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[Toulouse Engelhardt remembers Wes](#)

Even 50 years after his death, always popping on anecdotes when people remember Wes Montgomery. Here is a reminder of the guitarist [Toulouse Engelhardt](#) (whose name, I must confess, I read for the first time):

“When I was a sophomore in high school I had kind of outgrown surf music, and I started looking at jazz music. So, one of my heroes was Wes Montgomery. This was back in the early 60s, Wes would do a regular gig at the Lighthouse [Cafe in Hermosa Beach]. So I dragged three of my bros down; they wanted to go hustle chicks down in Hermosa, but I wanted to go see Wes Montgomery.

“I was 13 years old, so obviously I couldn't go in; but when it was balmy in the summer, they would open the porthole – it was a window right on the street side, you could see the jazz musicians play from there. I was looking over the Dutch door watching him play, my bros got bored and took off to go look for chicks and left me. While I was waiting for Wes to come out and do his last set, I walked around through the back alley, and lo and behold, who was standing there smoking a cigarette but the man himself.

“He looked up at me and said, ‘You play guitar, don't you kid?’

“I was completely star struck and I said, ‘Yeah, how do you know?’

““I saw you outside.””

“Wes, how do you do those double octaves?’ Which was his signature sound that separated him.

“He goes, ‘Lemme show you kid.’ He sat me down on the step of the backdoor of the Lighthouse and reached around the corner and put his big Gibson hollow body in my lap, and he said, ‘Here, lemme show ya.’ And he showed me how to do it, and I was in heaven.

‘I got my second only guitar lesson from the master himself. I’ve never had a lesson since.’”

The jazz master had blown some smokey life into Engelhardt’s fingers, and they were about to take flight in a whole new way.

Those

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