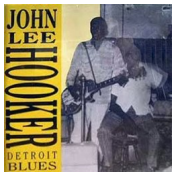
John Lee Hooker – Detroit Blues (1990)



01. House Rent Boogie 02. Wandering Blues 03. Making A Fool Out Of Me 04. Questionnaire Blues 05. Real Gone Gal 06. Squeeze Me Baby 07. Feed Her All Night 08. Gangster Blues 09. Where Did You Stay Last Night 10. My Daddy Was A Jockey 11. Little Boy Blue 12. How Long Must I Be Your Slave 13. Grieving Blues 14. Ground Hog 15. Mean Old Train 16. Catfish play 17. Decoration Day Blues play 18. My Special Friend Blues 19. Nervy Woman Blues
John Lee Hooker - guitar, vocals

John Lee Hooker (1917-2001) is firmly established as one of the true giants of the blues, along with Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and Howlin' Wolf. Hooker is often called the "King of the Boogie" and his driving, rhythmic approach to guitar playing has become an integral element of the blues sound and style. John Lee Hooker was considered something of an anachronism. Except for his thunderous electric guitar, Hooker's one-chord and two-chord modal stylings sounded very much like those of a Delta blues artist from the 1920s. But Hooker's music is altogether more fierce and rhythmic than old Delta blues. Early in his career, he played solo for the most part — his dark, hypnotic voice and relentless foot-stomping his only accompaniment.

John Lee has cut records for seemingly every large and small blues label that's ever existed (and doing so without having to vary his approach). Hooker's music is raw, riveting, and almost doom-struck Mississippi blues that demands much of a listener. His music provides one of the great emotional listening experiences in the blues. John Lee Hooker stands alone as a true creative original, often imitated, but never equaled.

Hooker moved to Detroit in 1943. After becoming a fixture on the Detroit blues club and house party scene, John Lee began recording in 1948, hitting pay dirt on his first try with his recording of "Boogie Chillen." Sounding like absolutely nothing else that was on the radio or the jukeboxes

at that time, its pounding rhythm helped carry that record all the way to Number One on the R&B charts in 1949.

While living in Detroit Hooker's style changed: from the country/rural folk-type blues played primarily on an acoustic guitar, he shifted to a more urban style played on an electric guitar. Part of the change was due to his encounter with Elmer Barber, a local record-store owner. Barber had heard Hooker perform and he made several primitive recordings of the young musician in the makeshift studio located in the back of his store.

Barber's recordings soon found their way to Bernie Besman, owner of a small record label, Sensation Records. It was Besman who suggested that Hooker should switch to electric guitar and include faster-paced material in his gigs at local clubs. Taking this advice, Hooker soon became one of the leading musicians in the Motor City, which at this time was witnessing a booming economy due to the men and women living there who had become wealthy due to the rise in wartime manufacturing.

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