



Title: [Cook With the Hook: Live in 1974](#)

Artist: John Lee Hooker

Label: MVD

Formats: DVD

Release date: June 19, 2012

In the summer of 1974, John Lee Hooker played the small outdoor festival “Down in the Dumps,” so named for its locale—a landfill in Gardner, Massachusetts. The festival was broadcast on a local access station, and the footage (grainy, low-quality 3-angle camera work) has been packaged in a concert DVD, *Cook with the Hook*. The DVD takes its name from Hook’s stage-swaggering mantra. When the emcee asks, “You gonna cook with the hook?” he’s not questioning the audience, he’s warning them of what’s to come: solar flares of electric boogie blues.

The video features the ever-dapper Chicago bluesman against a backdrop of hippie excess. Even Hooker's backing band has the undeniable features of rock's counterculture: long-hair, unkempt clothes, and experimental unrestraint. The contrast is about as jarring as the jumpcut shots of the performance, but to good effect. Both work to frame the dizzying, near-transcendent experience of Hooker's electric melody-making. While a landfill concert seems unbecoming the blues legend, Hooker owns the stage and captivates his audience, proving his music to be just at home at a psychedelic flesh fest as a South Chicago juke-joint. In the extended jam on "Boogie," Hooker tosses his guitar aside and grabs the mic to give a rousing blues sermon. He raps, he dances, and he seduces the crowd into a call and response frenzy. Though we are piped into the concert via local-access fiber-optics, viewers will feel part of the privileged few seeing music history in the making.

Reviewed by Betsy Shepherd

[Share/Bookmark](#)

Review Genre(s): [Blues](#)

[Trackback this post](#)

---

## Calendar

September 2012

**M T W T F S S**

1 2

3 [4](#) 5 6 7 8 9

10 11 12 13 14 15 16

17 18 19 20 21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28 29 30

[« Aug](#)

## Most Recent Posts

- [Welcome to the September 2012 Issue](#)
- [Fatoumata Diawara - Fatou](#)
- [Antibalas's new self-titled release](#)
- [Frank Ocean - Channel Orange](#)
- [Paul Ngozi - The Ghetto](#)
- [Lurrie Bell - The Devil Ain't Got No Music](#)
- [Johnnie Bassett - I Can Make That Happen](#)
- [The Latest Works from Three Fresh Jazz Artists: David White, Dennis Rollins & Jeff Parker](#)
- [Quetzal - Imaginaries](#)
- [Personal Space: Electronic Soul 1974-1984](#)
- [Jimi Hendrix - Jimi Plays Berkeley DVD](#)
- [John Lee Hooker - Cook With The Hook Live in 1974](#)
- [The Supremes at the Copa: Expanded Edition](#)
- [Diana Ross - Live in Central Park](#)