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REVIEW

Music DVD Review: Larry Carlton, Robben Ford, & Autour Du Blues - *The Paris Concert*

Written by [Richard Marcus](#)

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Quick: what places do you associate most with the blues? Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans, and most of the state of Mississippi are what I'm guessing most of you would answer. Historically those would be fine, and I'm sure they're still hotbeds of blues today; but more and more the blues are making a home for itself in Europe. Labels like Germany's Ruf Records boasts a roster of blues musicians that include the likes of Jimmy Vaughn, Omar and The Howlers, the late Jeff Healy, and Sue Folly from North America plus European young guns from England and the continent.

Jazz and blues music have been popular in Europe since the 1920s when African American musicians first started coming to Paris to play and escape the oppressiveness of American racism. In the years after World War Two, blues musicians were touring Europe on a regular basis either independently, or in the late fifties and early sixties as part of the American folk and blues tours that saw performers play concerts across Europe and England. It was in those tours of the early sixties that young British musicians like Eric Burden, Jimmy Page, and Eric Clapton had their first chances to share stages with the men whose records had inspired them to pick up guitars and start singing in the first place.

While the blues in North America has only ever had minimal mainstream success, Europe has not only welcomed North American performers wanting to rejuvenate careers with open arms, but has maintained a thriving domestic scene. From Finland to the former Yugoslavia, blues players and performers have been popping up all over the continent. Just how well established the blues are becomes clear when you watch a DVD like [Larry Carlton, Robben Ford, & Autour Du Blues Paris Concert](#) that's being made available by [MVD Entertainment](#)



While guitarists [Larry Carlton](#) and [Robben Ford](#) are familiar to audiences in North America, the same can't be said for the men and one woman who accompanied them on stage that night at the New Morning night club in Paris. The five guitar players, two keyboardists, harmonica player, bass player and vocalist who made up Autour Du Blues for that night's concert were an all star collection of players from France. While both Carlton and Ford are world renowned players and carry heavyweight reputations onto stage with them, it was soon obvious that the locals didn't look out of place on the same stage.

celebrating New Morning's twenty-fifth anniversary in 2006 and the result is a hundred minute plus concert of great blues music, being played for the sheer fun of playing.

When you get as many as seven guitar players on stage at once it can get awfully crowded and the chances of it turning into a pissing contest seems to be good. Yet, somehow these folk have been able to leave that sort of shit behind and nobody tries to "outgun" anybody when they play. Of course, you hardly ever get all seven on stage at once, but there's always at least three guitars up. While one player (I believe it was Claude Engel, but I'm not sure as it's hard to tell from the photos in the liner notes who is who) was content to handle the majority of the rhythm guitar duties for the night, and occasionally playing a mean slide, everybody else soloed at least once while on stage.

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Richard Marcus is a long-haired Canadian iconoclast who writes reviews and opines on the world as he sees it at [Leap In The Dark](#) and [Epic India Magazine](#).

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