

# EARL HOOKER

## "Two Bugs And A Roach"

Over 60 Minutes of Classic Blues

1. Two Bugs and a Roach
2. Wah Wah Blues
3. You Don't Love Me
4. Earl Hooker Blues
5. Anna Lee
6. Off The Hook
7. Love Ain't a Plaything
8. You Don't Want Me
9. The Hook
10. New Sweet Black Angel (inst)
11. I'm Going Down the Line
12. Sweet Black Angel
13. Guitar Rag
14. Earl's Boogie Woogie

Total time: 61:52

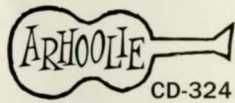
Produced by Chris Strachwitz

All tunes © by Tradition Music Co. - BMI

Cover by Wayne Pope

Photos by Chris Strachwitz

All material previously released on Arhoolie LPs 1044, & 1066.



CD-324

Selections #1, 2, 5, & 7:

Earl Hooker - guitar (and vocals on #5) and talking with Andrew Odom on #1; Geno Skaggs - bass; Joe Willie Perkins - piano & organ; Williams - drums; Fred Roulette - steel guitar; Andrew "B.B. Jr." Odom - vocal on #3; Carey Bell - vocal and harmonica on #7; Louis Myers - harmonica on #5.

Recorded at Sound Studios in Chicago, IL on November 14, 1968. Dave Antler - engineer

#3, 4, 6, 8: Same as above except Levi Warren on drums. Recorded at Sound Studios in Chicago, IL on November 12 and 15, 1968. Dave Antler - engineer

#9 Earl Hooker - guitar and vocals; Louis Myers - harmonica; Geno Skaggs - bass; Steve Miller - piano; Bobby Johnson - drums. Recorded in Berkeley, CA July 18, 1969

#10 Earl Hooker - guitar & vocals; Geno Skaggs - bass; Joe Willie "Pine Top" Perkins - piano; Levi Warren - drums. Recorded in Chicago, IL November 12, 1968

#11, 13, 14 Earl Hooker - guitar & vocals; Joe Willie "Pine Top" Perkins - piano; Willie Nix - drums; Unknown bass. Recorded in Memphis, TN July 15, 1953

#12 Earl Hooker - guitar & vocals; Unknown drums & harmonica. Recorded probably in Memphis, TN 1952

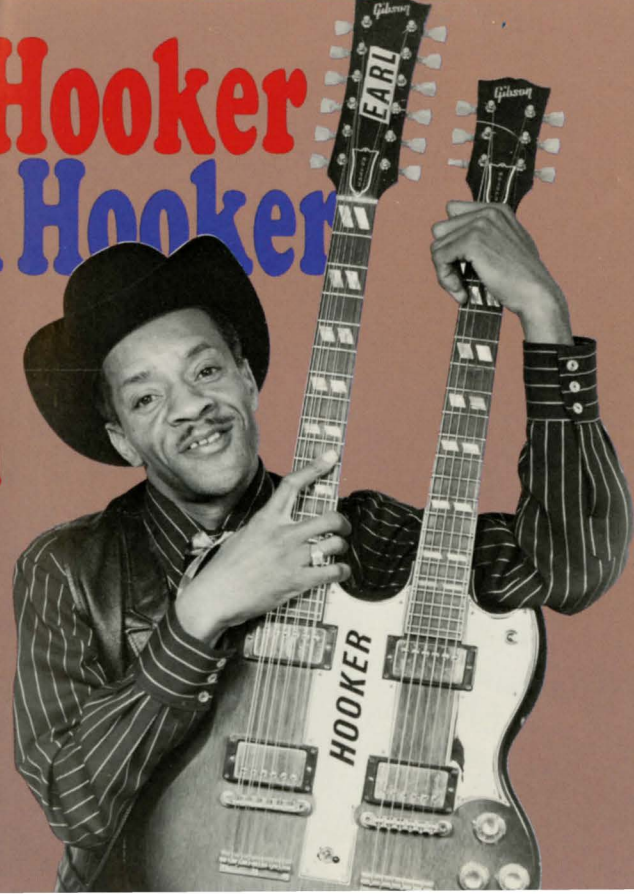
# Earl Hooker Earl Hooker

## Two Bugs & A Roach



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OVER  
**60**  
MINUTES  
OF CLASSIC  
**BLUES**





## Earl Hooker

Born in Clarksdale, Miss. on January 15, 1930, Earl Hooker was raised in Chicago where he arrived in 1931. His parents had worked on farms and were very musical with his mother singing with the Rabbit Foot Minstrels and his father playing harmonica, guitar, and violin. Earl had other musical relatives: John Lee Hooker was his cousin, the late Joe Hinton was a first cousin, and Earl's sister was a fine singer and organist.

Earl said he was a "bad boy" and used to hang out with street gangs until music became his overpowering prime interest. He started playing guitar around 1945 and credited Robert Nighthawk (from whom he learned to play the Mississippi bottleneck or slide style) and the Blevins brothers, Leo and Kinky, as his main teachers in the early

days. He bought his first guitar from Sears & Roebuck Co. for \$1 down and 50¢ per week. Earl spent a lot of time at Robert Nighthawk's music store where he would listen and pick up what he could. Later he branched out and took lessons from other musicians soon making him one of the most versatile guitarists in the blues field. Earl loved to play jazz, country and western, rock and roll and the blues!

Earl Hooker made his first record "Race Track Blues"/"Blue Guitar Blues" for the King label. King's talent scout heard Earl and his trio playing at a night club in Florida and the sides were cut right there in the club. Earl was a popular side man and appeared on many recording sessions backing artists like Junior Wells, Ricky Allen, and Muddy Waters, among others. He also continued to



record on his own, usually instrumentals, and "Blue Guitar" on Age Records was one of his best sellers.

In 1949 Ike Turner needed a guitar player and Earl went with him to Memphis for his first trip back to the South. He met B. B. King, Junior Parker, Bobby Blue Bland, Johnny Ace, Sonny Boy Williamson, and many others. Earl toured with Ike Turner through Mississippi and Florida and remembered: "Back in those days I was playing more guitar than I am now — I was younger and had more pep — I was playing better then — my fingers were much faster — and some of the music they are playing now — well, I was playing it back in 1949!"

After that, Earl traveled all over the country with his own group, doing all the booking and advertising himself, driving in a huge limousine which could carry his whole band!

"I always liked to have my own group — I feel better — I can play what I want — but when you play with somebody else you have to play like they want you to play — I like to do different things on the guitar. I always doubted myself on singing — some people tell me that I sound nice — but I be ashamed of myself the way I sing, but I'm not ashamed of playing music! I started at ten years old — I have never had a job in my life — played music all my life. I like to play rock and roll, jazz, and blues — I like to play a little of everything. I once had a jazz group but we couldn't make no money. Well, so I said I'm going back to play the blues — so I got me a blues group and started to make money again! The older people, they enjoy you playing the blues, but I like any club with lots of people in it — that gives me real soul to play — when I see them people — I get happy

and everything comes out of me."

"I went to Waterloo, Iowa — went to a hillbilly joint where some hillbilly boys were playing — I asked the guy to let me sit in and he said: 'Man, you don't play no rock and roll do you?' I said, 'Well, I can play some rock and roll and I can play some of that stuff you playing too!' So he said, 'If you can play this good old hillbilly music you are welcome to play,' and called me up on the bandstand. Everybody was looking at me — they said this is something they got to dig — a colored guy playing hillbilly music — in a hillbilly joint! I went to play my guitar doing "Walking the Floor Over You" (which Earl recorded on the Cuca label) and some of Hank Williams' songs like "Your Cheating Heart." Now those kind of numbers I can sing — I used to watch Gene Autry and Roy Rogers when I was a kid! The man liked the way I played and told me I was about

the best guitar player to come through there — so I was playing hillbilly music for six months!"

In the late 1960s I happened to ask Buddy Guy to suggest some guitar players in Chicago who should be recorded and he immediately said: "Earl Hooker!" He even gave me Earl's address. When I got to Chicago in November of 1968 I called Earl and he told me to come by that night to hear his band at the White Horse Inn on the South Side. I went and was indeed pleasantly surprised. I am not a musician myself but I know what I like and Earl Hooker really got to me. Not only was I overwhelmed by his incredible guitar playing, (he had impeccable taste and used his instrument to its fullest, his "slide" guitar style was beautiful and clear, his use of the wah wah effect was haunting), I was also impressed by Earl's pleasant singing and his fantastic band! Most of the selections on

this CD/C were recorded in Chicago in the days following. In 1969 we went to Europe for the annual American Folk Blues Festival produced by two German enthusiasts, Horst Lippman and Fritz Rau and Earl Hooker played the finest concert halls in England and on the continent along with Clifton Chenier, Juke Boy Bonner, Alex Moore, and John Jackson.

Unfortunately Earl Hooker was

in ill health during the last few years of his life due to recurring bouts with tuberculosis. He was often in the hospital trying to get rid of the "bug" — the TB bug (which is what "Two bugs and a roach" is all about!). Earl eventually succumbed to the disease and died on April 21, 1970 but left us a legacy of great music.

Chris Strachwitz (1968 & 1990)  
Copy editing by Dix Bruce

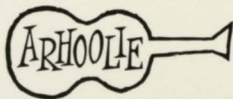
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# EARL HOOKER

## "Two Bugs And A Roach" & His First Recordings



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Over 60 Minutes of Classic **BLUES**

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14. Earl's Boogie Woogie

Total time: 61:52

Earl Hooker – guitar and vocals accompanied by various rhythm sections

All selections previously released on Arhoolie 1044 and 1066.



**E**arl Hooker (1930 - 1970) was born in Mississippi but went to school in Chicago and picked up guitar techniques from the blues greats as well as jazz and country players. A cousin to John Lee Hooker, Earl loved to play guitar — whether it was blues, jazz, country, soul, or R&B didn't matter — he always played with impeccable taste. This recording, with some of Chicago's best side men, came about at the urging of Buddy Guy who told me that he considered Earl Hooker to be a monster guitar player who was admired by every blues guitarist but who at the time had hardly been recorded.

— Chris Strachwitz 1990

#1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, & 14 composed by Earl Hooker.

#3 composed by Andrew Odom and #7 composed by Carey Bell. All selections © by Tradition Music Co. (BMI)

Cover photo by Paul Mark Sands

Cover by Wayne Pope

Produced by Chris Strachwitz

Photos by Chris Strachwitz

COMPACT  
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DIGITAL AUDIO



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