

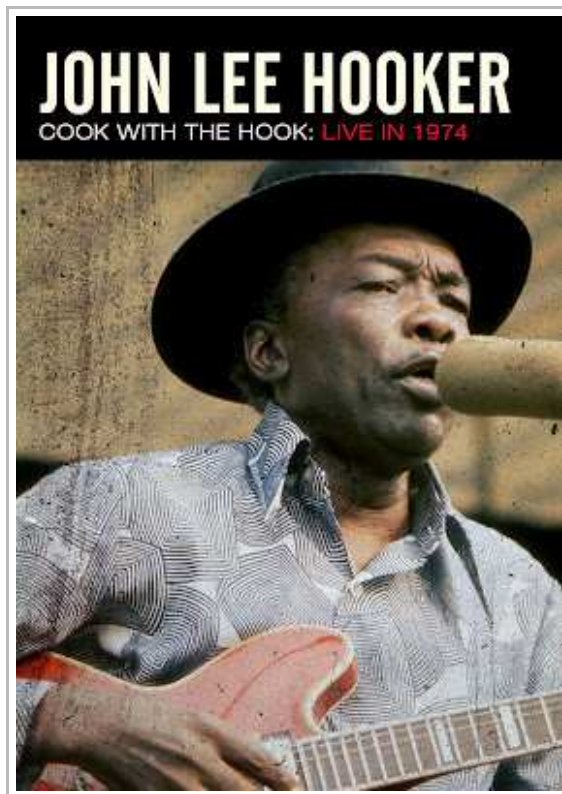
# FFanzeen: Rock'n'Roll Attitude With Integrity

Through the writings and photography of Robert Barry Francos, a view of the arts and culture, including everyday life.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 2012

## DVD Review: \Johnny Winter: Live from Japan; John Lee Hooker: Cook with the Hook Live in 1974

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Images from the Internet



### John Lee Hooker - Cook with the Hook: Live in 1974

Directed by Bob Boyd  
MVD Visual,  
45 minutes, 1974 / 2012  
[MVDvisual.com](http://MVDvisual.com)

Mississippi-Delta Blues musician John Lee Hooker (d. 2001) was one of the bigger influences in the blues rock movement of the '60s, a definite link between, say, Robert Johnson and Eric Clapton. His driving rhythms and vocal intensity was different than many of the other blues players of the time, who were closer to early rock'n'roll than *Sgt. Pepper's* period rock. Hooker's improvisational fierceness and hypnotic repetitions made him the forefront of what would become the Yardbirds (all three incarnations), Cream, and Led Zeppelin, to name a few.

There are a number of items on the checklist that makes this

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### About Me

Robert Barry Francos  
Currently living in Saskatoon (email at RBF55@msn.com for address). From 1977-88, I used to publish a print version of a music magazine in New York called FFanzeen, which dealt with the wide-ranging independent music scene. I also photographed many bands from the period (and since). Now I write this blog, and have a column at jerseybeat (dot) com (slash) quietcorner (dot) html. And the beat goes on.

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document so important, both directly and indirectly to Hooker. Public access television was just becoming a glimmer on the horizon when this was shot on July 6, 1974, during the *Down in the Dumps* music festival in Gardner, Massachusetts. Its faded black and white image (most with a white line going through it, possibly from the playback heads scratching the video as it went through an early tape player (reel-to-reel is my guess, as it was pre-VHS) is reminiscent of early kinescope (look it up). But despite the washed-out jeans look, the sound is solid, if a little on the tinny side (ah, technology and its Faustian bargains...).

Though nearly a decade before the advent of MTV-style quick cuts that would revolutionize the way we view film editing, the line producer here jumps between the three cameras quickly (sometimes too much so) between Hooker from the mostly long-haired and shaggy audience. Way ahead of its time in both video usage *and* use of the fader bars. I wonder if any of the rest of the festival's music will resurface. Fortunately, Hooker's has now, and that is just fine.

Backed by the Coast to Coast Blues Band (who would do so for 30 years), Hooker sits front and center (much like Johnny Winter does now), showing some rock chops with the likes of the great "Boom Boom" and "Sweet, Sweet Thing." There's also some solid Delta blues, of course, with the likes of "It Serves You Right to Suffer" and "Whiskey and Women." For the last number of his set, listed as "Boogie," Hooker stands up and roams the stage a bit. The band plays the same riff over and over while Hooker improvises for over 16 minutes. Honestly, I would rather he would have played some set numbers, because it is just a bit too much of a ramble for that long a period.

After this number, Hooker leaves the stage and a very enthusiastic emcee brings him back, where he actually continues the same number (listed as "Medley" for some reason, rather than "Reprise") for another five minutes.

At the end of the set, the unseen announcer excitedly shouts out, "A man in his fifties! Imagine that! ...And he's doing rock'n'roll!" I heard this in a kind of bemusement as I realize that Johnny Winter, a version of the Who, and even the Zombies are still out there touring into their 60s and 70s. As the camera quickly pans the hippie-ish / stoner-looking audience, it was, indeed, hard to imagine someone of his generation could still give the guitar a hard lickin'. To put it in perspective, when he died at age 83, he was just about to tour Europe.

This DVD comes with an informative sheet with liner notes written by Massachusetts rock and cable television historian Joe Viglione that is worth checking out, as well.

**Set List:**

It Serves You Right to Suffer (Hooker)

Sweet, Sweet Thing

Boom Boom

Whiskey & Women

Boogie

*Encore:*

Medley

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