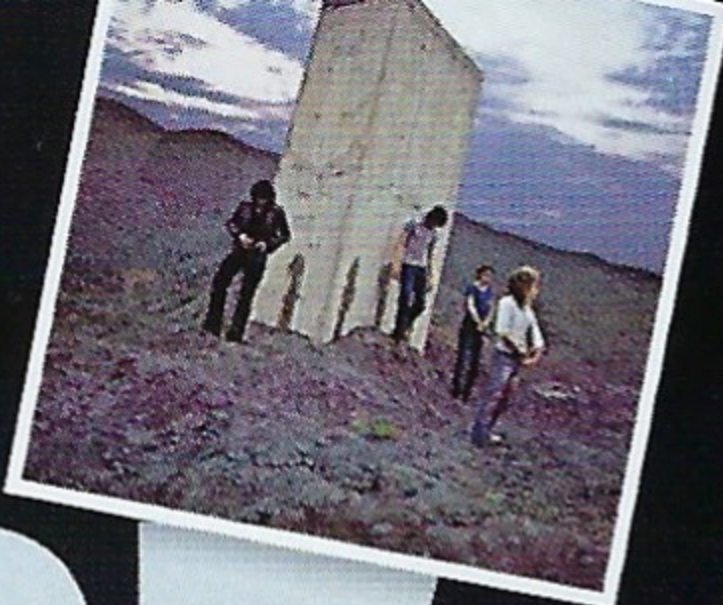


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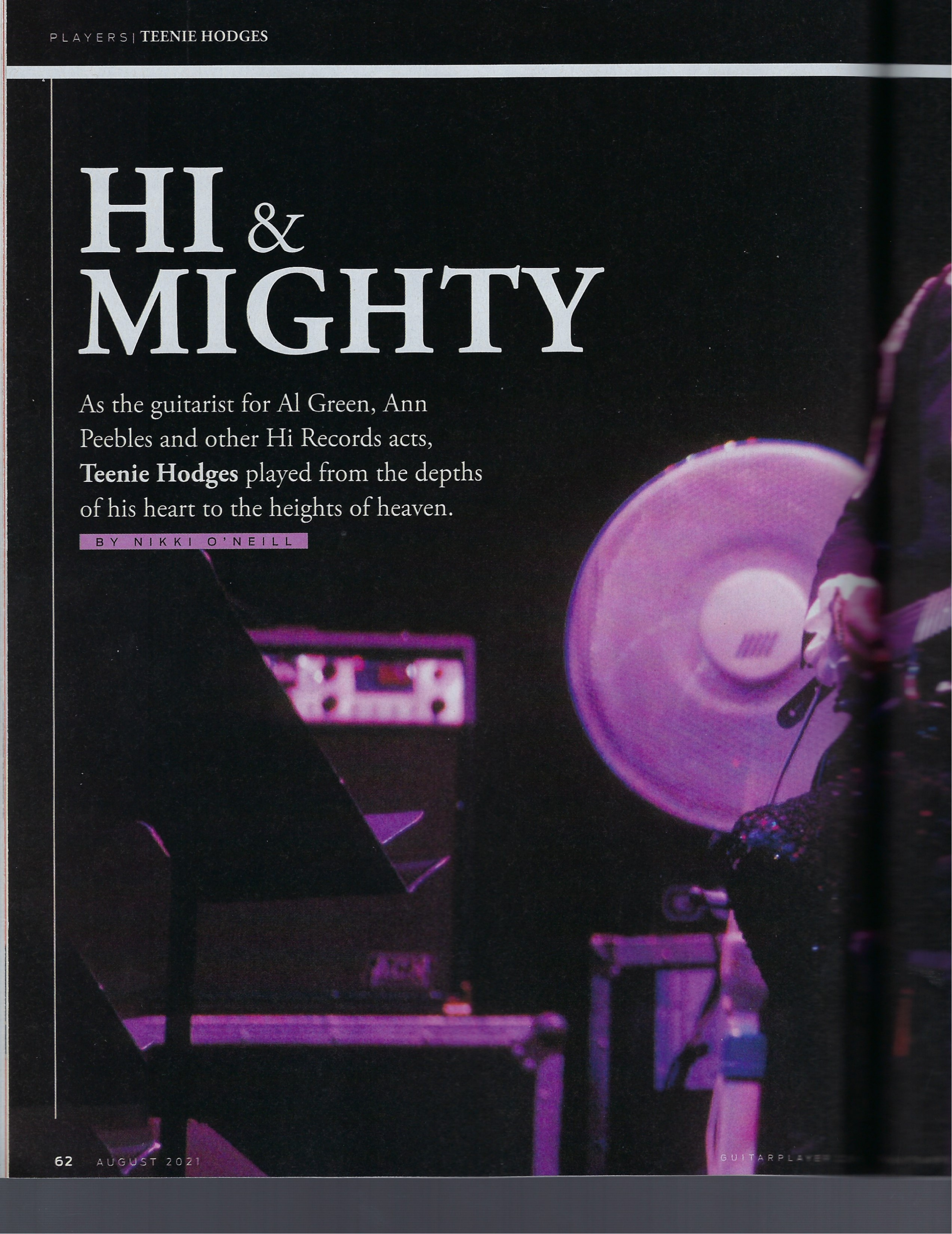


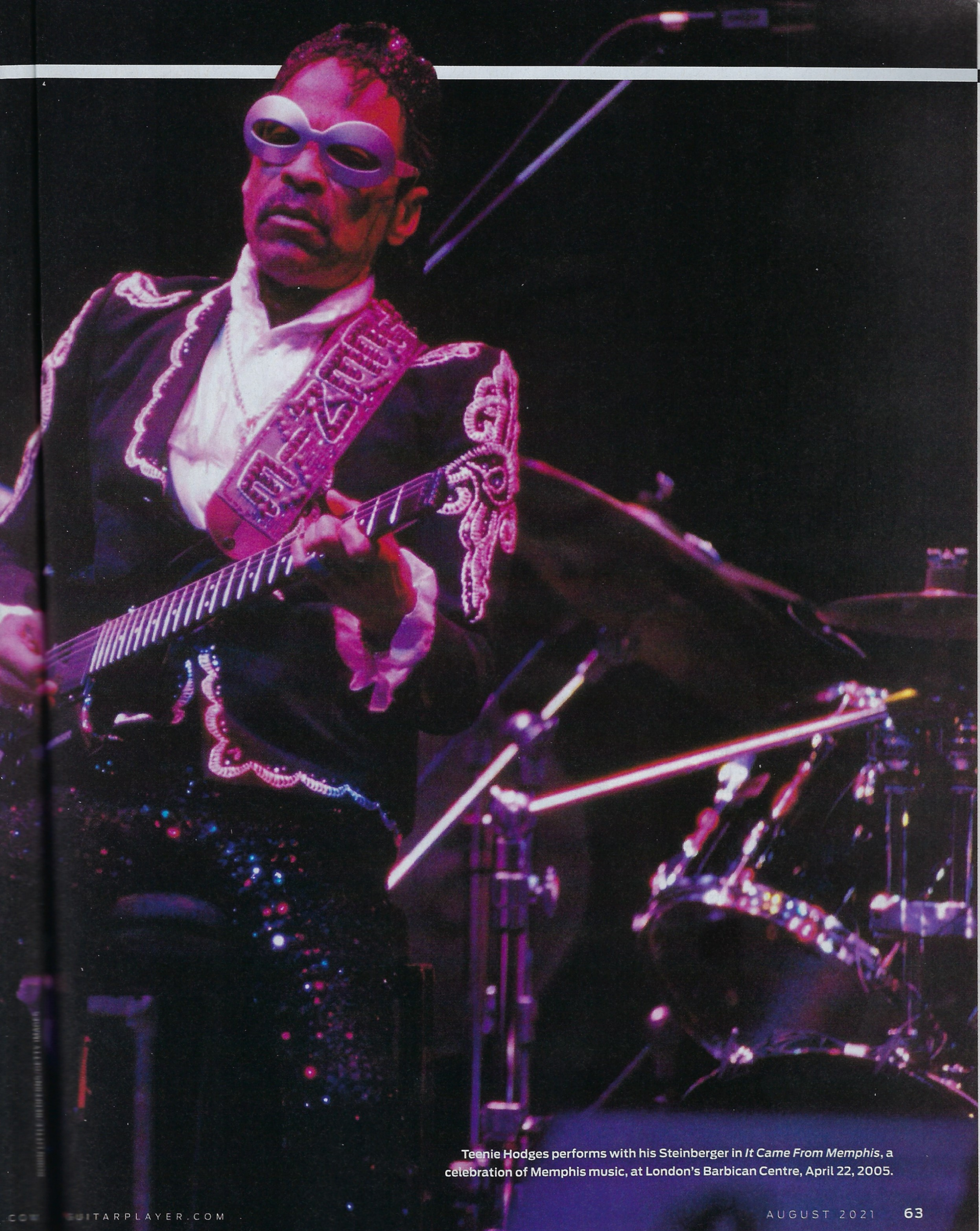
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HI & MIGHTY

As the guitarist for Al Green, Ann Peebles and other Hi Records acts, **Teenie Hodges** played from the depths of his heart to the heights of heaven.

BY NIKKI O'NEILL





Teenie Hodges performs with his Steinberger in *It Came From Memphis*, a celebration of Memphis music, at London's Barbican Centre, April 22, 2005.

HE INSTINCTIVELY KNEW how to come up with the perfect part for a song. And he had his own way of fingering heavenly and earthy voicings that could pull at the heart strings of Memphis's finest soul singers. Usually the one to count off a take at Royal Studios, he'd tap his foot on a Coca-Cola crate and lead the Hi Rhythm Section into playing so seductively deep in the pocket that we still get hooked 45 years later, willing to follow the band wherever it goes. Mabon "Teenie" Hodges was one of the architects of Memphis soul.

Boo Mitchell, producer, owner of Royal Studios and son of legendary producer-arranger Willie Mitchell, remembers Hodges' unique approach to the guitar. "It was just the way he voiced chords and his fingerings," Mitchell says. "When he was a teen, he spent a lot of time with my Pop, who was a real stickler with how to voice chords to get the most out of them."

Mitchell recalls one particular session. "When we cut Boz Scaggs' *Memphis* album in 2012, Teenie stopped by for a visit. Ray Parker Jr. was there and asked him how he played the licks on [*Al Green's 1973 hit*] 'Here I Am (Come and Take Me)'. So Teenie is sitting with his guitar and his foot on the Coke crate playing the song, and Ray's jaw dropped because he never would've thought to play it like that."

"As a brother, he made me proud. And as a musician, he was one of the greatest of the rhythm players," says Reverend Charles Hodges, organ player with the Hi Rhythm Section. "He had that style, bounce and soul pocket, which he worked on real hard to create as he was growing up."

Martin Shore is a drummer, music educator and director of the 2014 documentary *Take Me to the River*, which portrays Memphis music legends and sidemen passing on their knowledge to younger artists. "Teenie had a way of setting a rhythm and locking into this velvety groove. That's what made Al Green's stuff so definable," he says. "He wasn't the kind of guy who would sit



Performing at the Seventh Annual Ponderosa Stomp, House of Blues, New Orleans, April 29, 2008