

Bad music for bad people

Hendrix dropped acid, changed music

Jimi Hendrix is continually regarded as the best guitar player of all time, but what was it that made him any different from the rest?

The late 1960s were stocked with incredible guitarists: Pete Townshend, Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck to name a few. Hendrix intimidated and intrigued all of them.

Out of nowhere, the Seattle born Hendrix arrived in England in 1966 dressed like Little Richard on acid. He began playing exciting live shows and quickly got recognition.

Hendrix developed his own groundbreaking style of heavy soul and blues. His Marshall amps were spewing obnoxious noise and feedback that no one had ever heard before. It was traditional blues put through a psychedelic ringer.

Hendrix was also a passionate stage performer. With his colorful ruffle



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shirts, headbands, tight pants and afro, the young guitarist would shake and vibrate his body against huge walls of amplifiers, convulsing as if he was possessed by the music.

Clapton remembered in a 1973 documentary the first time he met Hendrix, the same night they played a Howlin' Wolf blues jam on stage at a club in England.

"He did his whole routine," Clapton said,

"playing the guitar with his teeth, laying it on the floor, playing it behind his head, doing the splits; the whole thing, it was incred-

ible."

Today, rock bands across the map pull lame stage antics, often ones that have been done many times before. When Hendrix did them over 40 years ago, they didn't seem rehearsed, fans knew it was genuine.

When he was on stage and his head would fall back, his mouth would drop open and he would play sounds that had never been heard on this planet, spectators knew he was special. Today, he is still a musical phenomenon.

At the Monterey Pop Fest in 1967 Hendrix ripped off his Fender Stratocaster, dropped it on the stage floor, kissed it, lit it on fire and then smashed the hell out of it in front of an amazed audience.

While the Beatles were innovative, they never sacrificed an instrument with fire on stage!

Townshend and Clapton, known as the best gui-



Photo courtesy of google.com

Firestarter: Jimi Hendrix sets his Fender Stratocaster ablaze at the 1967 Monterey Pop Fest. This iconic performance rocketed him into stardom. Hendrix is considered one of the greatest and most influential guitarists in rock music history.

tarists in rock'n'roll during this period, were suddenly being compared to this new guy on the scene. The mystique of Hendrix is what formed a relationship between the two rock stars.

Townshend remembered receiving a phone call from Clapton out of the blue, he invited Townshend to a movie; they had never spoke before. Townshend said he won-

dered about the reasoning behind the invite.

"During the movie we started to talk about Jimi Hendrix," Townshend said in an interview not too long after Hendrix's death.

"We decided that we both really liked him. Suddenly out of the blue we had a very strong bond of friendship, which I think, came about because Jimi threatened us both in a way, but at the same time he also entertained us both."

If Elvis made rock'n'roll about showmanship and Bob Dylan made genius lyrics a part of the equation, Hendrix's part was knocking down whatever barriers were still up in music.

His style was complex, yet at times sloppy. His amp would often feedback a bit too much. That is why Hendrix still matters, because no one prior to him had considered going to those lengths.

Straight up and down

'And then there were four': The story of a failed search

LCC has narrowed the potential presidential candidate field down to four individuals. The search committee has concluded its meetings (though it has not disbanded).

Candidate forums and Board of Trustees Q&A sessions have ended. The only thing left are visits to the candidate's colleges to get the "man/woman-on-the-street" view.

So, as it comes to the end of the search process, LCC must ask, "Was this a successful Presidential Search?"

No, no it was not.

Case in point: Board Chairperson Robin Smith's



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statement at the last presidential search committee meeting.

"I've been in situations where others have called it a failed search because there were only two candidates to choose from," she said.

"I think it's going to be

best to get a good look at the top candidates and it was very clear that numbers were very close between the top four candidates."

Those numbers, so you know, were as follows: 14, 11, seven and five. Okay, that looks to be true. Consider this: the candidate with 14 votes was Cardenas, the incumbent.

She probably could have put "I AM THE LCC PRESIDENT" in bold words across the top of her application, eschewed her resume, and still got around the same number of votes. We know where she stands, we can go to board meet-

ings and hear it. In other words, she can not be counted with the others.

Now there are three to choose from. Darnell Cole was the candidate who got 11 votes.

Cole comes from a similar institution in terms of student size and program offerings. He talked about mentoring programs and offering support programs for faculty.

He has several area connections that could have positive ramifications for LCC's nursing program. He is about the future and has ways to get there; a good choice.

The last two candidates, Brent Knight and Ron Wright, come from schools that, at best, might be half the size of LCC. These are people who were brought in to build colleges.

Wright, at his board interview, talked about how he was instrumental in getting a technology and learning center built on his campus, which is good.

LCC has the Technology and Learning Center and the University Center. Also, we have three campuses. You built one building, get over it.

LCC needs to go to the next level. People are talking about becoming a driving force in the Michigan economy; we are not building from the ground up.

As for Brent Knight, it's hard to know where to begin. He is also a candidate from a school much smaller than LCC.

His most recent accomplishment was focusing his college toward the needs of Hispanic students, who make up 78 percent of his colleges student population. Sweet, but that isn't what LCC should be looking for.

Then there were the interviews. Knight bombed, big time. In the forums and during the board interview he went off on tangents that had nothing to do with the questions he was supposed to be answering.

By his own admission he is a "numbers guy." As in, "I don't talk much," which is fine by me. But a candidate who can't get through his own interviews is not much of a candidate at all. Some would use the term "crash and burn."

Knight's interview was more "mid-air explosion followed by fiery rain of metal death." Not very pretty at all.

What does that leave us with? One qualified candidate. Take a moment to revisit Smith's quote. Two candidates could be a failed search.

Therefore, LCC's search failed. LCC had a national search and it produced one legitimate candidate. That is

a problem.

Who's to blame? The presidential search committee? Were they, at some point, supposed to say, "We should postpone the search indefinitely until we can get better candidates?"

Maybe, but they had been searching for nearly two years. Also, they were acting on a schedule that called for them to have "three to five" recommended candidates by a certain time: a goal they accomplished.

What about the Board of Trustees? It was their incessant bickering and infighting that tainted the search process in the first place. Well, they cleaned up their collective act.

Two new trustees, three new board officers, team-building exercises; the board managed to accomplish a significant amount of things in a very short time.

But it was too late. Potential candidates probably saw only superficial changes.

There was insufficient time for real changes to have been made. LCC was dealt a bad hand and officials played it as best they could.

There's a phrase in poker that goes, "You gotta know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em."

LCC should have sat this hand out.

Be smart.

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