

## **MANCE LIPSCOMB:**

1. STOP TIME (Lipscomb)
2. I AIN'T GOT NOBODY (Williams-Graham)
3. DOWNTOWN BLUES (Lipscomb)
4. SHAKE, SHAKE, MAMA (Lipscomb)
5. THE SINKING OF THE TITANIC  
(God Moves on the Water) (arr. by Lipscomb)
6. TAKE YOUR ARMS FROM AROUND MY  
NECK, SUGAR BABE (Lipscomb)
7. WHEN THE SAINTS GO MARCHING IN  
(arr. by Lipscomb)

## **CLIFTON CHENIER:**

8. INTRO & LOUISIANA SHUFFLE (Chenier)
9. FRENCH ZYDECO (Chenier)
10. CLIFTON'S AFTER HOURS (Chenier)
11. SCRATCH MY BACK (J. Moore)
12. EVERYBODY CALLS ME CRAZY (Chenier)
13. WHAT'D I SAY? (Charles)
14. OLD COUNTRY WALTZ (Chenier)
15. LOUISIANA ROCK (Chenier)
16. CLIFTON'S BOOGIE WOOGIE (Chenier)

## **LIGHTNING HOPKINS:**

17. IF YOU DON'T WANT ME (Hopkins)
18. I FEEL SO GOOD (Broonzy)
19. LAST NIGHT (Hopkins)
20. GOIN' TO LOUISIANA (Mojo Hand) (Hopkins)
21. BLACK CADILLAC (Hopkins)
22. SHORT HAIRED WOMAN (Hopkins)
23. LIGHTNING'S BOOGIE (Hopkins)

**MANCE LIPSCOMB:** vocals & guitar

**CLIFTON CHENIER:** accordion & vocals  
Francis Clay - drums

**LIGHTNING HOPKINS:** vocals & guitar  
Francis Clay - drums

All selections composed by Lipscomb  
and Chenier and most by Hopkins are  
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**Recorded by** Radio station KAL  
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**Edited by** Chris Strachwitz &  
Dan McClosky

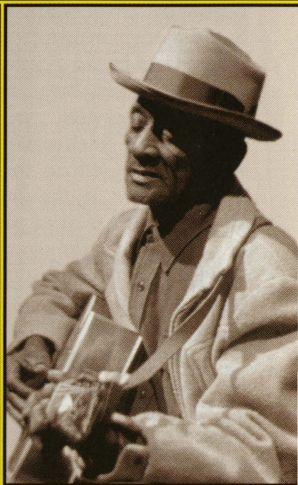
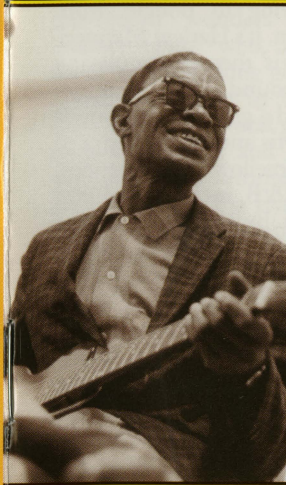
**Produced by** Chris Strachwitz  
The 1966 Berkeley Blues Festival was  
presented & produced by the Pretentious  
Folk Front under the direction of Ed  
Denson & Chris Strachwitz

The 2nd half of the program featured  
Muddy Waters and his band but was  
unfortunately not recorded.

**Graphic Design by** Morgan Dodge  
**Photos:** Hopkins © by Bill Carter,  
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# **CLIFTON CHENIER MANCE LIPSCOMB LIGHTNING HOPKINS**



# **LIVE!**

**At the 1966  
Berkeley Blues Festival**

**Arhoolie** 484



# Clifton Chenier, Mance Lipscomb, & Lightning Hopkins

## LIVE! - at the 1966 Berkeley Blues Festival

By the early 1950s authentic "Down Home" blues were suddenly widely heard on American radio stations. Such programming was primarily aimed at African American audiences but air waves have no boundaries, racial or otherwise, except those set by the physical reach of AM radio waves which depended on the power of the transmitter or on the time of day of the broadcast. All sorts of marvelous music as well as strange advertisements magically appeared on your radio dial no matter what your age, color, sexual orientation, or national origin!

In the late 1940s and early 50s, Hunter Hancock was the afternoon DJ on KFVD in Los Angeles and his program, "Harlem Matinee" reached my white, European ears while attending high school just south of Santa Barbara. The music was called "Rhythm & Blues," and "old H.H."

would begin the program by hollering his spiel which went something like this: "from Swing to Boogie, from Blues to Rhythm, it's Harlem Matinee" with Johnny Otis' theme song playing in the background. The program always presented a great mix of sounds from Johnny Otis and his orchestra to vocal groups, mellow instrumentals, sax honkers, R&B rockers, and real low-down blues. By 1952 I was tuning in almost every afternoon while attending college in the Los Angeles area. My favorites were the blues of Lightning Hopkins, Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf, Elmore James, Sonny Boy Williamson, Fats Domino, and Joe Turner along with some of the R&B cats like Roscoe Gordon and Ruth Brown, and of course the honkers, Big Jay McNeely and Joe Houston. I went to several shows put on by "old H.H." at L.A.'s Olympic

Auditorium and other venues but the real blues singers seldom appeared in person. Many years later I began to realize that they were probably not considered "professional" by the promoters and their following may not have been that great in the L.A. area. Nevertheless the shows were usually fantastic with lots of variety between one-record wonders like "Smilin' Smokey Lynn" who hopped around the stage with a long guitar chord like a kangaroo (soon to be imitated by Chuck Berry) to vocal groups, smooth romantic singers, and usually ending with one of our favorite "honkers" like Joe Houston or Big Jay. Unfortunately Big Jay never did capture on record the dynamics and powerful sound his band produced "live." Except at the Rendezvous Ballroom in Balboa, mine was usually one of the few white faces in the crowd - the rest being mostly brown and black. Since I had no car, fellow student Frank Demond, would often take me along to hear the wonderful old time New Orleans jazz of George Lewis at the Beverly Cavern in L.A.. One time, a Stan Kenton fan at school gave me a ride to the

Rendezvous (a popular beach hang-out) where Big Jay was tearing the place apart with his pounding sax band and solid four-four beat. While most of the crowd, including myself, was furiously hopping up and down and many young couples were doing the "dirty boogie" (until cops moved in and hauled many of them to the paddy wagon) my friend stood stoically on the side-line, unmoved and declared that this noise certainly was not jazz! I usually had to take the bus since I never did find anyone to give me a ride to the Olympic Auditorium in downtown L.A.!

Although I also loved hillbilly music which I heard over stations like XERB and KXLA, I never dared to venture into those areas of Los Angeles where this music was presented and of course none of my friends in school would have been caught dead at such venues. However, Frank Demond, bless his soul, also took me along to the St. Paul Baptist Church from which Rev. J. Earl Hines and his congregation would broadcast every Sunday night giving me a very personal introduction to the power and joy of Gospel music.



By the mid 1950s, after a stint in the US Army, I returned to study at UC Berkeley and started my search for America's vernacular music in earnest. After getting some "lessons" from record producers Bob Geddings and Mr. Jaxson here in Oakland, I finally started Arhoolie Records in 1960. A year later, Barry Olivier, who was organizing the annual Berkeley Folk Festival, contacted me to bring to his festival Texas songster Mance Lipscomb, whose fine old time country blues were introduced to the world via the very first Arhoolie album.

I began to realize that I was not the only white kid who showed an appreciation and love for authentic vernacular singers and musicians. It was soon apparent that thousands of young, primarily white youngsters as well as some older folks around the world were thirsty to hear the real thing. I found out that the world of "folk music" encompassed some of the musics I really liked, but the interest was primarily in the very old styles - musicians from the 20s and 30s, instead of the contemporaries heard on the radio. I knew there were a lot of jazz

fans in Europe and began my label by selling 78 rpm records to European collectors and soon discovered that many were hip to the Blues as well! A few years later, Horst Lippman with the help of German jazz critic Joachim Berendt and promoter Fritz Rau, started the annual American Folk Blues Festival tours which gave blues singers a chance to be heard in Europe. The Rolling Stones were on their way, and soon the blues revival was in full swing!

Here in the US only a few of the better folk festivals were presenting authentic, contemporary American vernacular and regional musicians. Newport finally jumped on the bandwagon but the University of Chicago Folk Festival was one of the very few to stick with the authentic folks. Unfortunately most of the country was soon (no pun intended!) snowed under by white folky acts like the Rooftop Singers, Peter, Paul & Mary, and all the rest during the Hootenanny craze.

Faced by the relatively simple proposition of bringing Mance Lipscomb to Berkeley for Mr. Olivier's UC Folk Festival, I was suddenly

thrown into the role of promoter and agent. Looking back over the years of scouting out regional vernacular musicians, I must confess that meeting and getting to know these remarkable individuals was really just as, if not more, enjoyable than putting their exiting music on tape. Sam Phillips of Sun Records, told me at a recent symposium in Memphis that he felt very envious of me when he heard how I got to hang out and travel with Lightning Hopkins as well as with so many other now-legends of American music.

In 1964, having become acquainted with many festivals and clubs through my travels with Mance Lipscomb and Lightning Hopkins, I decided to produce a concert with the help of a few friends featuring Jimmy Reed and Rev. Gary Davis. Thirty minutes before show-time and no Jimmy Reed! I frantically drove to the California Hotel in Oakland only to find a very sick Jimmy Reed lying on his bed. He had just bitten-off a part of his tongue during an epileptic attack but his agent insisted he would play the job! After a few miserable attempts to sing

and play, Jimmy Reed had to get off the stage, accompanied by much boo-ing. A very young John Hammond Jr. suddenly appeared and offered to fill in. Of course I gratefully accepted although the musicians union had sent a piano player to be present who claimed he could play any type of music, but I did not want to take a chance with him! Rev. Gary Davis was scheduled to finish the show and I had told Bobby Newirth, who had volunteered to act as his guide, to keep the good Rev. away from alcohol. No such luck! The Rev. was totally inebriated and when he finally got on the stage, told endless stories about the Egyptians crossing the great desert! I finally had to go out and whispered in his ear: "please SING"! One song actually resulted, to be followed once again by endless Bible tales! Ralph Gleason (S.F. Chronicle) reviewed the concert as the worst ever put on in Berkeley! One strike however did not keep me down! In 1965 Pat Kilroy and I put together the first Berkeley Blues Festival featuring the Chambers Brothers, Long Gone Miles, Big Mama Thornton, Fred McDowell, the



Johnny Talbot band, with headliner, Chuck Berry. It was a hit, except for Talbot's soul band which couldn't figure out how to get into Chuck Berry's groove! We even made a little money but the Berkeley Community Theatre was expensive. In 1966 I joined with Ed Denson, who was Country Joe's manager and hip to putting on various politically and protest oriented events, and with the help of an amiable student Richard Sanders (now a jazz bassist), we formed a phoney campus organization which we named the Pretentious Folk Front. Being a UC organization gave us access to Harmon Gymnasium at a much better rate!

This disc brings you pretty much all that went on during the long first half of the 2nd annual Berkeley Blues Festival! Mance Lipscomb and Lightning Hopkins had made appearances in the Bay Area in previous years and they were "names" as was of course Muddy Waters and his incredible band with Otis Spann at the piano and James Cotton on harmonica. As you can see from the reviews however (pp. 7-8), it was Clifton Chenier who was the hit and surprise of the

evening. This was indeed Clifton's very first appearance in front of a mostly young, white, relatively sophisticated concert audience. He was nervous and on several occasions forgot what he wanted to play next. Although not well recorded, I feel these cuts are rare examples of Clifton's incredible raw talent and musicianship. Clifton offers an apology before playing Slim Harpo's then current hit "Baby, Scratch My Back" about not having his band and then proceeds to play just about all the parts and instruments on that record with just his accordion and Francis Clay on drums. This was the stripped-down Chenier sound which I heard when I first met him at a beer joint in Houston's French Town. Clifton was a truly amazing singer and accordionist, yes, a blues accordionist, something no one outside of Louisiana had ever heard before. He made some powerful music that night and had the audience absolutely spell bound! During Lightning's performance I can clearly hear in the audience the joyful chuckling of our old friend and host to so many fine musicians, the late Phil Huffman. I also wish to thank the late

Ralph Gleason and Mary Ann Pollard for giving us practical advice about producing concerts. It was fun presenting and MC'ing this program. My friend and partner, Ed Denson, in a phone conversation just the other day, recalled vividly how we somehow handed out those 100 free albums to "lucky ticket holders" and 400 free 45 rpm records which we suppositively dished out to the first 400 customers at the door! It was a crazy scene!

A few years later a student at UC., Joe Garrett followed in our footsteps and produced several outstanding Berkeley Blues Festivals. In 1970 he presented Big Mama Thornton with Bee Houston, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, J.C. Burris, Dave Alexander, Bukka White, K.C. Douglas, L.C. "Good Rockin'" Robinson, Sugar Pie Desanto, etc. At a later festival I recall Joe presenting T-Bone Walker and Robert Pete Williams, among others, also on the UC campus. Shortly thereafter Blues aficionado and DJ, Tom Mazzolini began the San Francisco Blues Festival and has continued to this day to bring the best blues talent to the Bay Area.

Once frowned upon as "alley music," "low class" or worse, the Blues have in the past 40 years become one of the most widely loved and imitated forms of American popular music. None of this dawned on us at the time but I am glad that many of the great legends of the Blues world did have a chance to get heard outside their usual "chitlin' circuit." Today they are almost all gone but they have enriched our lives immeasurably. I know that Mance Lipscomb and Fred McDowell, especially, not only enjoyed meeting new friends but also cherished the fact that their musical legacy and heritage were being passed on to a new generation. Back home in their own communities the blues singer's music and poetry were no longer valued or appreciated except perhaps by a very few. Maybe this new, outside attention will revive or awaken an interest among all young people and help them realize that there is priceless beauty not only in the best of contemporary music but in the older traditions as well.

Chris Strachwitz - October 1999



# Fascinating Blues Display

By **RUSS WILSON**  
Tribune Jazz Writer

They turned the blues every way but loose last night in UC's Harmon Gymnasium, to the appreciative delight of some 2,000 listeners.

Occasion was the second annual Berkeley Blues Festival, which presented a concert by some of America's real folk artists: Muddy Waters and his Chicago Blues Band, Lightning Hopkins, Clifton Chenier, and Mance Lipscomb.

With a few exceptions, the four-hour show consisted of nothing but the blues.

Since the blues is a simple instrumental form, a 12-bar structure utilizing three basic chords, the uninitiated might suppose the program quickly grew tiresome through repetition.

To the contrary, it was a fascinating, kaleidoscopic display of personalized instrumental and vocal timbres and phrasing that not only set each artist apart but also put the stamp of individuality on his separate numbers.

Additionally, and perhaps unintentionally, the program was something of a capsule history of the blues.

Lipscomb, the 71-year-old Texas sharecropper, who neither looks nor sounds his age, drew upon his years along the Brazos for a program laden with country blues. Oddly enough, he also sang a couple of old

pop songs, "Shine On Harvest Moon," and "I Ain't Got Nobody."

His interpretation of "The Sinking of the Titanic," enhanced by use of a bottle neck on the guitar strings, and an Apocalyptic version of "The Saints" were standouts.

Chenier, making his first Bay Area appearance, provided one of the night's highlights with his blend of Cajun music and the blues in an unusual form called Zydeco, which is played on the accordion. Chenier is an adept instrumentalist and the riffs he set up in the bass while playing a solo line in the treble at times sounded like a miniature Basie band.

His swinging output, supported by a drummer, soon had a hundred couples dancing in the space that had been cleared for this.

Hopkins, one of the last of the great blues singers, was in a talkative as well as a songful mood. Much of the time he was speaking, however, he missed the microphone or muffled his words and what he said was largely lost, at least in the back of the gym.

But when he sang he came through loud and clear and his guitar playing was a complete delight. His songs included his famed "Mojo Hand" and a humorous tale involving a girl and a black Cadillac and represented both rural and urban blues....

On the Town

# Amazing Sounds of a Blues Accordion

Ralph J. Gleason

AT ONE point Friday night at the Second Annual Berkeley Blues Festival in Harmon Gym on the UC campus, a man walked with the aid of a cane out on the floor and began to dance. It was that kind of a night and that kind of music.

The blues festival combined country, urban, regional, old and contemporary forms of blues into a fascinating evening that suffered somewhat from awkward programming but was crammed full of goodies nevertheless.

Clifton Chenier, a lanky black-skinned man from Louisiana, really broke up the show playing blues accordion. That's right, blues accordion. He uses an instrument that is attached to a microphone and an amplifier and loudspeaker system and the sounds that he produces are somewhat like larger versions of the harmonica and resemble at times the electric organ.

Chenier played his own versions of several contemporary hits such as "Scratch My Back" and "634-5789" (both on the hit parade these days) as well as a number of other blues compositions including the classic "After Hours." He was accompanied by drummer Francis Clay and his music was the most conducive to dancing that the evening produced. He is a regular one-man band, singing and jiving the audience with a diamond set in a tooth, making his mouth appear to have a miniature star in it when he smiles.

Chenier has never appeared here before. He is, in addition to the blues, an exponent of the "zydeco" music from the cajun French country in Louisiana.

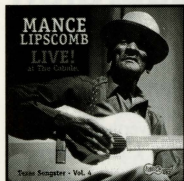
A flashy personality, he is nevertheless one of the most surprising musicians I have heard in some time, with a marvelously moving style of playing the accordion in which he combines a strong rhythmic drive with interesting harmonies and runs....

Earlier, Lightning Hopkins and Mance Lipscomb, both guitarists and both blues singers, performed. By now Lipscomb and Hopkins have appeared here numerous times. I have never heard Hopkins sound as forceful and effective as he did Friday night, his voice dark with tragedy and his guitar evoking strange and almost mystical sounds during the accompaniment. Hopkins has now worked out a little vignette of story-line to introduce each tune, which is really a drag and quite pretentious. As he was about to sing a blues with the line "Don't the moon look lonesome shinin' through the trees" he told a story about a girl he loved and how "I made this song" concerning her. But he sang very well indeed and one can forgive the make believe context because of the hard reality with which he sings his songs....

It was a fine evening and I welcome the prospect of its really becoming a yearly event. It is highly educational and culturally invaluable.



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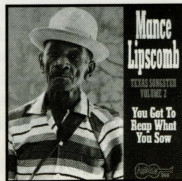
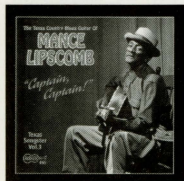
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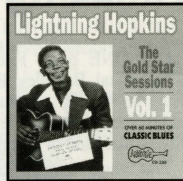
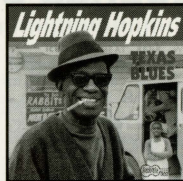
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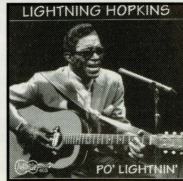
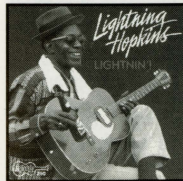
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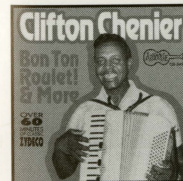
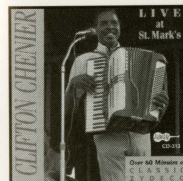
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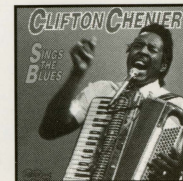
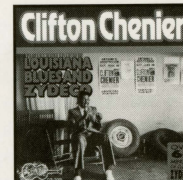
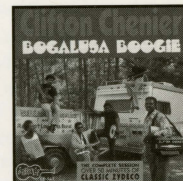
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# Clifton Chenier, Mance Lipscomb, Lightning Hopkins

**LIVE!** - at the 1966 Berkeley Blues Festival



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vocals & guitar

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