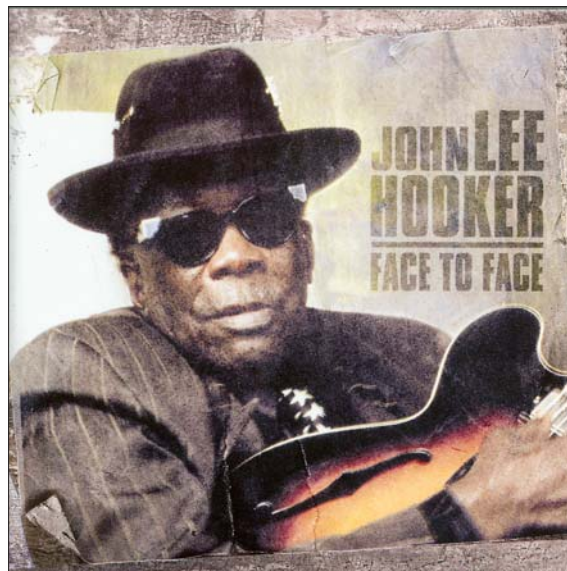


Pat St. John

Blues

John Lee Hooker *Face To Face*
Eagle Records ER 20023-2



WHAT A WONDERFUL GIFT John Lee Hooker has just given us, nearly four years now after his passing at the age of 83. It never really occurred to me that we might actually receive the album he was working on when he left us.

But all of sudden an event has occurred, John Lee Hooker is alive and well with a brand-new one called *Face To Face*. Unlike other posthumous records where others finish it and it just doesn't quite sound the way it should have, I do believe he'd have been very proud of this one. Both the editor and I actually hear this as *the* album of his career. With heaps of help from his daughter Zakia, and front-line musicians including Johnny Winter, George Thorogood, Van Morrison, Roy Rogers, Dickey Betts, Warren Haynes, Jack Cassidy, Elvin Bishop, and piano legend Johnnie Johnson (who *were* working with him on it), this album is first and foremost, pure John Lee Hooker. Better yet, and again in the opinion of both the editor and me, this is Hooker's best album *ever*. I wouldn't have believed it possible.

You might as well be prepared for the shortest review I've yet written; my editor will be disappointed as he'll have fewer places to jump in & comment, yet that's too bad,

Editor Gene, go ahead and sell the next page.

Favorites here are "Funky Mabel" and "Stop Jivin' Me," but his re-do's of "Dimples" (with Van) and even his classic "Boogie Chillen'" as well, are just rockin', full-tilt boogie. The whole 69:51 length CD doesn't disappoint once, not even on one song. Clear as a bell, John Lee is at the top of his craft, when in fact he was not in the prime of health. You'd never suspect it from this recording. He did want this album made though, and God bless him, he did it. From the happiness and joy, his love of great music, and the mellower tunes which deliver emotions yet describable, this is like hearing "Boom Boom" for the first time (or the hundredth time), it really is just that good.

Buy this album. On cut three, when he sings "I want to tell you something about my life", I'm listening. When he sings "Loving People' keeps me happy", I'm filled with optimism, when the CD is finished, I've been entertained and satisfied for an hour, ten.

It's blues at its best, from a master, who has given us the gift of a masterpiece. Thank You, John Lee Hooker! You're a generous man! You just passed on to us your best recording.

Pat St. John now broadcasts Monday thru Friday from 6:00 PM to Mid ET nationally on *Sirius Blues*, and has been named as Format Manager of the channel as well. Subscribe to Sirius Satellite Radio and you'll have the coolest commercial free Blues Station your town has ever not had. www.Sirius.com, www.PatStJohn.com.