

# CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE

## **GET UP! Ben Harper with Charlie Musselwhite**

GRAMMY Nominee for Best Traditional Blues Album  
Stax Records, January 29, 2013

## **JUKE JOINT CHAPEL**

Henrietta Records, December 24, 2013

### **2014 Grammy Nominations - 3 Grammy Nominations!**

Best Blues Album: *Get Up!* With Ben Harper

Best Music Film: *I'm In I'm Out And I'm Gone: The Making Of Get Up!*

Best Blues Album: *Remembering Little Walter*, with Billy Boy Arnold, Mark Hummel, Sugar Ray Norcia, and James Harman

2014 Blues Music Awards Nominee for 5 separate awards, tying for the most nominations of any artist in 2014

2013 Featured in Bob Sarles' *Sweet Blues*, a documentary about Paul Butterfield Blues Band guitarist Michael Bloomfield

2013 Featured as part of "In Performance at the White House: Memphis Soul" along with Justin Timberlake, Booker T. Jones, Ben Harper, Mavis Staples, Cyndi Lauper, William Bell and Queen Latifah broadcast nationally on PBS

2013 DownBeat Critics Poll ranked 3rd in the Best Blues Album of the Year category for *Get Up!* And named among the Best in the Blues Artist of Group category.

2013 Living Blues Awards Readers' Poll winner for Most Outstanding Musician award (Harmonica), his 8th win in this category since 2004. He has also won this category twice before in the Living Blues Critics Poll.

2013 Featured on the cover of DownBeat Magazine's March 2013 issue with Ben Harper

2013 Appearances with Ben Harper on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, AXS TV's coverage of the 2013 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, and on Tavis Smiley. *I'm In I'm Out And I'm Gone*, the "making of" documentary by Danny Clinch for *Get Up!*, was broadcast on Palladia TV

2012 Blues Music Award Winner for Traditional Blues Male Artist of the Year and for Best Instrumentalist Harmonica

2011 GRAMMY Nominee for Best Traditional Blues Album for *The Well* (Alligator Records)

Featured on Cyndi Lauper's *Memphis Blues*, also a 2011 GRAMMY nominee for Best Traditional Blues Album

2011 Blues Music Award Winner for Best Instrumentalist - Harmonica AND Traditional Blues Male Artist of the Year! Also nominated for Album of the Year for *The Well*, Traditional Blues Album of the Year for *The Well* and Song of the Year for "Sad and Beautiful World"

2011 saw Charlie recognized in the DownBeat Magazine Critics Poll in both the Blues Artist category and Blues Album

2011 DownBeat Magazine Readers Poll - ranked among the Best Blues Artists and Best Blues Albums for *The Well*

Featured on Tom Waits' latest album, *Bad As Me*, which entered the Billboard Top 200 Album Chart at #6 in November 2011. Charlie appears on five tracks, including the title track

### **2010 Blues Hall of Fame Inductee**

10-Time GRAMMY Nominee

27-Time Blues Music Award Winner

Collaborations with Eddie Vedder, Tom Waits, Ben Harper, Bonnie Raitt, The Blind Boys of Alabama, Gov't Mule, INXS, Mickey Hart, George Thorogood and personal friend and best man at his wedding John Lee Hooker

### **Mississippi Blues Hall of Fame Inductee and Mississippi Blues Trail Marker Honoree.**

Created by the Mississippi Blues Commission, the Blues Trail is composed of historical markers and interpretive sites located throughout the state. Other artists both inducted into the Hall of Fame and honored with markers to date include fellow legends B.B. King, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, and Robert Johnson

Beale Street Brass Note Walk of Fame Honoree. Charlie's marker is placed outside of BB King's Nightclub in Memphis, TN

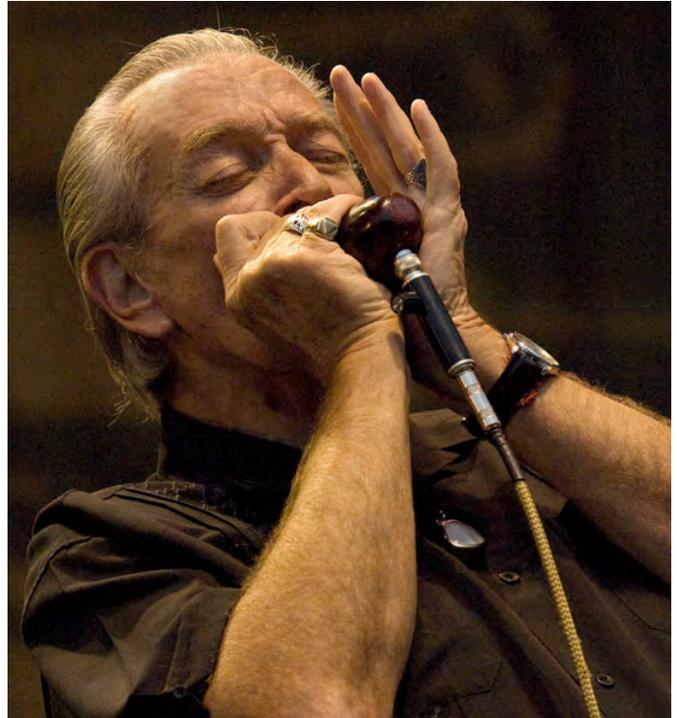


photo credit © Kenji Oda

"Harmonica virtuoso Musselwhite raises the level of emotional expression on his instrument beyond even the masters he learned from... the grizzled veteran richly decorates his music with telling nuance and chiseled detail."

- *San Francisco Chronicle*

"Legendary is an overused term, but it's also the only word that suits this heavyweight blues harpist."

- *Time Out New York*

"Charlie Musselwhite continues to astonish. Musselwhite achieves an authoritative deep blues sound through spare understatement as only a master can."

- *Off Beat Magazine*

"His delivery is as thick as molasses and as warm and rich as freshly ploughed soil on a Mississippi morning. He draws from a deep pool of emotion, brings it to life when he plays, and invites us to jump on in."

- *BluesWax*

"Musselwhite continues to create trailblazing music while remaining firmly rooted in the blues. His worldly-wise vocals, rich, melodic harmonica playing and deep country blues guitar work flawlessly accompany his often autobiographical and always memorable original songs."

- *AllAboutJazz.com*

THE ROSEBUD AGENCY

P.O. Box 170429 • San Francisco • CA 94117 • (415) 386-3456 • Fax: (415) 386-0599 • Email: [info@rosebudus.com](mailto:info@rosebudus.com) • Web: [www.rosebudus.com](http://www.rosebudus.com)

# JUKE JOINT CHAPEL

Henrietta Records  
December 24, 2013

---

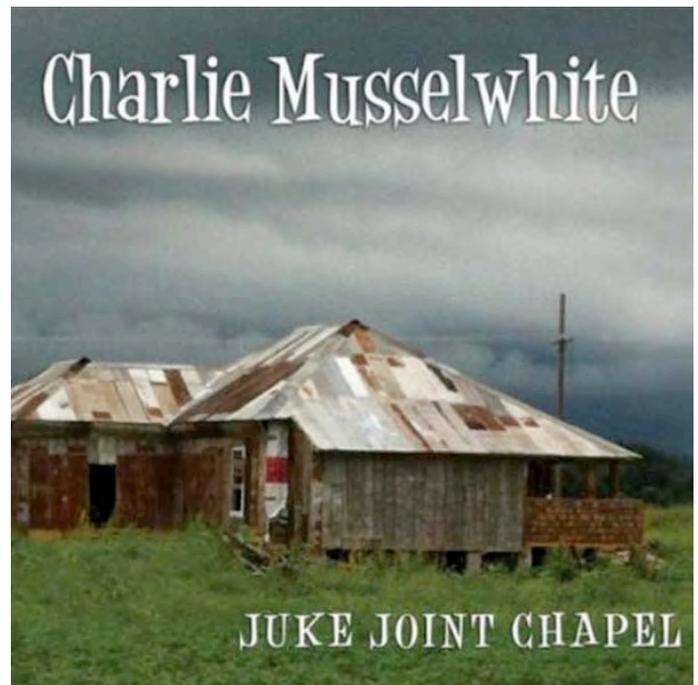
*“The blues sounded like how I felt growing up. Too many people think of the blues as sad, but I think many of these tunes will immediately dispel that notion, as they are fun, dancing tunes that lift your spirits. I often tell people that the blues is your buddy in good times and your comforter in bad times. It empowers you to keep going,” states bluesman extraordinaire Charlie Musselwhite. “It is secular spiritual music, the gospel blues. It’s music from the heart instead of the head.”*

---

His journey through the blues was literal from his birth in Mississippi to Memphis, Chicago and California. Arriving in Chicago in the early sixties, he was just in time for the epochal blues revival. In 1966 at the age of 22 he recorded the landmark *Stand Back! Here Comes Charlie Musselwhite’s Southside Band* to rave reviews. A precipitous relocation to San Francisco in 1967, where his album was being played on underground radio, found him welcomed into the counterculture scene around the Fillmore West as an authentic purveyor of the real deal blues. More than 20 albums later he is at the top of his game, a revered elder statesman of the blues nowhere near ready to hang up his harp belt, his depth of expression as a singer and an instrumentalist unexcelled and only getting deeper.

The live and kicking *Juke Joint Chapel* showcases five originals and seven choice covers with a stone groove band of Matt Stubbs (guitar), Mike Phillips (bass) and June Core (drums). The classic Eddie Taylor shuffle “Bad Boy” chugs with grace and attitude as Musselwhite slyly quotes “C.C. Rider” in his opening harp solo, his tone as thick as sweet molasses. His is one of the most recognizable voices in the blues, a true “instrument” he employs effortlessly to great expressiveness. “Roll Your Moneymaker” cruises smoothly as a ’55 Lincoln Continental, the luxury ride only interrupted by dynamic stop-time. Written by crap-shooting Shaky Jake Harris, whom Musselwhite says played harmonica as “another hustle” and modestly admits to “showing him a couple of licks.” Stubbs stands out and is a monster guitarist graciously allotted extensive solo space throughout from a leader who has enjoyed the services of many greats, but will never feel threatened by another instrumentalist. The toe tapping two-beat of Tony Joe White’s “As the Crow Flies” is driven hard by the propulsive and endlessly inventive Stubbs along with Musselwhite, who has observed, “In country music, the singer might say ‘my baby left me and I’m gonna jump off a bridge.’ But in blues, they say ‘my baby left me, and I’m gonna get a new baby’.” “Gone Too Long,” from fellow harmonicist Billy Boy Arnold contains one of his patented syncopated figures and an unstoppable rhythm from the Musselwhite band demanding you can’t sit down.

This Musselwhite set has a Little Walter nugget called “It Ain’t Right,” which almost levitates with buoyant energy. He exuberantly tests the metallurgy of his “Mississippi saxophone” while utilizing his natural blues growl to lecture his baby as Stubbs throws down the gauntlet to other blues guitar heroes. About the original “Strange Land,” Musselwhite states “I went to Chicago when I was 18 and coming from the South, I felt like a stranger in a strange land, not having any idea there was a book with that title.” The menacing, heavy country blues vamp surges below while the harper and picker take the track to an otherworldly place. The autobiographical, thumping shuffle “Blues Overtook Me” finds



Musselwhite confessing “The blues overtook me, when I was a little child. You know fast women and whisky, made this poor boy wild...I ain’t complaining!” as his slippery harmonica dramatically ranges from lyrical high notes to a snarly low rumble in an abstract evocation of his life. The exultant boogie of “River Hip Mama” pays homage to his close friend John Lee Hooker, the modern classic being covered numerous times. Saucy lyrics such as “She’s long and tall, she weeps like a willow tree...she caught me in the woods and weeped all over me,” compel the author to comment with amusement how often others get them wrong.

The snappy “Blues Why Do You Worry Me?” lopes with a lilt as Musselwhite’s poetic lyrics confirm his credo with “I learned to smile at trouble, I won’t let it get me down (2x). I’ll keep on keepin’ on ‘till the last deal goes down.” A surprising figurative trip to South America produces the irresistible syncopation of “Feel It in Your Heart,” described as “It’s what they call ‘forro’ music in Brazil and is a corruption of the English ‘for all’, because it is the music for everybody. It’s kind of like the blues of Brazil. The blues and the music of Brazil and Cuba are cousins of each other because that’s where European and African music came together and sparked a new music in a new place.” The obscure Prince Conley minor key samba “I’m Going Home” is slick as satin with a booty-shaking beat kept popping by the perpetually locked-in rhythm section of Phillips and Core. Appropriately closing the festivities is the Duke Pearson minor key ballad “Cristo Redentor,” translated as “Christ the Redeemer,” originally inspired by the monumental statue of Jesus overlooking the Rio de Janeiro harbor, and Musselwhite’s signature performance. His audience always clamors to hear it and the enormously moving instrumental affords the harp-meister the opportunity to let flow his bottomless wellspring of soulful expression, combining the emotion of the blues with touching melodies.

Charlie Musselwhite, more than any other harmonica player of his generation, can rightfully lay claim to inheriting the mantle of many of the great harp players that came before him with music as dark as Mississippi mud or as uplifting as the blue skies of California. In an era when the term legendary gets applied to auto-tuned pop stars, this singular blues harp player, singer, songwriter and guitarist has earned and deserves to be honored as a true master of American classic vernacular music.

- Dave Rubin, KBA recipient in Journalism



# GET UP!

## Ben Harper with Charlie Musselwhite

2014 GRAMMY Nominee

Stax Records

January 29, 2013

“It all goes back to that John Lee Hooker session,” enthused Ben Harper. “Even John Lee mentioned it, saying: ‘yeah, yeah, you guys... that’s good. Yeah, yeah. You should stay with that. Do that.’”

Mississippi born Musselwhite is one of the most revered blues musicians in the world. The harmonica master, also a respected singer and songwriter in his own right, has won countless awards during his legendary career including induction into the Blues Hall of Fame and collaborated with innumerable musical giants of the past 50 years including Howlin’ Wolf, Muddy Waters, Big Joe Williams, Little Walter, Sonny Boy Williamson, Tom Waits, Eddie Vedder and the aforementioned Hooker, just to name to name a few.

A fan of the harmonica virtuoso since childhood, Harper begged an introduction to his idol at Australia’s Bryon Bay Blues Festival in 1996. Despite the difference in age and background, the two hit it off immediately. The next pivotal moment came at a 1997 session for John Lee Hooker where they locked in musically, finding a common language that is seamless and remarkable.

Since then, the two musicians have worked together over the years, including sessions for Solomon Burke’s *Don’t Give Up on Me* in 2002, on Musselwhite’s 2004 Grammy nominated album *Sanctuary*; the budding mates teaming on a version of Harper’s “Homeless Child” and on Harper’s own album *Both Sides of the Gun* in 2006. Each time Harper and Musselwhite played together it was lightning in a bottle. The more they played, the louder Hooker’s words echoed.

In the grand but all-too-rare tradition of full-album artist collaborations, *Get Up!* (Stax/Concord Music Group) featuring Ben Harper with Charlie Musselwhite is a modern blues classic. The release, Harper’s 12<sup>th</sup> studio album, surveys gospel, roots, country and R&B; the marriage’s fluid chemistry helping his multi-layered canvas expand as never before.

“Blues is a feeling,” Musselwhite points out. “It doesn’t have to be a certain chord change. You could have 1-4-5 chord changes without that feeling and it wouldn’t be the blues. B.B. King could sing “Mary Had a Little Lamb” and it would be the blues.”

“Mr. Harper, a folk and blues singer-songwriter, and Mr. Musselwhite, the electric blues harmonica veteran, celebrate the release of “Get Up!” (Stax/Concord), their hot-blooded collaboration album. The record’s pleasantly shambolic spirit suggests a fortuitous jam session with moments of gospel elevation,” - *The New York Times*

“[Musselwhite’s] tender harmonica beautifully counterpoints Harper’s bruised, emotionally charged vocals.”

- *MOJO, 4 STARS*

“Harper finds himself sharing the stage with one of the most gifted harmonica players in modern day blues, Charlie Musselwhite.” - *PopMatters*

“Charlie Musselwhite helped hammer out the genre’s shape when it was still red-hot. Now, the harmonica player and singer has teamed up with a member of the next generation, Ben Harper, to rekindle some of that blues fire.”

- *The Wall Street Journal*

“In Musselwhite [Harper’s] found a kindred spirit: an understated virtuoso able to push past tradition without losing himself. They’ve made a set that feels timeless and right on schedule.” - *Rolling Stone*

“In movies, they talk about chemistry between co-stars. It can happen in music too. [Harper and Musselwhite] have it with their timeless, blues-powered ‘Get Up!’” - *The New York Post*

“Ladies and gentlemen...I’m thrilled to present to you the first great album of 2013: “Get Up!” by Ben Harper w/Charlie Musselwhite.” - *No Depression*

“When a singer-songwriter (Ben Harper) and a blues legend (Charlie Musselwhite) put their heads and their hearts together in the name of a good tune, the resulting tapestry of scales, shouts, hums, riffs and broken-hearted ruminations is bound to be a vibrant one, and that’s exactly what the pair set out to celebrate last night at Irving Plaza.” - *Paste Magazine*

- continued -

Harper, Musselwhite and the band (guitarist Jason Mozersky, bassist Jesse Ingalls, and drummer Jordan Richardson) play this intense and emotional song-cycle with economical grit. Produced by Harper with co-production credits going to engineer Sheldon Gomberg, the band members and Grammy winning roots music producer Chris Goldsmith, **Get Up!** has a timeless feel, as if it had been recorded 40 years ago in Chicago at Chess Studios just as easily as the Carriage House in Los Angeles.

Opening with "Don't Look Twice" Harper echoes Blind Lemon Jefferson, vocalizing in a high octave falsetto. The swaggering electric blues of "I'm In I'm Out and I'm Gone" comes next, the spirit of Muddy Waters no doubt smiling from beyond the grave.

"To me it's one of the crown jewels of the album," Harper says of "I'm In I'm Out And I'm Gone." "I am just going to go on record and say it. I think it contains one of the greatest harmonica solos in history. It's straight ahead but that's elusive. It's hard to do something straight ahead and make it sound fresh."

The fearsome "Blood Side Out" finds Harper portraying a man pushed past his breaking point. Both the blunt guitar solo and the emotive harmonica capture the frustration and manic energy of someone who's been on the short end of the stick too many times.

There's plenty of defiance on **Get Up!** and also tender heartache. Case in point the poignant acoustic guitar and harmonica duet of "You Found Another Lover (I Lost Another Friend)." Featuring poetic lyrics, the song's three short verses detail a painful break-up, vividly embodied in Musselwhite's brilliant accompaniment. "I've played with John Lee, Solomon Burke and Taj Mahal, and one of my

greatest musical moments is playing that song with Charlie," Harper says.

"I Don't Believe a Word You Say," is an angry blast of electric blues that could be directed at anyone who hasn't lived up to their promises, be it lover or politician. "I could fit those words to political imagery and it would almost work better than matters of the heart," Harper points out.

A rollicking New Orleans piano highlights "She Got Kick", an unambiguous testimonial to the ultimate control of the opposite sex. Things go further out on "We Can't End This Way," a heavenly synthesis of acoustic blues and gospel written in three-quarter time. In lesser hands it would have been a mess of good intentions but here the music is simply a celebration teeming with life.

Anchored by a pulsating groove, the band goes just as far in a different direction on "Get Up!" the title track. "That song was written around a killer baseline that Jessie had," Harper explains. "It's tempting to throw everything but the kitchen sink on top of it, but we left it sparse. Powerful."

The haunting battle hymn, "I Ride at Dawn", dedicated to departed Navy SEAL Nicholas P. Spehar, the brother of a friend, is a harrowing look at a modern day warrior preparing for duty. "Real blues has depth and substance," Musselwhite points out. "It's not just tunes that are tossed off. These songs are all from the heart, more so than from the head. More than just music, they are reflections of life."

The album ends with the uplifting "All That Matters Now." The song is a reconciliation of sorts after the album's emotional journey. "I was in the production booth, in total producer mode trying to figure out where to go next," recalls Harper. "And I hear Charlie and Jason messing around in

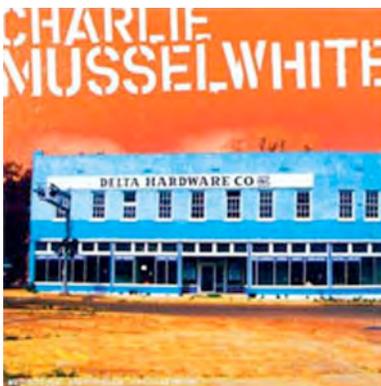
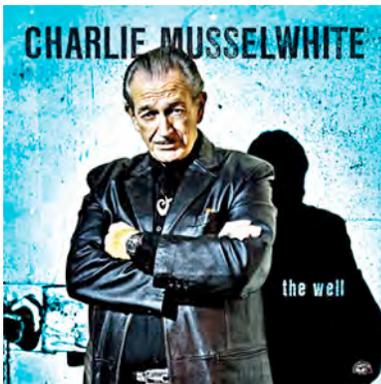
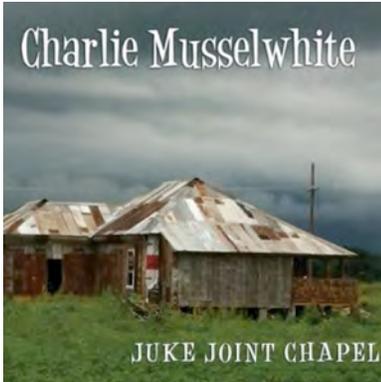
the studio with this deep groove. I heard it and told my engineer to roll tape. Don't go fix the mic, just roll tape. There's people talking and walking through the room, but it doesn't matter."

Recorded down and dirty, fast and live, **Get Up!** is an old school creation. This kind of musical chemistry demanded the approach. But its attitude, brash, assertive, disarming and vulnerable, is defiantly modern. This is a record Harper has always aspired to make but knew required the essential life experience. **Get Up!** proves it's been time well spent.



photo credit © Danny Clinch

# DISCOGRAPHY



- 2013 Juke Joint Chapel
- 2013 Get Up! Ben Harper with Charlie Musselwhite  
- GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 2010 The Well - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 2009 Rough Dried: Live At The Triple Door
- 2006 Delta Hardware
- 2004 Sanctuary - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 2003 Live 1986 – Up & Down The Highway (Reissue)
- 2002 One Night In America - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 2000 Best Of The Vanguard Years
- 1999 Continental Drifter - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 1999 Harpin' on a Riff: The Best of Charlie Musselwhite
- 1997 Rough News - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 1994 The Blues Never Die
- 1993 In My Time - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 1993 Takin' Care Of Business
- 1991 Signature - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 1990 Ace Of Harps - GRAMMY NOMINEE
- 1991 1988 Cambridge Blues
- 1986 Mellow Dee
- 1984 Tell Me Where Have All The Good Times Gone
- 1982 Curtain Call Cocktails
- 1979 Harmonica According To Musselwhite
- 1978 Times Getting Tougher Than Tough
- 1975 Leave The Blues To Us
- 1975 Goin' Back Down South
- 1974 Takin' My Time
- 1969 Tennessee Woman
- 1969 Memphis, Tennessee
- 1969 Memphis Charlie
- 1968 Louisiana Fog
- 1968 Stone Blues
- 1967 Stand Back!

THE ROSEBUD AGENCY