



# THE BLUES™

**SNAPPER MUSIC is delighted to announce that Martin Scorsese's eagerly anticipated film series, [The Blues](#), will have its UK theatrical opening at The Other Cinema, Rupert Street, London W1 and the Arts Picturehouse in Cambridge on 30th January 2004.**

**From 6<sup>th</sup> February the series will play at the Ritzy Brixton before moving on to the Manchester Cornerhouse, Bristol Watershed and Sheffield Showroom. In addition, the NFT is planning to screen [The Blues](#) in March.**

**Additional dates and venues are to be announced.**

[The Blues](#), executive produced by legendary director Martin Scorsese, is a seven-film series of personal and impressionistic feature length films viewed through the lens of seven world-famous directors who share a passion for the music. In addition to Scorsese's film, Charles Burnett, Clint Eastwood, Mike Figgis, Marc Levin, Richard Pearce and Wim Wenders each capture the essence of blues music and delve into its global influence – from its roots in Africa to its continued inspiration for today's top artists.

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## INTRODUCTION

**The Blues** is the culmination of a great ambition for Scorsese - to honour the music he loves, to preserve its legacy and to work closely with talented feature film directors united in their desire to celebrate this art.

"The blues is at once American and worldly," says Scorsese, who began work on the project six years ago. "It's a form of storytelling that is so universal that it has inspired people beyond our borders and continues to influence music here and abroad. We're hopeful that the series and The Year Of the Blues will introduce new audiences worldwide to this music and also inspire kids, whether they like rock or hip hop, to better understand the struggles and genius that gave birth to the music they listen to today.

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[www.snappermusic.com/theblues](http://www.snappermusic.com/theblues)

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## SYNOPSIS

The Blues is a chance to celebrate one of the last truly indigenous American art forms, before it all disappears, swallowed whole by the rock and roll generation it spawned. Hopefully we'll get there before it's too late." – Richard Pearce

Under the guiding hand of Martin Scorsese, The Blues is a series of seven personal and impressionistic films viewed through the lens of seven-world famous directors who share a passion for the music. The films, by Scorsese, Mike Figgis, Wim Wenders Clint Eastwood, Charles Burnett, Marc Levin and Richard Pearce, capture the essence of blues music and delve into its global influence - from roots in Africa to its inspirational role in today's music.

### **FEEL LIKE GOING HOME - A Film By Martin Scorsese**

Director Martin Scorsese (The Last Waltz, Raging Bull, Gangs of New York) winds his way from the banks of the Niger River in Mali to the cotton fields and juke joints of the Mississippi Delta to trace the origins of the blues in a lyrical combination of original performances (including Willie King, Taj Mahal, Otha Turner, and Ali Farka Toure) and rare archival footage (featuring Son House, Muddy Waters, and John Lee Hooker).

## **RED, WHITE & BLUES - A Film By Mike Figgis**

Director Mike Figgis (Stormy Monday, Leaving Las Vegas, Time Code) joins musicians such as Van Morrison, Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, John Mayall, Lonnie Donegan and Tom Jones, performing and talking about the British blues boom from the late 1950's onwards. A thoughtful and musically uplifting analysis of the influence of the blues on British musicians and the re-export of the music to America.

## **THE SOUL OF A MAN - A Film By Wim Wenders**

Director Wim Wenders (Buena Vista Social Club; Wings of Desire; Paris, Texas) explores the lives of his favorite blues artists - Skip James, Blind Willie Johnson, and J. B. Lenoir - in a film that is part history and part personal pilgrimage. The film tells the story of these artists' lives in music through a fictional film-within-a-film, rare archival footage, and covers of their songs by contemporary musicians, including Bonnie Raitt, Lucinda Williams, Lou Reed, Eagle Eye Cherry, Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds, The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Cassandra Wilson, Los Lobos, and others.

"These songs meant the world to me. I felt there was more truth in them than in any book I had read about America, or in any movie I had ever seen. I've tried to describe, more like a poem than in a 'documentary,' what moved me so much in their songs and voices." - Wim Wenders

"For those of us who love the blues, this is a gift from the God of Blues himself" -  
Hollywood Reporter

### **PIANO BLUES - A Film By Clint Eastwood**

Director - and piano player - Clint Eastwood (Play Misty for Me, Bird, Unforgiven) explores his life-long passion for piano blues, using a treasure trove of rare historical footage in addition to interviews and performances by such living legends as Ray Charles, Pinetop Perkins and Jay McShann, as well as Dave Brubeck and Marcia Ball. "The blues has always been part of my musical life and the piano has a special place, beginning when my mother brought home all of Fats Waller's records. Also, the music has always played a part in my movies. A piano blues documentary gives me a chance to make a film that is more directly connected to the subject of the music than the features that I have been doing throughout my career." - Clint Eastwood

### **THE ROAD TO MEMPHIS-A Film By Richard Pearce And Robert Kenner**

Director Richard Pearce (The Long Walk Home, Leap of Faith, A Family Thing) traces the musical odyssey of blues legend B.B. King in a film that pays tribute to the city that gave birth to a new style of blues. Pearce's homage to Memphis features original performances by B.B. King, Bobby Rush, Rosco Gordon and Ike Turner, as well as historical footage of Howlin' Wolf and Rufus Thomas.

### **WARMING BY THE DEVIL'S FIRE - A Film By Charles Burnett**

Director Charles Burnett (Killer of Sheep, My Brother's Wedding, To Sleep with Anger) presents a tale about a young boy's encounter with his family in Mississippi in the 1950s, and intergenerational tensions between the heavenly strains of gospel and the devilish moans of the blues. Including performances by Big Bill Broonzy, Willie Dixon, Lightnin' Hopkins, Son House, Mississippi John Hurt, Bessie Smith, Dinah Washington, Muddy Waters & Sonny Boy Williamson.

### **GODFATHERS AND SONS - A Film By Marc Levin**

Director Marc Levin (Slam, Whiteboys, Brooklyn Babylon) travels to Chicago with hip-hop legend Chuck D (of Public Enemy) and Marshall Chess (son of Leonard Chess and heir to the Chess Records legacy) to explore the heyday of Chicago blues, as they unite to produce an album that brings veteran blues players together with contemporary hip hop musicians. Along with never-before-seen archival footage of Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, are original performances by Koko Taylor, Otis Rush, Magic Slim, Ike Turner and Sam Lay.