



Interview with Director Bob Boyd / 38th Anniversary of the July 6, 1974 performance by John Lee Hooker

An interview with Bob Boyd, July 6, 2012

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Artist: John Lee Hooker  
DVD Title: Cook With The Hook:  
Live, July 6, 1974

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Produced and Directed by Robert Boyd for  
Boyd Communications this legendary performance by John Lee Hooker was released by Music Video  
Distributors on June 19, 2012.  
Today, Friday, July 6, 2012 is the  
38th Anniversary of the historic performance.

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View the first track from the dvd here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=phbKqyJurDQ>

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#### **Robert Boyd Interview**

Conducted July 6, 2012, the 38th Anniversary of the Taping of the COOK WITH THE HOOK DVD

A Q & A with Producer/Director Bob Boyd

Music Business Monthly: When did you start working at Fitchburg/Gardner Cable TV?

Bob: Late 1973/early 1974...working marketing and sales...my goal was local programming.

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MBM: When did you hear about the John Lee Hooker show / event?

Bob: My friend Dr. Michael Siegel, a communications professor at Fitchburg State College, and Marketing Director for Adams Russel Cable in Fitchburg/Leominster/Gardner...and talk radio host...told me John Lee was coming to town.

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MBM: How did you go about getting the crew together to tape?

Bob: At Cable TV 3 we had a crew of volunteers pulled from Fitchburg State, Wachusette Community College in Gardner and Fort Devens. About 20+ people producing 30 hours of local origination programming a WEEK! Every type of programming you could think of...Call-in talk TV, Music shows, Women's shows, Entertainment. high school sports with our three camera location truck, Boston Bruins training camp every day, election returns and coverage of City Council hearings, Spanish TV..you name it, we tried it.

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Music Business Monthly: When do you think this was first broadcast on television?

Bob: "Cook With The Hook" first was cablecast on my Saturday Night Music/comedy live show. probably a week after we shot the concert.

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MBM:What do you remember about the events leading up to the day of the concert?

Bob: When Mike Siegel and I said to each other, "What a good idea!" We called John Lee's management to ask if we could record the show...phone was passed to John Lee who basically said..."Son, there's not exactly a bunch of people knocking on my door to film me or my shows, come on by."

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MBM: Do you remember anything about the opening acts?

Bob: Coast To Coast Blues band" John Lee's supporting band was tremendous. I actually thing that The Fabulous Rhinestones where there, I was a fan, but can't remember if they played.

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MBM: Do you remember any special events or incidents at the festival?

Bob: This was 1974, outdoors, hot sunny day with about 6000 people...was very "mini-Woodstock" environment...Just alot of happy people to see a blues legend.

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MBM: Did you try to interview John Lee Hooker?

Bob: Wanted to, but he was under a tight schedule with a show in Boston that night...couldn't do it but we did thank him on stage.

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MBM: Did any of the bands do interviews?

Bob: No

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Music Business Monthly: Did you think 38 years later the televised concert would be out worldwide?

Bob: Not in my wildest dreams, who would have known back then? But It's been my treasure over all these years and I am just so pleased we get to share this with everyone. It's all about the great art of a John Lee Hooker and many others like him. Not about the money. ENJOY!

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*Thank you, Robert Boyd, for your visionary work and for taking time out on the 38th Anniversary of this excellent concert to share your thoughts.*

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## **Here are the Press Notes from Music Video Distributors**

On Saturday, July 6, 1974, Mississippi-Delta bluesman John Lee Hooker was one of the star attractions at an all-day festival attended by 6,000 people. The event in the town of Gardner Massachusetts was called "Down in the Dumps" perhaps the first in what was proposed as a series of musical events to be held in the city landfill area. Luckily, very luckily, Hooker's performance was captured on a three camera shoot and broadcast on cable television in local cities and towns.

**Track Listing :** It Serves You Right to Suffer, Sweet Sweet Thing, Boom Boom, Whiskey & Women, Boogie, Encore/Medley

**Run Time :** 45 min

**Hooker's style has always been unique, even among other performers of the real deep blues, few of whom remain with us today. While retaining that foundation he has simultaneously broken new ground musically and commercially.**

**He first recorded in 1948. "Boogie Chillen" became a number one jukebox hit and his first million seller. This was soon followed by an even bigger hit with "I'm In The Mood" and other classic recordings including "Crawling Kingsnake" and "Hobo Blues." Another surge in his career took place with the release of more than 100 songs on Vee Jay Records during the 1950's and 1960's.**

**During the late 1970's and much of the 1980's, Hooker toured the U.S. and Europe steadily. In 1989, The Healer was released to critical acclaim and sales in excess of a million copies. Since then, he continued recording his own albums (Mr. Lucky, Boom Boom, Chill Out, and Don't Look Back for Pointblank / Virgin) and contributed to recordings by B.B. King, Branford Marsalis, Van Morrison, and Big Head Todd and the Monsters and portrayed the title role in Pete Townshend's 1989 epic, The Iron Man.**

His influence on younger generations has been documented on television with features on Showtime and a special edition of the BBC's 'Late Show' as well as appearances on "The Tonight Show" and "Late Night With David Letterman" among many others. John Lee was invited to perform with The Rolling Stones and guest Eric Clapton for their national television broadcast during The Stones' 1989 Steel Wheels tour.

Hooker's 1991 induction into the Rock n' Roll Hall Of Fame was fitting for the man who has influenced countless fans and musicians who have in turn influenced many more. Then, at the age of 80, John Lee Hooker received his third and fourth Grammy Awards, for Best Traditional Blues Recording (Don't Look Back) and for Best Pop Collaboration for the song "Don't Look Back" which Hooker recorded with his long time friend Van Morrison.

**Complete Bio:** <http://www.johnleehooker.com/biography.htm>

**Purchase DVD:** <http://www.seeofsound.com/p.php?s=MVD5302D>

**Hi Res DVD Cover Art:** <http://mvd2b.com/i/300dpi/MVD5302D.jpg>

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## Joe Viglione's Liner Notes

### John Lee Hooker Live

On Saturday, July 6, 1974, Mississippi-Delta bluesman John Lee Hooker was one of the star attractions at an all-day festival attended by 6,000 people. The event in the town of Gardner Massachusetts was called "Down in the Dumps" perhaps the first in what was proposed as a series of musical events to be held in the city landfill area. Luckily, very luckily, Hooker's performance was captured on a three camera shoot and broadcast on cable television in local cities and towns.

Robert Boyd was the Program Director of Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster cable at the time. As public access didn't really hit until 1983 or 1984...Boyd was one of the true early pioneers of the genre...and visionary enough to preserve this important performance by John Lee on videotape.

As with the Jimi Hendrix / Little Richard concert taped by Little Walter DeVenne, and broadcast back in the day on WTBS (now WMBR; M.I.T. college radio) – it is amazing to consider that both John Lee Hooker and Jimi Hendrix were actually broadcast by local media and that these tapes didn't appear sooner in gray-area form. That exclusive concert tapes like this are discovered – and find commercial release authorized by the respective estates that oversee an artist's catalog - is reason for hope that more such concerts will surface from a variety of artists.

**Those who appreciate John Lee know his story – as found on [JohnLeeHooker.com](http://JohnLeeHooker.com) – that the guitar legend was born near Clarksdale, Mississippi in 1917, moved to Detroit in the early 1940s and hit with the million-seller “Boogie Chillun” in 1948. Kids today might think of Jim Morrison when they hear “Crawling King Snake” – and that's a beautiful thing. John Lee was one of the few outside artists to author a song recorded by Krieger/Manzarek/Densmore and Morrison, the quartet usually writing their own original material with only Van Morrison, John Lee Hooker and a handful of others finding a composition of theirs included in to the repertoire of the band that would indulge in the pure pop of “Hello, I Love You” (with its acknowledgment to Ray Davies, of course!)**

That the blues could influence a heavily psychedelic/pop band like The Doors – and bring John Lee Hooker to a wider audience when he appeared in 2000 on the Stoned Immaculate tribute album – dueting with Jim Morrison audiotapes a la Natalie Cole singing with Nat King Cole – well – it warms the heart when the original gets to party with one of the iconic rock bands that brought his music greater recognition.

Bruce Gary of The Knack asked Randy California of Spirit to join him and John Lee Hooker for a rendition of Jimi Hendrix's “Red House”, which was included in the rare Variatons On A Theme disc released by the Hal Leonard publishing company. It was multiple performances of Jimi Hendrix playing his own tune with the John Lee Hooker version as well. The tribute CD From Clarksdale To Heaven: Remembering John Lee Hooker also contains this version.

Along with the contemporary tracks that brought our hero to a wider audience, John Lee also made a

recording or recordings which feature Bobby Hebb, the singer of “Sunny” on guitar. That there are more nuggets in the vaults that the world has yet to hear will only add to the legacy!

You can find John Lee Hooker performing with The Rolling Stones and Eric Clapton on YouTube, the new technology bringing his genius to every new generation that wants to enjoy ...and study...the virtuoso guitar master. That the most popular bands on the planet paid tribute to John Lee Hooker is a statement in itself, and makes this recording, a live show from the 1970s, all the more compelling.

Imagine 100 years from now how this essential document can be more than a time capsule. There will - no doubt- be holograms where you can walk inside your DVD as it is playing and experience this tape with images multiplied a dozen or a thousand times, colorized, digitized and who-knows-what. The cameras that captured the original event when it happened didn't know that 38 years later the music and stage craft would be put to DVD. Who knows what enhancements will make this very special show even more special down the road. The key is that the moment was captured and – once published - the delivery systems can further enhance this incredible moment in time.

The Crossroads Concert group put the program together, according to an article that day published in the Gardner News. On the bill were Captain Metro, the Wiley Crawford Band (a veteran of that regional scene), Skyhook, Firewater and Zargut. As the Gardner News article noted, the Fabulous Rhinestones were scheduled to appear but canceled. Director Boyd recalled that John Lee had an additional show scheduled in Boston (or Cambridge) that night after the performance at this mini-festival.

A week later John Lee Hooker would play at Centre Island in Toronto, Canada for “A terrific day of blues” with Roy Buchanan also featuring John Lee Hooker, the Sunnyland Slim Blues Band, Ellen McIlwaine, Diamondback and Michael Hasek

***Special thanks to Steve Marcotte Assistant Editor at  
The Gardner News who retrieved the photo and the story of the event from the July 8,  
1974 edition of that newspaper.***