

Mike Miller WHS 1971 – WHS HOD 2025



Mike Miller (May 8, 1953 – January 18, 2025) was an American rock and jazz guitarist.^[1] He worked with [Chick Corea](#), [Bette Midler](#), [Yellowjackets](#),^[1] [Brand X](#), [Burton Cummings](#), [Vinnie Colaiuta](#), [Quincy Jones](#), [Gino Vannelli](#), and [Vital Information](#).

Background

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Miller was born into a musical family in [Sioux Falls, South Dakota](#). He was the third of four bass-playing brothers, performing with his father's jazz band at the age of twelve and in garage bands in his teens. He played bass in the [Sioux Falls Symphony](#).^[2]

Miller died of a heart attack on January 18, 2025, at the age of 71.^[3]

Career

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In 1972, Miller moved to [Colorado](#), where he played with [Larry Coryell](#), [Robben Ford](#), [Bill Frisell](#), [Bruce Fowler](#), [Tom Fowler](#), and [Steve Fowler](#). He recorded the album [Fly On](#) with the band [Air Pocket](#).^{[4][5]} He moved to [Los Angeles](#) in 1975.^[2] In California, he worked with [Max Bennett](#), [Brand X](#), [Bobby Caldwell](#), [Alphonso Johnson](#), [Bennie Maupin](#), [Airtó Moreira](#), [Shawn Phillips](#), and [Tom Scott](#).^[2]

In 1981, Miller began eleven years of working with pop singer [Gino Vannelli](#), touring and recording five albums. In 1983 he wrote "Elamar" for the [Yellowjackets](#) album [Mirage a Trois](#). Three years later he started a trio called [The Outsiders](#), releasing the live album [Band Overboard](#) (1996)^{[2][6][7]} In 1993, Miller joined [Chick Corea](#) for the album [Elektric Band II: Paint the World](#) (1993).^{[7][8][9][10][11]}

In 1990s Miller performed the music of [Frank Zappa](#) as a member of [Banned from Utopia](#) with the [Seattle Symphony](#), the [Portland Symphony](#), and the [Israel Philharmonic Orchestra](#). With the [Royal Philharmonic Orchestra](#) he recorded a guitar concerto by [Joseph Curiale](#) and with the [Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group](#) he was a soloist alongside [Peter Erskine](#) for the album [Blood on the Floor](#) by [Mark-Anthony Turnage](#).^{[2][12][13][14][15]}

At the end of the 1990s, he was involved in scoring [Jessica Yu](#)'s documentaries [Breathing Lessons](#) and [The Living Museum](#). He toured with [Bette Midler](#) and appeared on her album [Bette](#). He also worked with film composer [Mark Mothersbaugh](#) on [The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle](#) (2000) and [The Royal Tenenbaums](#) (2001).^[2] [Marsis Jazz](#) released his first solo album, [Save the Moon](#), in 2001. He was a touring guitarist with [Boz Scaggs](#) since 2014 and has worked with [Brandon Fields](#), [Mitchel Forman](#), [Scott Kinsey](#), [Otmáro Ruíz](#),^[7] and [Queen Latifah](#).

In the early-2000s, Miller played custom-made instruments, some with [Seymour Duncan](#) pickups, as well as a [Martin D-28](#). He used effects made by Danish company [Emma](#) and by [Line 6](#).^{[7][16]}