

August 19, 2022

I Can't Quit You Baby -- Otis Rush

Otis Rush is a bit of an under-appreciated bluesman, both for his guitar work and his vocal style. That's not to say he didn't get his deserved acclaim while he was alive. It's just that his name doesn't come up as much in blues guitar discussions these days. Not like he deserves. He was one of the great innovators who helped develop the Chicago, West Side sound.

The licks for this week, in the key of Bb, are actually two versions of the same lick. The first begins with a fairly common figure, bending from Eb up a whole-step to F and following it with the triplets descending from the root (high-Bb), down to F, the 5th of the key. In the first lick, Rush winds his way down to a low D-natural, the 3rd of the Bb chord.

In the the second, he moves down more directly, but then moves back up to the root (Bb). Both are very nice and tasteful. While you work on them, listen closely to Otis' phrasing and his rhythmic concept. He has a subtle looseness in his sense of time.