

Concert report essay example

[Environment](#), [Electricity](#)



An Evening with B. B. King

For the purposes of this assignment, I attended a B. B. King concert at the B. B. King Blues Club & Grill. It took place on Tuesday, March 3rd, and featured noted blues musician B. B. King, known by many as King of the Blues. During the concert, he played approximately two hours of blues music, singing and playing guitar primarily while his blues band played around him.

During the concert, King played a great deal of his repertoire, including blues classics such as " 3 o'Clock Blues," " Woke Up This Morning," " Bad Luck," " Every Day I Have the Blues," and more. In addition to existing songs, King would often improvise new songs and pieces with his band, simply providing background music to our enjoyment of the venue. The length of the songs he had already written ran from about three minutes to six minutes; alternatively, the improvised works would often run up to eight or ten minutes, since it teetered on freeform jazz.

The form of the music was usually a 12 bar blues rhythm, as the sound followed a very specific pattern, with the same kinds of changes indicative of the blues. His songs have a very slow tempo to them, allowing the audience to relax and take in the experimentation and improvisation that King engages in with his music. In his music, there was very little variation in dynamics; the songs rarely move between soft and loud, instead staying at a pretty even volume. This had the effect of having a very mellow sound that was easy to predict; the variation in the songs came from King's ability to improvise, and the embellishments each band member made on their instruments.

King's real talents come in his ability to play blues guitar, which was chiefly

on display during this concert. For the entire evening, he was on his electric guitar, providing an improvised solo guitar melody over the band in the background. The variations that he found between notes and rhythms were typical of the blues genre; jazzy off-beats and syncopated rhythms allowed for an unpredictable and fun sound to be found in these songs.

The instrumentation present in King's band consisted of a fairly consistent rhythm and percussion section: the drums, bass and rhythm guitar would all offer a consistent rhythm that King could improvise over. The percussion was non-pitched and minimal, only serving to support King, his guitar and the rest of the band. The bass and piano players also had their moments of focus, but all members of the band stayed within that 12 bar blues formula. Electronic instruments were at a minimum, King only having his electric guitar and the bassist with an electric bass. The sound was clean and undistorted - all of these elements came together to create a very predictable but enjoyable bass sound.

King's voice timbre has a very gravelly, vibrato sound to it; his singing consisted of a wailing, bluesy style that was clear and passionate over the instrumentation. The combination of King's gravelly voice and the clean, crisp and complex guitar playing that he uses created an interesting texture, the backing band providing clean harmonies to support these lead instruments/vocal elements. Often, he used melisma in his songs, including "3 O'Clock Blues" - he would stretch a single syllable into a whole melody, showing his vocal range. The grittiness of his voice lent a great deal of character to his singing, and was accompanied well by his band.

I was very pleased to see B. B. King in concert. I was not very familiar with

his work, but I had heard of him, and I recognized that he was a very influential musician in the creation of blues and popular music. This concert was very much unlike most rock concerts I have attended; instead of it being like a loud party where you can barely hear the music, the slow blues created a calming effect on the audience. The music was passionate and friendly, instead of abrasive and loud. This had the effect of lulling me into a sense of full engagement with the music.

King's band was very light on showmanship, King just conversing lightly with audience members between sets of songs. This made the music the real focus, and because of the unique nature of the blues, I was moved. The music was very nice to listen to, and I loved hearing King's complex guitar work, effortlessly moving from note to note. I had no idea that musicians could improvise so much and still make it sound amazing. All in all, I am very pleased that I attended this concert. It has led me to have a much better appreciation for the blues, and I hope to enjoy more of King's work in the future.