rattle and Rock!* He entered the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in 1987, the second year of its operation, being called "the brawny voiced "Boss of the Blues."

Turner was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987, with the Hall lauding him as "the brawny voiced 'Boss of the Blues.'"

Sheryl Crow

Singer-songwriter Sheryl Crow (born 1962) was born in Kennett in the southeast "bootheel" part of Missouri and received a B.A. in music composition, performance and education from the School of Music at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She taught music at an elementary school in Fenton, Missouri while beginning to sing with bands on weekends and singing advertising jingles, and later toured as a back-up vocalist with Michael Jackson. Her own music springs from pop, rock, country, jazz and blues music genres, and she has made numerous albums, contributed to film soundtracks, won nine Grammy Awards, and been an actress on several television shows.