



# WHITE, BLACK & BLUES

A Feature-Length Documentary Film by John Anderson

It was 1960, and Chicago, like the rest of America, was changing fast. Besides playing a key role in the country's economic expansion, the city, over the last ten years, had become the acknowledged blues capital of the world, with dozens of record companies and a thriving club scene on the south and west sides.

It was in these tough neighborhoods that the original blues masters shared their art and earned their livings. Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Little Walter and James Cotton were just a few of the hundreds of artists on the scene, drawn from the South by the promise of high-paying gigs and the chance to record for Chess Records.

They were singers, guitarists, songwriters, harmonica players, and keyboardists, with varied styles but one thing in common – they were black.

Little did these blues pioneers know that they were inspiring young musicians everywhere. In the UK, the seeds of what would surface three years later as The British Invasion were being sown in future members of The Yardbirds, The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, The Kinks, The Animals, The Who, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, and many other groups, who waited eagerly at the docks for the arrival of the latest recordings by their idols and mentors.

Closer to home, these blues giants were having just as profound an effect on a small group of young Chicago musicians. Led by Nick Gravenites, teenagers Paul Butterfield, Michael Bloomfield, Charlie Musselwhite, Barry Goldberg, Harvey Mandel, Corky Siegel, Steve Miller, and Elvin Bishop were drawn to the raw, emotional music being created in their own backyard.

They, too, were singers, guitarists, songwriters, harmonica players, and keyboardists, with varied styles but one thing in common – they were white.

Combining a love of the blues with sheer will and musical talent, they earned their places in the blues community, performing with and learning from every major blues artist on the scene. Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and others took them under their wings and treated them like sons.

Within the decade, they would go on to their own greatness, pioneering the blues-rock explosion of the late 1960s. As key contributors to The Paul Butterfield Blues Band, Charlie Musselwhite's South Side Band, Siegel-Schwall, The Electric Flag, Canned Heat, John Lee Hooker, Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan, The Rolling Stones, Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels, and The Steve Miller Band, their work would in turn impact artists ranging from Cream to The Boston Pops Orchestra, from Leonard Cohen to Led Zeppelin, Tom Waits, The Ramones, Bonnie Raitt, Pearl Jam, and Jack White.

**This is their story.**

*Featuring new performances by Chicago Blues Reunion (Gravenites, Goldberg, Mandel and Siegel), Steve Miller, Charlie Musselwhite, Sam Lay, Marcy Levy, and Dave Mason, and special appearances by B.B. King, Buddy Guy, Marshall Chess, and Jack White.*

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