

" WILBERT LONGMIRE BIO"

- Born

7 December 1940

- Born In

Mobile, Mobile County, Alabama, United States

- Died

3 January 2018 (aged 77)

Wilbert Longmire Thomas (1941 - 3 January 2018) was an American rhythm & blues and jazz guitarist.

Longmire was raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, and learned the violin as a child before gravitating to the guitar. The first band he played in was a doo-wop group called The Students. When he was 23, he joined Hammond hero, Hank Marr's combo in the early '60s and later joined the band of another organist, Philly-based Trudy Pitts, playing on two of the latter's LPs for Prestige.

Wilbert Longmire played in the early 1960s in the music scene of Cincinnati. His first recordings were made in 1963 with the Hank Marr Quartet ("The Greasy Spoon", Federal). He worked as a session musician for King Records with Red Prysock and Jack McDuff a.o.. In 1967 he recorded in New York with Trudy Pitts / Bill Carney .

Around 1968 he recorded in Los Angeles his debut album Revolution. The studio band directed by Joe Sample included Gary Barone, George Bohanon, Anthony Ortega, Wilton Fields, Leon Spencer, Larry Gales and Paul Humphrey. In the following years he worked in Gerald Wilson's Big Band and with Rusty Bryant. Born in Mobile, Alabama, Mr. Longmire first came to the attention of many R&B and jazz fans in the late 1970s when he recorded for Bob James' short-lived Tappan Zee label. Enthusiastically recommended to James by another guitarist, George Benson, Longmire recorded three LPs for Tappan Zee between 1978 and 1980. "Sunny Side Up" was his debut, followed by "Champagne," and "With All My Love," the latter two charting in the US R&B chart.

In the late '60s, he did sessions with French violinist Jean-Luc Ponty and west coast arranger, Gerald Wilson. Longmire released his first album in 1969. It was called "Revolution" and was helmed by noted pianist and Jazz Crusaders' member, Joe Sample. He didn't record his next album - "This Side Of Heaven" - until 1976, by which time he was on the indie label, J&M.

After his stint with Tappan Zee, Mr. Longmire fell off the radar for many years. In recent years, his albums for Tappan Zee have been reissued in the UK and Japan. His work can be heard on a forthcoming Cherry Red compilation, 'The Very Best Of Tappan Zee,' released on February 9, which features Mr. Longmire's "Black Is The Color," "Good Morning," "Love's Holiday," and "Take Your Time."

Wilbert Longmire, one of the finer gems mined from Cincinnati's rich vein of great jazz guitarists, began his musical life in the west end of Cincinnati in what he calls a "street corner symphony" - a group of young people who gathered together to sing. His first foray into the world of instrumental music was as a violinist in his school's orchestra.

After several years of studying and performing classical music, Wilbert turned his attention to the guitar. His mother bought his first guitar, a Harmony, for \$86.50 (including amplifier) from Ben's Department Store. He learned to play a couple of songs, figured he had accomplished his goal and then set the guitar down for a while. When a musical group called The Students invited him to play with them, he began to play the guitar again seriously. After doing shows with them at the Motown Revue, he got a taste for the music business and began working with other local players.

Wilbert has released several recordings as a leader and has performed with a wide variety of the great jazz artists of our day, such as Jack McDuff, Billy Eckstine, Lou Rawls, Jimmy Smith, Art Farmer, Herbie Hancock, and Larry Coryell. Wilbert's most recent recording is with organist Hank Marr.

<https://youtu.be/DDwfHscpOTc?si=oHjDZW7P1gjiOWF9>