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Individualism

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[Abstract]

Jimi Hendrix, was born on November 27th, 1942 in Seattle, Washington. He was well known for being an electric guitarist, singer, and songwriter. Hendrix was one of the most unique, influential artists in the history of music. Known for smashing his guitar in concerts, unique music, having a funky style, and always rocking an afro, we still remember him now. Hendrix passed away early on in his career in 1970 at age 27.

[Entry]

Johnny Allen Hendrix, also known as Jimi Hendrix, was born on November 27th, 1942 in Seattle, Washington. He was well known for being an electric guitarist, singer, and songwriter. Hendrix was one of the most unique, influential artists in the history of music. Although his career only lasted a short four years, he became a world phenomenon because of his renowned individuality.

Jimi Hendrix started to play the guitar at age 14, he taught himself the basics just by listening to records and the radio.ⁱ Since was a teenager he went through rough patches in his life: his mother would drink a lot, he got arrested and ended up joining the army, and after Hendrix left the army he lived wherever he could find shelter and would steal food. Throughout all of this, he still had the passion for music. Hendrix would join bands and leave them until he found what he wanted.ⁱⁱ

Finally, in 1965, he was performing in the Greenwich Village Club with his group Jimmy James and the Blue Flames. He showed originality by his formidable techniques, distinctive playing style, and charismatic stage presence. Chas Chandler, a British guitarist from a rock

group the Animals, was intrigued by Hendrix. Chandler ended up taking them to England. There, the Jimi Hendrix Experience was formed. He stayed in the U.K. for quite a while then he took the stages in the U.S.

Hendrix's vocal style had developed into a highly individualistic blend of mannerisms, it came from blues, soul, and Bob Dylan's half spoken narrative style.ⁱⁱⁱ The electric guitarist was playing highly refined art music under the aegis of rock. Hendrix was a virtuoso artist on the guitar, like no other artist in his time.^{iv} He played a right handed guitar upside down and it allowed him to make unusual fingering patterns.^v Hendrix said, "We're trying to create our personal sound, our own music and our own personal being," and "I'm not copying what I heard before." With these quotes from his book, it was clear that he wanted to be different from the crowd and he achieved that.

"My music, my instrument, my sound, my body are all one action with my mind," the singer stated after getting shamed that what he did was his guitar was too vulgar and sexual. He would only be able to explain himself through songs. The songwriter hoped to put the audience into hypnotic state while his music played.

Hendrix was also known for his elaborate, unique sense of style. He was asked, "Why it is necessary to be dress peculiarly?" The songwriter replied, "I don't consider it necessary. This is the way I like to dress and look, off stage and on. I like when the shades of color clash."^{vi} He felt comfortable in what he wore. People believed that the way he dressed and way he styled his hair was just for the act, but it wasn't. Hendrix had an extraordinary individuality that people disliked at times but most of the time people liked it. An example, "In N.Y. taxi drivers would drive up to me, take a look at my appearance and then drive away."^{vii} He was a pioneer in

making fashion statements. Fashion became youth led in the 1960s, the young singer would wear his eclectic mix of clothes, then the public would immediately pick up the style.^{viii}

Jimi Hendrix exemplified the American Dream by becoming one of the most famous guitarists in the history of the U.S. Although discovered by a British guitarist he came back to the U.S. and the singer expressed his individuality through his music and style.

ⁱTerence J. O'Grady 2000 "Hendrix, Jimi (1942-1970), rock guitarist, singer, and songwriter." *American National Biography*.

ⁱⁱ Jimi Hendrix and Peter Neil. "Voodoo Child" in *Starting at Zero*. (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013)

ⁱⁱⁱ Terence J. O'Grady 2000 "Hendrix, Jimi (1942-1970), rock guitarist, singer, and songwriter." *American National Biography*.

^{iv} David Henderson. "Jimi Hendrix Deep Within the Blues and Alive Onstage at Woodstock--25 Years after Death." *African American Review* 29, no. 2 (1995): 213-16. doi:10.2307/3042293.

^v Terence J. O'Grady 2000 "Hendrix, Jimi (1942-1970), rock guitarist, singer, and songwriter." *American National Biography*.

^{vi} Jimi Hendrix and Peter Neil. "Are you Experienced?" in *Starting at Zero*. (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013)

^{vii} Jimi Hendrix and Peter Neil. "Beyond the Watchtower" in *Starting at Zero*. (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013)

^{viii} Pamela Church Gibson. "Fashion Icons." In the *Berg Companion to Fashion*, edited by Valerie Steele. Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010. Accessed October 30, 2018.

<https://www.bloomsburyfashioncentral.com/products/berg-fashion-library/encyclopedia/the-berg-companion-to-fashion/fashion-icons>.