

Jerry Jeff Walker, "Mr. Bojangles" Songwriter, Dead at 78

NEW YORK 24 October, 2020—Jerry Jeff Walker, the "Mr. Bojangles" songwriter and a pioneer of the "cosmic cowboy" sound that would evolve into outlaw country, has died at 78 after a long battle with throat cancer. Walker's publicist confirmed his death to *Rolling Stone*.

Born Ronald Clyde Crosby in Oneonta, New York, in 1942, Walker made his way south, living for a time in the Florida Keys and in New Orleans, where he took up his stage name. In 1971, he landed in Austin, Texas, and became a fixture of the local music scene. Two years later, Walker released his landmark album *Viva Terlingua!*, a rowdy and ramshackle live concert LP recorded in a dance hall in Luckenbach, Texas. *Viva Terlingua!* – featuring songs like "London Homesick Blues," written by Gary P. Nunn, a member of Walker's Lost Gonzo Band, and Ray Wylie Hubbard's "Up Against the Wall, Redneck Mother" – is regarded as a sacred text of the early outlaw country movement and, particularly, the progressive cosmic sound that preceded it.

"It's still the quintessential Texas album as far as explaining how it all was before *Austin City Limits*," Walker told *Rolling Stone* in 2018. In fact, "London Homesick Blues" would serve as the theme song of the TV concert series for nearly 30 years. ([Rollingstone.com](https://www.rollingstone.com))