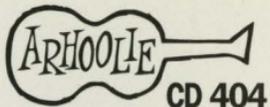


CLIFTON CHENIER

Live! At The Long Beach And
San Francisco Blues Festivals



1. INTRODUCTION and THEME
by The Red Hot Louisiana Band
2. I' VE HAD MY FUN
(Going Down Slow)
3. ZYDECO TWO- STEP
4. CALINDA
5. WHAT'D I SAY?
6. PARTY DOWN
7. I'M COMING HOME
8. PINETOP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE
9. THEY CALL ME CRAZY
10. ZYDECO CHA CHA
11. YOU GONNA MISS ME
12. CALEDONIA
13. NEW ORLEANS BEAT
14. CLIFTON'S ZYDECO
15. LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL
16. ROCK ME
17. LOUISIANA TWO-STEP
18. CHER CATIN
19. I'M THE ZYDECO MAN

Total Time: 74:03

Clifton Chenier - accordion and vocals;
and The Red Hot Louisiana Band:
Cleveland Chenier - rubboard
Robert St. Judy - drums
C.J. Chenier - alto sax
Warren Cesar - trumpet
Sherman Robertson - guitar
Alonzo Johnson Jr. - bass

1 - 12 recorded by KLON at the
Long Beach Blues Festival, 1983.
Never before released.

13 - 19 recorded by Leroy Shyne &
Shyne Sound at the San Francisco
Blues Festival, 1982 (Tom
Mazzolini - producer.) Originally
released on Arhoolie LP/C 1093.

Cover by Wayne Pope
Cover photo by Syndey Bryd

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Clifton Chenier

And the Red Hot Louisiana Band

Live!

At the Long Beach and San Francisco BLUES FESTIVALS



CLIFTON CHENIER – *Live!*

at the Long Beach and San Francisco Blues Festivals

The man who put Louisiana ZYDECO on the musical map of America, was Clifton Chenier, the now legendary and undisputed KING OF ZYDECO. Clifton played an accordion, an instrument hardly ever used in recent times by African Americans unless they happened to be born in the French speaking parishes of southwest Louisiana. Not only could Clifton sing and play the Blues, but he grew up with Creole-Cajun two-steps and waltzes which he mixed with African American syncopation to make the *roux* of his Zydeco gumbo. But Clifton put a lot more into his musical stew: he also loved to play boogie woogie, country, rhythm and blues, and rock and roll at the beer joints, house parties and dance halls where the dancers always wanted something new. I heard

Clifton and his band play nothing but two-steps and waltzes for a Cajun audience one night at a dance in Kaplan, La., and the next night play a six hour non-stop dance for a Black audience in Lake Charles where he kept the dance floor packed by dishing out recent soul music hits, along with Zydeco two-steps, and a lot of Blues. That was back in the early 1960s. Twenty years later, on this recording, you hear Clifton Chenier and his Red Hot Louisiana Band bring you his well seasoned and perfected brand of high energy Zydeco for young and enthusiastic California audiences.

Arhoolie released two earlier "live" recordings by Clifton Chenier: one was recorded at St. Mark's Church Hall in 1971 during a dance attended mainly by French-speak-



photo by Chris Strachwitz

Cleveland Chenier

ing African American expatriates from Louisiana who had moved to California (Arhoolie CD/C 313). The other was recorded in Europe, in Switzerland, at the 1975 Montreux Jazz Festival accompanied by only his rhythm section (Arhoolie CD/C 355). On this, Arhoolie's third "live" Chenier recording, the microphones and tape machines captured Clifton and his full band at their best during the last half decade of his remarkable career. Although ill health was occasionally beginning to sap Clifton's energy in the early 1980s, we had released almost the full set performed at the San Francisco Blues Festival (still available on Arhoolie C-1093) which was one of the best performances I had heard and seen. When I recently received a DAT tape of the Long Beach concert, I was delighted to hear an even better performance! Both recordings are of remark-

ably high technical quality and capture the response of the audience. Unfortunately these concerts also turned out to be Clifton's last great performances to be recorded. After a long illness, Clifton Chenier died on December 12, 1987. He was 62 years old.

Clifton Chenier and his accordion were only one half of a remarkable team. His older brother, Cleveland Chenier, although he did not have Clifton's charisma and singing ability, provided a significant element in the band's unique syncopation. Cleveland had played a custom made "rubboard" (or *froitoir* in French) ever since I first met him in the early 60s but he started on a washboard. This was later replaced by a simple piece of corrugated steel, suspended inside a frame and worn around the neck with a strap. Brother Clifton takes the credit for inventing the rubboard

which is today in general use by most Zydeco bands. One day he drew a picture of what he wanted in the sand showing two collars to put over your shoulders, for a man who then proceeded to manufacture it from a piece of corrugated steel. Cleveland, in his subtle ways, became the master of this instrument and developed its use to perfection and into an art form. Much in the way the 12-string *bajo sexto* became the ideal accompaniment to Mexican accordion music in south Texas, so did the rubboard become the perfect match for African American accordionists. In the early 1960s, during a lull in Clifton's career, Cleveland worked with Lightning Hopkins in Houston accompanying that famous singer and guitarist. Cleveland Chenier died on May 7, 1991 in Lafayette—he would have been 70 on May 10th.

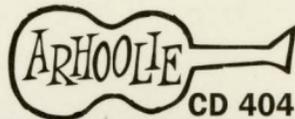
(Chris Strachwitz - 1993)



Clifton Chenier at the San Francisco Blues Festival, 1982, as seen in the Arhoolie Video 401: Clifton Chenier – The King of Zydeco. 55 minutes filmed at S. F. Blues Festival, New Orleans Jazz Festival, plus Louisiana TV clips and more. – Send \$19.98 + \$3.00 postage to ARHOOLIE, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, Ca. 94530 USA

CLIFTON CHENIER

Live! At the Long Beach and San Francisco Blues Festivals



Up to 78 Minutes of Classic ZYDECO

1. INTRODUCTION and THEME by Band
2. I'VE HAD MY FUN (Going Down Slow)
3. ZYDECO TWO-STEP
4. CALINDA
5. WHAT'D I SAY?
6. PARTY DOWN
7. I'M COMING HOME
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– alto sax; Warren Cesar – trumpet; Robert
St. Judy – drums; Sherman Robertson – gui-
tar; Alonzo Johnson, Jr. – bass.

1 - 12 recorded by KLON at the Long
Beach Blues Festival – 1983. (*Never before
released.*)

13 - 19 recorded by Leroy Shyne & Shyne
Sound at the 1982 San Francisco Blues
Festival, Tom Mazzolini - producer.
(Originally available on Arhoolie LP/C 1093.)

Cover photo by Sydney Byrd
Produced by Chris Strachwitz,
Tom Mazzolini, and station KLON.
Cover by Wayne Pope

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