Subject: Clarence Gatemouth Brown-- passed away after escaping Katrina
Posted by lon on Wed, 14 Sep 2005 04:49:34 GMT
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I think some space should be devoted here to the passing of Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. Gate, at age 81, was suffering from cancer for some time.He escaped from hurricane Katrina only to die on Sundaya week later. Some say he died of a broken heart because he lost his home. I heard the news Sunday but not until I had on the local bluesshow broadcast by my friend M. Flynn that I started to think aboutGate again. There's lots of material committed to cd by CGMB. I saw him live here about 10 years ago. When I did radio,we played his album with Roy Clark on numerous occassions. Gate's obituary and wiki are readily available on the netas well as many records and cds with Gate playing five instrumentsplus vocals with groups and big bands. He was the only black man on Hee Haw and not just with Buck Owens in the musical numbers. Gate would be seenin the cornfield for the one liners as well. This, for me issomehow significant. I remember wondering what this guy was doingon a whitebread show like Hee Haw but there he was. In performance Gate dressed high Texas style meaning ten gallonhat, points on the shirts and western boots. A brief spot I sawabout him on ABC news as a human interest feature showed him in Texas. So I was a bit surprised to hear he had passed afterescaping the hurricane in New Orleans. Blues is an old form and M. Flynn gives the news of thosebluesmen who have passed just about every week. But Gate transcended jazz, blues and pop. He playsmandolin, guitar, violin, harmonica (I think) and maybeothers. One of the most affecting parts of the one live performance I attended was a version of "La Mare"as a slide presentation on guitar with dobro. There's a lot that I'm leaving out. See if you can find some CGMB music-- especially a title with Roy Clark called"Makin' Music". That album has the best 'Take The A Train"you'll ever find. For a long time I thought that Brian Setzer was the only band leader who played guitar and did vocals with a big band.I was wrong. Gate did it first. And when the Brian SetzerOrchestra started to put out recordings I thought wouldn'tit be great if Gate could play with Brian while he's stillperforming. That never happened. Lastly I hope that there are musical tributes done on both blues and jazz shows for Gate. But the public'sattention is fleeting. It may be that all I and others can do is hold him in memory as one of the great jazzand bluesmen that America has ever produced.

Subject: Re: Clarence Gatemouth Brown-- passed away after escaping Katrina
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 14 Sep 2005 05:57:06 GMT
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Sounds like an interesting musician. I'll have to check him out. Sorry to say I hadn't heard of him, sorry to hear he passed away too.

Subject: Re: Clarence Gatemouth Brown-- passed away after escaping Katrina
Posted by Manualblock on Wed, 14 Sep 2005 11:24:08 GMT
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I saw Clarence numerous times, lastly back last year along with Dan HIcks.He was a talented guy; more of a multi-genre approach than Blues although he did many blues styled tunes. His band was tight and he kept a nice energy level up for the whole hour. If I had to pin it down I'd say he was a one man minstrel show of southern folk/rythym and blues/New Orleans funk(man it is weird writing that now.) I never thought a lot of his skill on guitar, he was redundant in my view; but his entertaining abiity was first rate.