

J U N E 2 0 0 6

## President Bush Celebrates Black Music Month at the White House



Legendary Blues guitarist B.B. King is applauded by President George W. Bush during King's performance in the East Room of the White House Monday, June 26, 2006, as part of the Black Music Month celebration focusing on the music of the Gulf Coast: Blues, Jazz and Soul.

*African-American musicians have added to the rich culture of our country and of countries around the world. During Black Music Month, we recognize the African-American artists who have enhanced our lives and created some of our Nation's most treasured art forms...*

*Throughout history, African-American artists have produced music with the power to change hearts and shape our national conscience. From gospel to blues, from jazz to rock and roll, the songs of America's black musicians have defined our times and enriched our culture.*

—An excerpt from President George W. Bush's Black Music Month Proclamation

*"Some of the finest performances by black musicians have been heard right here in the White House, and we're going to continue that tradition today. During—in 1878, during the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes, soprano Marie Seilka became the first black artist to perform here in the White House. A few years later, the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University became the first black choir to perform here. They moved President Chester Arthur to tears with a rendition of "Safe in the Arms of Jesus."... In more recent times, the White House has been graced by performances by artists like Louis Armstrong and Pearl Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald, Aretha Franklin, Shirley Caesar, Duke Ellington, and Lionel Hampton. These men and women created some of the greatest music America has ever produced, and they honored our country by sharing their gifts right here in the people's house."*

—President George W. Bush, June 26, 2006



President George W. Bush is joined by basketball Hall of Famer Kareem Abdul Jabbar in the East Room of the White House Monday, June 26, 2006, as they listen to performer Patti Austin at the Black Music Month celebration focusing on the music of the Gulf Coast: Blues, Jazz and Soul.

# Irvin Mayfield, Patti Austin, and B.B. King Highlight a Memorable Black Music Month Celebration

“We’re also pleased to welcome Irvin Mayfield. Irvin is the cultural ambassador of New Orleans, and artistic director of the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra. At just 28 years old, Irvin has already become one of America’s finest trumpet players in the great New Orleans jazz tradition. He’s more than a musician, he’s a decent, big-hearted man....He’s using his God-given talent to help rebuild his beloved homeland—his hometown, one brick and one note at a time...Patti Austin is one of America’s most talented singers and “songwriters. Her extraordinary career began at the age of four, when she made her debut alongside her godmother, Dinah Washington, at

Recently Patti earned her sixth Grammy nomination with her tribute to Ella Fitzgerald. Patti is an incredible artist...

Twist when two men got in a fight over a woman and knocked over a kerosene stove and set the whole place on fire. B.B. got out, but then he realized he had left his guitar behind. And so he went back inside, he braved the flames, and he rescued the guitar. Later, he learned that the lady who had inspired the brawl was named Lucille. So that’s what he named his guitar. Since then, B.B. and Lucille have played more than 10,000 shows. They have thrilled audiences all over the world. B.B. has notched an incredible 74 entries on the Billboard charts, and his work has influenced virtually every major guitar player over the last half-century. He remains gracious and humble, what folks in Mississippi call, “free-hearted.”

—President George W. Bush, June 26, 2006



**Patti Austin performs in the East Room of the White House at Black Music Month on June 26, 2006. She has performed for every President since Ronald Reagan.**

Harlem’s famed Apollo Theater. Since then, she’s recorded 16 solo albums, featuring everything from soul to standards.



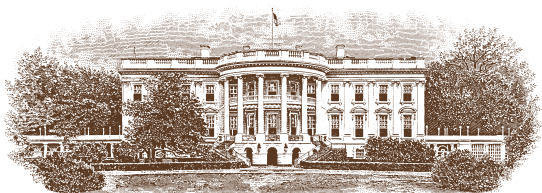
**Legendary Blues guitarist B.B. King gestures at the end of his performance in the East Room of the White House Monday, June 26, 2006, as part of the Black Music Month celebration focusing on the music of the Gulf Coast: Blues, Jazz and Soul.**

... B.B. King, “King of the Blues.”...was raised in the Mississippi Delta, where he picked cotton for 35 cents a day, and then he played after work on the street corners for dimes. He says that when he sang gospel songs, “They’d pat me on the head, but wouldn’t ever put anything in the hat.” So he would change, “my Lord” to “my baby” and then they always gave him a tip. One night in the 1950s, B.B. King was playing in an Arkansas town called



**Composer and trumpeter Irvin Mayfield performs Just a Closer Walk with Thee, for the final time, in honor of his father during the Black Music Month Celebration at the White House.**

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