

# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



An 86-year-old B.B. King thrills a crowd of several hundred people last week at the 32nd annual B.B. King Homecoming in Indianola, Miss.

## Legendary Bluesman Celebrates

### B.B. King performs at homecoming

(AP) — A crescent moon hung over the Mississippi Delta as a legendary bluesman crept onto the stage. He sat in a folding chair, grabbed a guitar, and introduced each member of his band. Then, as if it was needed, he introduced himself.

"I guess you can look at me and tell I'm the old man. My name is B.B. King."

At 86, King may be grayer and slower than he used to be, but there's no questioning his ability to please fans. King performed last Wednesday night at the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola, Miss., built on the site of a cotton gin where he worked as teenager while growing up in the impoverished delta.

Before taking stage, King took time to connect with his younger fans. He brought the W.A. Higgins Rock Ensemble from Clarksdale, a group of children ages 11 to 14, aboard his tour bus for a private

meeting. The setting was intimate. He sat close to the edge of a stage on a grass lawn outside the museum. There were no fixed seats and a crowd stood just inches from the star as he plucked off some tunes. He asked the crowd to sing along with him at times, saying "this one is for the ladies" before playing "Do You Know You Are My Sunshine."

King closed with one of his anthems, "The Thrill is Gone."

For his fans on a hot night in the Mississippi Delta, the thrill was back.

# Ex-Jail Cells Serve as Artist Studios

## Former police precincts now foster creativity

(AP) — For Hugo Navarro, the 5-by-9-foot jail cell that serves as his studio is an admittedly creepy place to immerse himself in his work.

Unlike jailhouse artists who find creative inspiration behind bars, however, the 56-year-old is there by choice. He paints for an arts organization that this year moved into its new home in a former police precinct in Detroit.

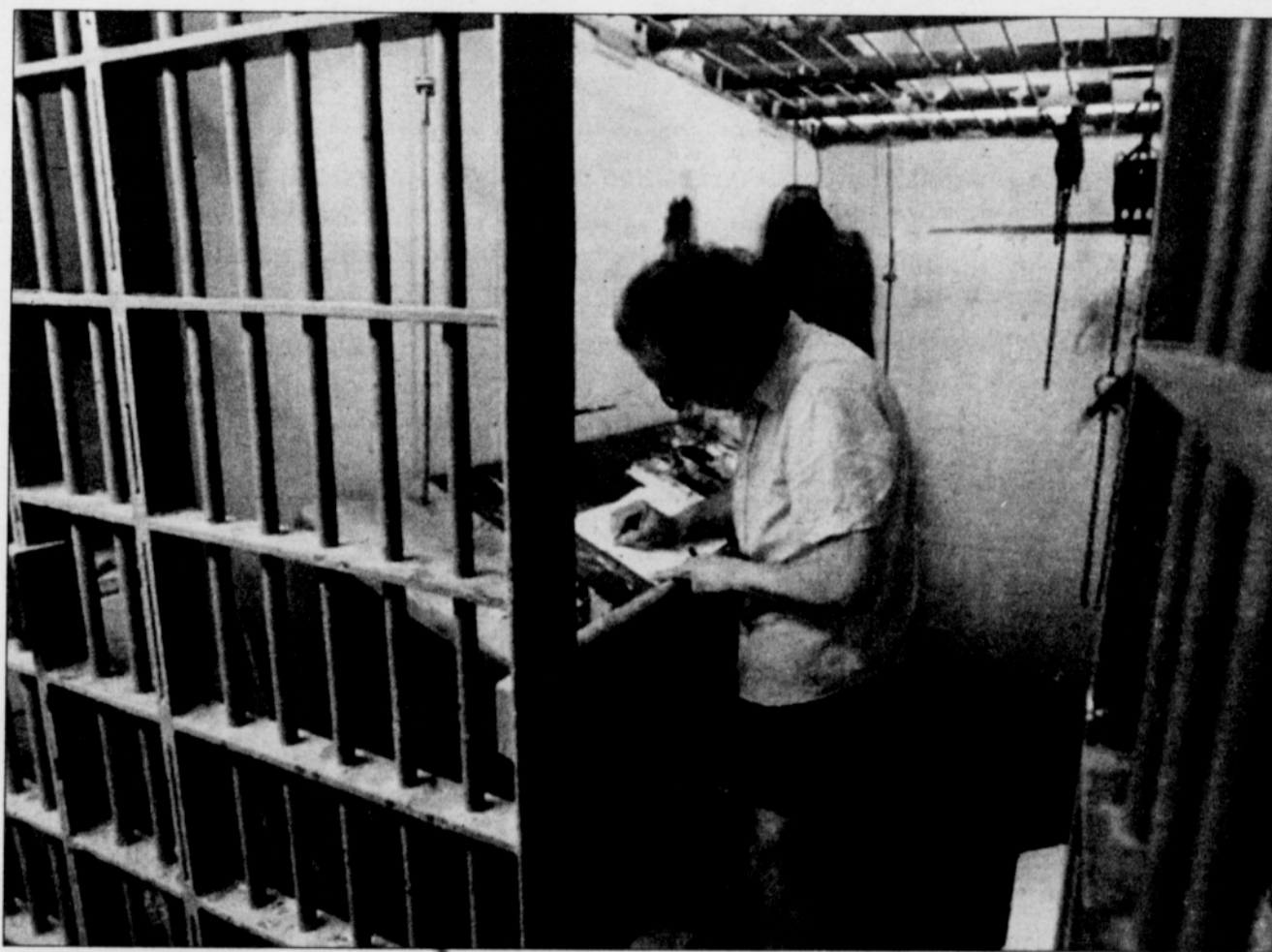
The city closed the building in 2005, and the former lobby where residents once could walk in to report crimes now is an airy gallery. Detectives' offices now serve as classroom and studio space. And potentially claustrophobic cells — bars still on their doors — are fostering creativity.

"I didn't really have anything in mind before going to my jail cell," said Navarro, whose colorful paintings of Detroit's shuttered Michigan Central Depot and fires gutting homes adorn some of the cells near where he's worked for the past few months. "I just let myself go and let my inside do the work."

The Third Precinct renovation is among a handful of projects nationwide converting old police facilities, including one in Chicago that will become a live theater venue and one in Philadelphia that is being converted into homes.

For Carl Goines, the project is a balancing act between preserving parts of the police station's past and making it a welcoming place for artists.

"This is a space that's taking on



a new life. It's a space that's becoming inspirational," said Goines, a sculptor. "It pushes them to take their work to a new level."

In Philadelphia, the former 26th Precinct Police Station, which sat vacant for years, is being renovated with the upper floors as apartments. Much of its history as a neighborhood law enforcement hub was erased by time and earlier reuse, but salvaged architectural details are being recreated to bring back some of its character. Arches in the basement, Barr said, mark where cells once stood.

In Chicago, the Griffin Theatre Company acquired a former police station and plans to start construction in September on the first of two live performance spaces. The building's large cells are too massive to remove, said William Massolia, a founding member, so they'll be used to house a green room, dressing rooms and a box office.

Hugo Navarro paints in a 5-by-9-foot jail cell that serves as his studio. The site was a former police precinct in Detroit.

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