

one-chord song, "The Beat Goes On," Kessel is reported to have stood up and proclaimed, "Never have so many played so little for so much." He recorded with pop acts such as The Monkees and The Beach Boys and with jazz musicians Sonny Rollins and Art Tatum. Kessel eventually left studio work to concentrate on his jazz career both onstage and on records. Along with solo work, he formed the ensemble Great Guitars with Charlie Byrd and Herb Ellis.

Kessel was rated the No. 1 guitarist in Esquire, Down Beat, and Playboy magazine polls between 1947 and 1960.

From 1961 to 1974 Gibson Guitars manufactured Barney Kessel artist signature guitars in Standard and Custom models.

Kessel, who had been in poor health after suffering a stroke in 1992, died of a brain tumor at his home in San Diego, California, on May 6, 2004, at the age of 80.

MUSIC TO LISTEN TO BARNEY KESSEL BY



Barney Kessel (October 17, 1923 – May 6, 2004) was an American jazz guitarist born in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Noted in particular for his knowledge of chords and inversions and chord-based melodies, he was a member of many prominent jazz groups as well as a "first call" guitarist for studio, film, and television recording sessions. Kessel was a member of the group of session musicians informally known as the Wrecking Crew.

Kessel began his career as a teenager touring with local dance bands. When he was 16, he started playing with the Oklahoma A&M band, Hal Price & the Varsitonians. The band members nicknamed him "Fruitcake" because he practiced up to 16 hours a day.

In the early 1940s he moved to Los Angeles, where for one year he was a member of the Chico Marx big band. He appeared in the film *Jammin' the Blues*, which featured Lester Young. Soon after, he

played in the bands of Charlie Barnet and Artie Shaw. During the day, he worked as a studio musician and at night played jazz in clubs. In 1947 he recorded with Charlie Parker. He worked in Jazz at the Philharmonic and for one year in the early 1950s he was a member of the Oscar Peterson trio. After leaving the trio, he recorded several solo albums for Contemporary. He recorded a series of albums with Ray Brown and Shelly Manne as The Poll Winners because the three of them often won polls conducted by *Metronome* and *DownBeat* magazines. He was the guitarist on the album *Julie Is Her Name* (1955) by Julie London, which includes the standard "Cry Me a River," which sold a million copies and demonstrated Kessel's chordal approach to guitar.

During the 1960s, Kessel worked for Columbia Pictures and was a member of a band of session musicians known as The Wrecking Crew. At one point after a two and a half hour session to record a

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1 Cheerful Little Earful 3:24

2 Makin' Whoopee 3:18

3 My Reverie 2:30

4 Blues For A Playboy 3:58

5 Love Is For The Very Young 2:27

6 Carioca 4:30

7 Mountain Greenery 3:46

8 Indian Summer 4:58

9 Gone With The Wind 2:45

10 Laura 3:23

11 I Love You 3:27

12 Fascinating Rhythm 2:27

Guitar, Arranged By – Barney Kessel

Bass – Buddy Clark (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12), Red Mitchell (tracks: 1, 3 to 8, 10)

Bassoon, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet – Howard Terry (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12)

Clarinet – George W. Smith (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12)

Clarinet, Bass Clarinet – Justin Gordon (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12)

Drums – Shelly Manne (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12)

Flute, Alto Flute, Clarinet – Buddy Collette (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12)

Oboe, English Horn – Jules Jacob (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12)

Piano – André Previn (tracks: 2, 9, 11, 12)

Claude Williamson (tracks: 5, 7, 8, 10)

Jimmy Rowles (tracks: 1, 3, 4 to 9)

All tracks recorded by Contemporary Records at Contemporary's Studio in Los Angeles.

2, 9, 11 & 12 on August 6, 1956.

1, 3, 4 & 6 on October 15, 1956.

5, 7, 8 & 10 on December 4, 1956.

Producer – Lester Koenig

Engineer – Roy DuNann