



'B.B. King: The Life of Riley,' the untold true American story of an orphan boy from the heart of the Mississippi Delta who rose to music stardom around the world and inspired a generation of fans against all odds, hits theaters Sunday, May 21. It screens twice at the PhilaMOCA, 531 N. 12th St., Philadelphia, Sunday, May 25.

By [Michael Christopher](#), Delaware County Daily Times

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"The Life of Riley" is an old-time phrase that loosely translates to a laid back, carefree existence. It's also the title of a new documentary on B.B. King, whose real name just happens to be Riley B. King.

And while he might be living the life of his namesake these days, that wasn't always the case — not even close. The film will be showing Sunday, May 25 at the Philadelphia Mauseoleum of Contemporary Art.

King worked closely with director Jon Brewer for two years to create the powerful film, which includes heartfelt contributions from a plethora of music's superstars — a vast indication that this was the time for his story to be told. At 88 years old, King, his family, friends and contemporaries unveil the true-life drama that was the springboard for the future "King of the Blues."

Battling unrelenting racism and the humiliation of segregation whilst working in the cotton fields as an orphaned child, King lived to overcome the toughest critics in the entertainment industry and ultimately be hailed as one of the principals of an entire genre of music. This candid documentary of the life story of one of our living legends is highlighted by rare archive footage and beautifully shot scenes of the deep American south. Informative and visually stunning, "The Life of Riley" is the definitive document of a true American treasure.

"We all have idols," said King. "Play like anyone you care about, but try to be yourself while you're doing so."

That's statement can be applied to the litany of well-known musicians who lent their voice to "The Life of Riley." Aaron Neville, Bill Wyman, Bono, Bonnie Raitt, Buddy Guy, Carlos Santana, Eric Clapton, John Mayer, Ringo Starr, Ronnie Wood and Slash are just a handful of the talent that contributed to the documentary, which also features Bill Cosby, Bruce Willis and is narrated by Morgan Freeman.

The film will be in theaters nationwide starting on May 21, Video on Demand June 1, and on DVD, Blu-ray, and digital platforms on June 17. The DVD and Blu-ray release features live footage from the Royal Albert Hall, some of which includes special guests such as Wood, Susan Tedeschi, Derek Trucks and Slash. In addition, there are bonus interviews from Guy, Wood, Raitt, Santana, Joe Bonamassa, Dr. John and Leon Russell, among others.

The soundtrack for "The Life of Riley" will be available digitally this Tuesday, and follows the specifically chosen music sequence used in the film. It contains career spanning songs as featured in the movie from his 1951 hit "3 O'Clock Blues" to his 2000 Grammy winning duet with Clapton, "Riding With the King," plus two live songs never available on digital or CD "Walking Dr. Bill" and "Sweet Sixteen."

"B.B. King: The Life of Riley" will screen twice on Sunday, May 25 (4:30 p.m. and 7:30) at the PhilaMOCA, located at 531 N. 12th St. Tickets are \$10 with no refunds or exchanges. For more information, visit <http://www.philamoca.org>

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