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Living blues legend B.B. King is the focus of stellar new documentary ‘The Life of Riley’

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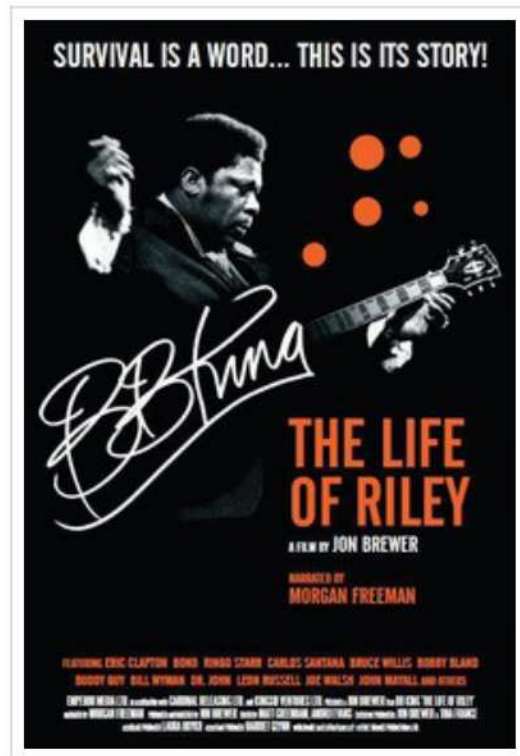
‘B.B. King: The Life of Riley’

(Cardinal/MVD Visual)

4 stars out of 5

Blues great B.B. King is one of the most beloved and admired figures in the history of American music and is the subject of the reverent (if slightly talky) documentary “B.B. King: The Life of Riley.” It’s a pretty thorough look at the man who began life as Riley B. King on Sept. 25, 1925, in Indianola, Miss., and went on to heights that even he could

never imagine.



The first half of the Morgan Freeman-narrated film is strongest and focuses on King's childhood and rise from poverty to becoming a working musician. Family and childhood friends join the 88-year-old King in recalling his Mississippi childhood.

Later, a veritable who's who of A-listers — Eric Clapton, Bono, Carlos Santana, Bill Wyman, Bonnie Raitt, Dr. John, George Benson, John Mayer, John Mayall, Johnny Winter, Bruce Willis, Ringo Starr, Slash, Walter Trout, Joe Walsh, among others — gush deserved praise on King and the music he's made over the years. The momentum wanes a bit when the interview subjects begin repeating themselves (and each other), but all in all, this is a fascinating look at The King of the Blues. *(Jeffrey Sisk)*

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