

## Lafayette Leake – Big Piano Man (1983)

Written by bluesever

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*A1 Disgusted 4:35 A2 Memories Of Jimmy 4:06 A3 Fog In London 3:56 A4 If You're Not Mine 3:23 A5 Let It All Hang Out 3:39 B1 Midnight Blues 7:18 B2 Lonely Piano 5:06 B3 Left In Misery 4:48 B4 Big Piano Man 2:37* Bass Guitar – Bob Stroger Drums – Odie Payne Guitar – John Littlejohn Piano, Vocals, Written-By – Lafayette Leake Recorded By – Disques Black And Blue S.A.R.L., France

Lafayette Leake played his versatile, expansive Blues piano on many great records in 50s Chicago, adding soulful counterpoint to Howlin' Wolf's rumblings, and sharp phrasing to the spiky West-side sound of Otis Rush. Never a leader in his own right, Lafayette always seemed to know exactly what to add to a tune, and his long partnership with the legendary Willie Dixon is testament to his good taste.

Born in 1917 in Winona MS, Lafayette was playing piano around the Chicago club scene in the late 40s, when he was introduced to bass-player Willie Dixon. When Willie was hired by Leonard Chess as producer, arranger and bass-man for his new studio, Lafayette was invited to sit in on many sessions.

This led to recording credits with Muddy Waters, Wolf, Rice 'Sonny Boy II' Miller, Little Walter, and even Chuck Berry. When Willie fell out with the Chess Brothers in 1956, Lafayette joined him at Lou Toscano's Cobra Records, where he played with emerging West-side talents like Otis Rush and Magic Sam. Lafayette was Willie's right-hand-man on stage as well as in the studio house-band, and in the 60s he was one of the Chicago All-Stars that featured at many Blues Festivals, at home and overseas.

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During the 70s, Lafayette stepped back from the spotlight a little, playing mainly in Chicago clubs, but his reputation and talent meant he was always a welcome guest on special occasions, like Chuck Berry's 1986 Chicago Blues Festival show, and with Willie Dixon at the White House in 1989. Sadly, that was one of Lafayette's last appearances, as diabetes caught up with him in 1990. ---allaboutbluesmusic.com

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