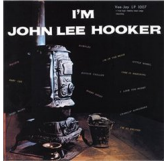


John Lee Hooker - I'm John Lee Hooker (1959)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 10 March 2014 17:08 - Last Updated Tuesday, 09 March 2021 20:25

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01. *Dimples* (2:17) 02. *Hobo Blues* (2:52) 03. *I'm So Excited* (2:57) 04. *I Love You Honey* (2:37) 05. *Boogie Chillun* (2:39) 06. *Little Wheel* (2:41) 07. *I'm in the Mood* (2:42) 08. *Maudie* (2:29) 09. *Crawlin' King Snake* (2:49) 10. *Every Night* (3:04) 11. *Time Is Marching* (3:05) 12. *Baby Lee* (2:59) John Lee Hooker – guitar, vocals

Winding through the literally hundreds of titles in John Lee Hooker's catalog is a daunting task for even the most seasoned and learned blues connoisseur. This is especially true when considering Hooker recorded under more than a dozen aliases for as many labels during the late '40s, '50s, and early '60s. I'm John Lee Hooker was first issued in 1959 during his tenure with Vee Jay and is "the Hook" in his element as well as prime. Although many of these titles were initially cut for Los Angeles-based Modern Records in the early '50s, the recordings heard here are said to best reflect Hooker's often-emulated straight-ahead primitive Detroit and Chicago blues styles. The sessions comprising the original 12-track album -- as well as the four bonus tracks on the 1998 Charly CD reissue -- are taken from six sessions spread over the course of four years (1955-1959). Hooker works both solo -- accompanied only by his own percussive guitar and the solid backbeat of his foot rhythmically pulsating against plywood -- as well as in several different small-combo settings. Unlike the diluted, pop-oriented blues that first came to prominence in the wake of the British Invasion of the early to mid-'60s, the music on this album is infinitely more authentic in presentation. As the track list indicates, I'm John Lee Hooker includes many of his best-known and loved works. From right out of the gate comes the guttural ramble-tamble of "Dimples" in its best-known form. Indeed it can be directly traced to -- and is likewise acknowledged by -- notable purveyors of Brit rock such as Eric Burdon -- who incorporated it into the earliest incarnation of the Animals, the Spencer Davis Group, as well as the decidedly more roots-influenced Duane Allman. Another of Hooker's widely covered signature tunes featured on this volume is "Boogie Chillun." This rendering is arguably the most recognizable in the plethora of versions that have seemingly appeared on every Hooker-related compilation available. Additionally, this version was prominently featured in The Blues Brothers movie as well as countless other films and adverts. Likewise, a seminal solo "Crawlin' King Snake" is included here. The tune became not only a staple of Hooker's, it was also prominently included on the Doors' L.A. Woman album and covered by notable bluesmen Albert King, B.B.

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King, and Big Joe Williams, whose version predates this one by several decades. I'm John Lee Hooker is one of the great blues collections of the post-World War II era. Time has, if anything, only reinforced the significance of the album. It belongs in every blues enthusiast's collection without reservation. ---Lindsay Planer, allmusic.com

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