

## ***Classic rock: unsung 6 string heroes!!***

*"I'm a rock and outlaw with a six string gun....."* Foghat :circa 1975

Classic rock is a term used loosely to describe the albums released in the early to late 70's by artists which have become legendary and therefore 'classics'.

Most of these albums/artists were highly original and would become influential on many other bands for generations to come. No matter what era you were born in since the 70's almost ANY band you listen to would have been influenced by artists and bands from this era. So even if you are now only in your teens and you find your favourite band sounds "totally original" you can bet your bottom dollar that they were influenced by someone from this era.[even if *they* don't even know it!]

The seventies was a great era for music because it truly was a ground breaking time for original music. Nothing was copied, or rehashed, everyone had their own sound[even though, as always in music, the 70's was a continuance and evolution of music from the 60's, but it matured more fully in the 70's]

Band and artists such as led zeppelin, deep purple, jimi Hendrix, free, allman brothers, queen, black Sabbath, cream, david bowie, status quo are all examples of acts who made their start in the 60's but found their sound and style in the 70's, and therefore gave rise to many other bands who then added their own flavour to these styles.

Less well know bands such as Uriah heap, wishbone ash, grand funk railroad, scorpions[who became quite huge in the 80's], and thin lizzy are worthy of mentions but would not necessarily be known as legends, where as other acts such as Queen became absolutely huge and remain so to this day.

It is the same with "guitar heroes" almost every guitarist no matter what age has heard of or has listened to Hendrix, Clapton. Jimmy page etc, but there are other extremely talented and influential guitarists who are less well known that should be in the legend status as well. Two such example are Richie Blackmore from deep purple and Michael Schenker from UFO. You will find some more "modern" players such as Kirk Hammet [Metallica] and Dimebag Darrel [Pantera] were heavily influenced by michael schenker, but schenker has not really achieved "god like" status such as some of his contemporaries have.[such as jimmy page and eric clapton].

I could go on for hours about classic rock and there are hundreds of excellent albums that are still available today,[and some fine ones deleted] but some songs and albums rate a special mention for their guitar prowess and are worth your time to have at least a quick listen.

Heres a quick list or lesser known gems of classic musical genius that are worth a listen

### **Deep purple:**

**guitarist:** richie blackmore:

**choice albums:** made in japan and deep purple in rock

**songs:** highway star, child in time..

some of the most blistering guitar work you will ever hear!recorded in the early 70's and held the guinness book of records title as the loudest recording ever made!

**UFO:**

**guitarist,** michael schenker.

**Choice Albums:** phenomenon and force it.

**Songs** 'rock bottom'

..one of the most exciting and dynamic solos ever recorded, he was about 18 at the time!

**FREE: [later to become" bad company"** another excellent act!!]

**guitarist** paul kossof;

**album:** best of free.

**Songs:** all right now, fire and water, .mr big [live]

Simplistic and slow style ,excellent natural tone. ... all feeling!!! a les paul plugged straight into a marshal, no pedals! no tricks

**WISHBONE ASH:**

**guitarists** andy powell & ted turner.

**Choice albums:** "argus" or "there's the rub".

Excellent melody and twin harmony lead breaks, copied by many acts since! Very complex arrangements

And for the more well known and legend status guitarists listen to:

Led zeppelin 4 ....

Pink floyd .....dark side of the moon,

Black Sabbath .....master of reality,

anything by Hendrix,

anything of clapton in his time with **cream,**

Queen's 1st album just titled 'queen' where they were more 'rock' than theatre / opera,

and of course mark knopfler with early dire straits albums.

Also eddie van halen just scrapes in the 70's list with van halen's first album I think approx 1979..have a listen to "eruption" and their version of you 'really got me' ...he shaped a whole generation of guitar styles for the next 15 years and up until today.

When they first came out they had every guitarist in the world with their jaws on the ground in amazement!

Most of these acts were British, but the other side of the Atlantic also gave rise to bands such as heart, **aerosmith, atlanta rhythm section, lynard skynard, Rush , mountain,** and many other excellent classic rock bands.[the USA/Canadian bands tended to dominate more in the early 80's]

I know I have missed many other guitarists and bands here, but the idea is to give an idea of the amount of unearthed 'gems' there are to be heard apart from the obvious legends!!

illy