

Matt Murphy, Master of Blues Guitar, Is Dead at 88

By [Richard Sandomir](#)

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Matt (Guitar) Murphy, a master bluesman who played with Howlin' Wolf, Etta James, Chuck Berry and Memphis Slim but was best known as a member of the Blues Brothers band, died on Friday in Miami. He was 88.

The cause was a heart attack, his wife, Kathy Hemrick, said.

Mr. Murphy began his career in Memphis before moving in the 1950s to Chicago, which was then at the epicenter of a new kind of hard-driving, heavily electrified blues. His harmonically sophisticated, jazz-inflected guitar playing established him as a mainstay of the Chicago scene, and a true original.

Reviewing a 1982 performance in which Mr. Murphy played mostly other musicians' songs, Rafael Alvarez of The Baltimore Sun wrote, "The blunt affection for the wide, wide range of musical styles Murphy offers will make you forget the original discs."

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