

# MARCIA BALL

*"Rollicking, playful, good time blues and intimate, reflective balladry...her songs ring with emotional depth."* - **Rolling Stone**



**\*2014 Blues Music Awards Nominee – Pinetop Perkins Piano Player of the Year. Marcia's 16th nomination** in this category which she's won **5 times** in the past 9 years. Also a two-time winner in the best Contemporary Blues – Female Artist category. Marcia has also won Blues Music Awards for best Contemporary Blues Album of the Year for her CDs ***So Many Rivers*** and ***Presumed Innocent***

**\*2013 Living Blues Award Winner – Most Outstanding Musician (Keyboard)**

**\*2012 GRAMMY Nominee** for her latest album ***Roadside Attractions*** (**Best Blues Album**), her **fifth GRAMMY nomination** overall and a very impressive **fourth CD in a row** of hers to be nominated, following ***Peace, Love & BBQ*** (2008), ***Live! Down The Road*** (2005) and ***So Many Rivers*** (2003), plus an earlier nomination for ***Sing It!*** (1998) with **Irma Thomas** and **Tracy Nelson**

**\*2013 DownBeat Critics Poll – ranked among the Best Blues Artist or Group**

**\*Louisiana Music Hall Of Fame Inductee** (April 22, 2012)

**\*2012 Living Blues Award Winner - Blues Artist of the Year (Female), Most Outstanding Musician (Keyboard) and Best Blues Album of 2011 (New Release)** for her CD, ***Roadside Attractions***

**\*2011 Living Blues Award Winner** for both **Blues Artist of the Year (Female)** and **Most Outstanding Musician (Keyboard)**

**\*Gulf Coast Music Hall Of Fame Inductee** (2010)

**\*Winner of two 2009 Living Blues Readers' Poll Awards** for **Blues Artist of the Year (Female)** and **Most Outstanding Musician (Keyboard)**, adding to her wins in the category in 2007 and 2008

**\**Peace, Love & BBQ* debuted at #1 in the Billboard Blues Charts** (April 2008)

**\*Featured in the films *Angels Sing* (2013) starring Harry Connick Jr. and Willie Nelson, and *Piano Blues* (2003 - directed by Clint Eastwood)**

**\*Television appearances on *Austin City Limits*, *Late Show With David Letterman*, *Today Show*, *CNN*, *AXS TV* and *Mountain Stage* (PBS)**

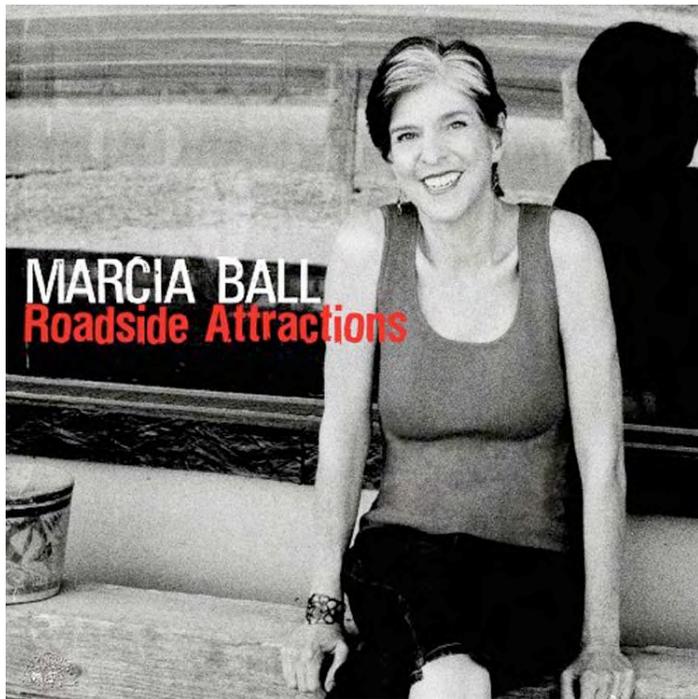
**\*Featured on *In Performance At The White House* with *B.B. King* and *Della Reese*, broadcast on PBS** (1999)

**\*Performances on NPR's *A Prairie Home Companion*, *World Café* and *Whad'Ya Know?*, as well as Public Radio International's *Studio 360* and the nationally syndicated *Mitch Albom Show***

Singer/pianist Marcia Ball knows how to raise roofs and tear down walls with her infectious, intelligent and deeply emotional brand of southern boogie, rollicking, roadhouse blues and heartfelt ballads. Over the course of her three-decade career, Ball has earned a huge and intensely loyal following all over the world. Her exquisite piano playing and passionate, playful vocals fuse New Orleans and Gulf Coast R&B with Austin's deep songwriting tradition into a sound **No Depression** described as "*a little rock, a lot of roll, a pinch of rhythm and a handful of blues.*"

**THE ROSEBUD AGENCY**

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## Roadside Attractions

Alligator Records

"Based in Austin and steeped in New Orleans, Marcia Ball plumbs the richness of both musical meccas. From rootsy swamp pop and blues-drenched boogie woogie to languid ballads, Ball is equally comfortable with brash roadhouse romps and caressing love songs."

- *USA Today*

**MARCIA BALL IS A WOMAN WITH A REPUTATION.** The Texas-born, Louisiana-raised pianist / vocalist / songwriter is famed worldwide for igniting a full-scale roadhouse rhythm and blues party every time she strolls on stage. Ball's groove-laden New Orleans boogie and rollicking Gulf Coast blues have made her a one-of-a-kind favorite with music fans all over the world. But she's also a master at transfixing her audience with an emotionally rich, passionately sung ballad. *The Boston Herald* says, "Ball plays masterful, red hot tracks from the Texas-Louisiana border. Her voice can break your heart with a ballad or break your back with a rocker." On her new CD, *Roadside Attractions* (her 15th solo recording), Ball's songwriting is at the forefront, ranging from tales of wild parties to stories of twisted motel affairs to declarations of the enduring power of love and family. It is inspired by her years on the road and from insights gained from everyday life, making it her most autobiographical album. *Roadside Attractions* is certainly more than capable of starting a no-holds-barred bash. But endless talent, and among the most emotionally moving recordings she has ever made.

Recorded by famed songwriter, musician and producer **Gary Nicholson (Delbert McClinton, Wynonna Judd, T. Graham Brown)**, *Roadside Attractions* finds Marcia Ball at a creative peak. Ball wrote or co-wrote every song - something she had never done over the course of her forty-year career.

Throughout the proceedings, her stellar musicians add power and nuance to the music, perfectly complementing Ball's expert piano playing, slice-of-life lyrics and melodic, storytelling vocals.

According to Ball the new CD is the one she was born to make. "*Roadside Attractions* is my most personal album yet. It's full of short stories and tall tales. Not every word is true, but close enough. The songs reflect forty years of travel and a lifetime of experiences. Writing with Gary Nicholson, **Dan Penn** and **Tom Hambridge** was a thrill I've waited a long time for. So off we go, touring the cosmos, weaving and lurching, distracted by every concrete dinosaur and giant strawberry along the way. It's a great life set to music."

Ball's musical life with the Alligator Records family began in 2001 (She also joined the roster of the influential Rosebud booking agency that same year) with the release of the critically acclaimed *Presumed Innocent*. The CD took home the 2002 Blues Music Award for Blues Album Of The Year. Her follow-up, *So Many Rivers*, was nominated for a Grammy Award, and won the 2004 Blues Music Award for Contemporary Blues Album Of The Year as well as the coveted Contemporary Blues Female Artist Of The Year award. Her next release, *Live! Down The Road*, released in 2005, also garnered a Grammy nomination, as did 2008's *Peace, Love & BBQ* (the album debuted at #1 on the *Billboard* Blues Chart). In 2005, 2006,

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2007 and 2009, the Blues Music Awards honored Ball as the Pinetop Perkins Piano Player Of The Year. In addition she won two *Living Blues* Awards in 2009. In 2010 she was inducted into the Gulf Coast Music Hall Of Fame.

Born in Orange, Texas in 1949 to a family whose female members all played piano, Ball grew up in the small town of Vinton, Louisiana, right across the border from Texas. She began taking piano lessons at age five, playing old Tin Pan Alley tunes from her grandmother's collection. From her aunt, Marcia heard more modern and popular music. But it wasn't until she was 13 that Marcia discovered the power of soul music. One day in 1962, she sat amazed while **Irma Thomas** delivered the most spirited performance the young teenager had ever seen. According to Ball, "She just blew my own band, the first stuff I was doing was Irma's." In 1966, she attended Louisiana State University, where she played some of her very first gigs with a blues-based rock band called **Gum**.

In 1970, Ball set out for San Francisco. Her car broke down in Austin, and while waiting for repairs she fell in love with the city and decided to stay. It wasn't long before she was performing in the city's clubs with a progressive country band called **Freda And The Firedogs**, while beginning to perfect her songwriting skills. It was around this time that she delved deeply into the music of the great New Orleans piano players, especially Professor Longhair. "Once I found out about **Professor Longhair**," recalls Ball, "I knew I had found my direction."

When the band broke up in 1974, Marcia launched her solo career, signing to Capitol Records and debuting with the country-rock album **Circuit Queen** in 1978. Discovering and honing her own sound, she released six critically acclaimed titles on the Rounder label during the 1980s and 1990s. In Barton - recorded the hugely successful **Dreams Come True** on the Antone's label. At the end of 1997, Marcia finished work on a similar "three divas of the blues" project for Rounder, this time in the distinguished company of **Tracy Nelson** and her longtime inspiration, Irma Thomas. The CD **Sing It!** was released in 1998 and was nominated for a Grammy Award. In 1999, Marcia and her band appeared in the nationally televised Public Television special *In Performance At The White House* along with **B.B. King** and **Della Reese**. Her recordings and performances received glowing reviews in major music

publications, and Marcia was featured on leading television and radio programs, including *Austin City Limits* and NPR's *Fresh Air* and Piano Jazz.

Since the release of her Alligator debut **Presumed Innocent** in 2001, Ball has received more popular and critical acclaim than ever before. 2003's **So Many Rivers** continued the push forward, with Billboard declaring, "Ball is a consummate pro - a killer pianist, a great singer and songwriter. Powerful. Righteous." 2005's **Live! Down The Road** received equally impressive praise. *The New Orleans Times-Picayune* said simply, "Bayou boogie has a queen and her name is Marcia Ball." *Billboard* said, "**Peace, Love & BBQ** is a welcome ray of sunshine. This is a potent batch of tunes, highlighted by Ball's keyboard mastery."

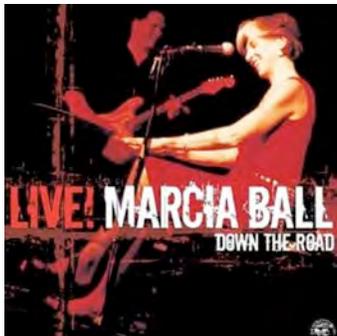
Over the last few years, Ball has been the subject of feature stories in many national publications, including *USA Today*, *Keyboard*, *DownBeat*, *Billboard*, and in newspapers from coast to coast. She has twice performed on *A Prairie Home Companion*, appeared on *World Café* and *Whad'Ya Know?*, Public Radio International's *Studio 360*, as well as on XM / Sirius satellite radio. Ball has appeared on the covers of *The Austin Chronicle* as well as *Blues Revue* magazine and performed in *Piano Blues*, the film directed by **Clint Eastwood** included in **Martin Scorsese's** *The Blues* series which aired on PBS television nationwide in 2003. Marcia has also appeared on *Austin City Limits* and *The Late Show With David Letterman* with **The New Orleans Social Club**, where she not only reached millions of people, she helped to benefit victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Living the life she loves, Marcia has no plans of slowing down anytime soon. "Forty years of roadside attractions and the life of roaming 'round has never worn thin," she proudly says. "I love it when the wheels start rolling, when the band starts playing, when the crowds start dancing." Now, with **Roadside Attractions** and a long list of high profile tour dates, Ball will bring her blend of Texas roadhouse boogie and Louisiana swamp blues to fans around the globe. "What's not to love about Marcia Ball?" asked *The Austin Chronicle*. "Scrumptious, Southern-fried boogies, blues, and ballads with the infectious street beat of New Orleans at the core." Clearly, in whatever city she performs or wherever her songs play, there is no better roadside attraction than the foot-stomping, soul-stirring music of the great Marcia Ball.

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# DISCOGRAPHY



**Roadside Attractions** (2011) - GRAMMY Nominated

**Peace, Love & BBQ** (2008) - GRAMMY Nominated

**Live! Down The Road** (2005) - GRAMMY Nominated

**So Many Rivers** (2003) - GRAMMY Nominated

**Presumed Innocent** (2001)

**Sing It!** (1998) - GRAMMY Nominated

**Let Me Play With Your Poodle** (1997)

**Blue House** (1994)

**Dreams Come True** (1990)

**Gatorrhythms** (1989)

**Hot Tamale Baby** (1985)

**Soulful Dress** (1984)

**Freda & The Firedogs Live** (1980)

**Circuit Queen** (1978)

# PRESS

"A sensational, saucy singer and superb pianist... where Texas stomp-rock and Louisiana blues-swamp meet"  
- *USA Today*

"An irresistible, celebratory blend of rollicking, two-fisted New Orleans piano, Louisiana Swamp rock and smoldering Texas blues from a compelling storyteller."  
- *Boston Globe*

"Raucous, Piano-based Dixie R&B...classic Southern songcraft and passion."  
- *Chicago Tribune*

"Ball is the bayou queen of the piano, steeped in blues and honky-tonk. When revved... she's a rollicking dynamo spewing heat-seeking triplets from the ivories while her horn-driven band wails. She's also a subtle songwriter and a formidable singer with a wisp of huskiness edging her Cajun-Texan twang."  
- *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

"Like most of the great blues singers, Ball has a throaty, penetrating voice and a style that manages to combine romance, sorrow and defiance."  
- *People*

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