

# 'Blues date to dawn of time'

NEW YORK (AP) — As far as John Lee Hooker is concerned, the blues wasn't born in the Mississippi Delta. He dates blues back farther than that — to the Garden of Eden.

"When the world was born, the blues was born," he says simply. "There wasn't no problem 'til God put man and woman together. Then started love and heartache. It turned into blues."

The 73-year-old singer, guitarist and songwriter had a hit with his first record, Boogie Children, in 1948. Since then, he's been up and he's been down, opened for the Rolling Stones on one tour, paid a lot of dues. His latest record, The Healer, has brought him more attention than any record he's ever had.

He was recently honored at a concert in Madison Square Garden, and talked about the tribute a few days before.

"I'm glad to be here and alive," he said. "I'm just proud

and I'm overjoyed that the people are doing this for me. It's a long time coming but it got here.

"I paid so many dues. I've laid the path for so many other musicians to follow my footsteps. I'm proud of that."

The concert, part of a 10-day Benson Hedges Blues Festival, was a benefit for the 12-year-old Delta Blues Museum in Hooker's birthplace, Clarksdale, Miss.

A duet by Hooker and Bonnie Raitt, I'm in the Mood, won a Grammy Award this year. A single now is out, Baby Lee, by Hooker and Robert Cray. Raitt and Cray are on Hooker's The Healer. So are Carlos Santana, Charlie Musselwhite, Los Lobos, Canned Heat and George Thorogood.

"They wanted to do it because of the respect they had for me," Hooker says. "They didn't need the money. It's brought more attention to me than any album ever."

Hooker estimates that he has made between 65 and 70 albums, and wrote or co-wrote all the songs on The Healer.

About the title:

"The blues is a healer. It's got a meaning to it. You do things in your lifetime — at the time you did it you really wanted to do it. In the end sometimes you see it wasn't good for you and you say, 'It served me right to suffer.' People hear that and say, 'Oh, that's a true lyric,' and feel better. 'I write songs people can relate to, young or old.'"

He recites his Think Twice Before You Go, a blues about getting mad, storming out, then wanting to come back but it's too late.

"People think you got to be poor and half starving to sing the blues. Rich people can sing the blues. I ain't poor and broke. I sit and sing the blues. I'm a human being. I like women. I've been brokenhearted."

"You can have a room full of money, if you're sad and lonely, that money is no good. You spend and spend and spend and it don't take away the loneliness. You love a woman and you go out there and you party and drink and come back home by yourself; you're lonely with a hangover. The woman is still gone. You got the blues."

"I know it because I experienced it myself."

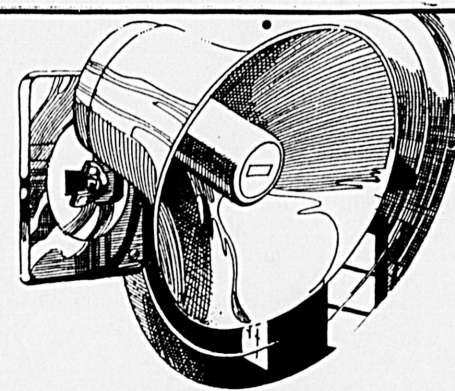
Appreciation of blues music never dies, Hooker says. "It may reach a certain level, then it stops. It is in a big rise now. Rock 'n' roll boomed way up and boomed down."

Hooker's stepfather taught him the guitar style he still uses. "Nobody else plays this style," he says, adding that some try.

"I don't use a lot of fancy chords, just a solid driving, moving, soulful beat. You hear the sound, it gets right to you."



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### FAIRY TALE FILM

## Burton's vision 'bizarre'

By JAMIE PORTMAN  
Southam News

NEW YORK — Ask Tim Burton to define his bizarre vision of the world about him, and he gropes for the answer.

"I don't know," he finally confesses. "I just sort of amble along in my own fashion. I never try to define things."

Yet, that vision has emerged in a succession of feature films that defy conventional categorization: Pee-Wee's Big Adventure, in which Pee-Wee Herman is in love with his bicycle; Beetlejuice, in which a profane, gravel-voiced ghoul invades a middle-class household; Batman, in which a solemn millionaire disguises himself as a bat in order to wage battle against the painted clown who is the world's ultimate master criminal.

"You never know how your film is going to turn out," explains Burton in a tone of boyish enthusiasm. "That's part of the challenge for me."

He does see his new movie, Edward Scissorhands, opening Dec. 14, as a sort of "contemporary fairy tale."

But this new release featuring Johnnie Depp as a boy with scissors instead of hands is a lot of other things as well.

It provides moments of scathing social satire.

It's a broodingly beautiful homage to classic horror films of the past, dominated by the grey, Gothic gloom of Edward's sinister house high on a hill overlooking the pink and green artificiality of typical American suburbia.

It even has aging screen bogeyman Vincent Price playing the kindly inventor who creates Edward in his laboratory — giving him a face, a brain, even a heart, only to have the misfortune to drop dead before replacing the clanking metal shears at the end of Edward's wrists with real hands.

It's also an off-the-wall love story between Edward and the devoted Kim (Winona Ryder), teenage daughter of the sprightly Avon lady (Dianne Wiest) who

welcomes Edward into the family home.

It even gives 20th Century Fox's familiar searchlight symbol a new and startling look, in keeping with the film's tone.

Considering that Burton's previous film was Batman, the biggest commercial hit of 1989, Edward Scissorhands, which was shot largely in Florida, has not exactly generated great waves of advance publicity.

Indeed, Burton finds himself talking to the media at a time when nervous Fox publicists are still imposing sharp restrictions on the number of media photos to be made available.

Indeed, there's been precious little publicity about Edward Scissorhands from the time it started shooting in Florida.

"It wasn't really filmed under wraps," Burton protests. "It's just that nobody ever knew about it." Then he reconsiders his statement. "Well, no, they didn't want too many visitors on the set." He laughs. "Yeah, it would be fair to say that it was quietly shot!"

More seriously, he stresses that Edward Scissorhands is his most "personal" feature movie to date.

Only one other project has meant so much to him: Vincent, an animated short he made at the age of 23 when he was working as an artist for Disney. The story of a boy who wanted to be just like Vincent Price, it won two awards from the Chicago Film Festival. Disney was so impressed it let Burton make a 25-minute live-action short.

The latter proved to be Frankenstein, about a boy who brings his dead dog back to life. The film enjoys cult status despite the fact

that Disney has never allowed it into general release.

It's often been written of Burton that his films move on converging planes of meaning — that the commonplace is stretched out of recognition by the outrageous.

Yet, visual artist that he is, Burton has trouble discussing such matters in straight linear terms.

"I never think about it too much. For example, when I did the Pee Wee movie, my goal there was that you have this extreme character and you just want to set him in a world in which he belongs and exists and which you believe — but it has to be all heightened. I love that."

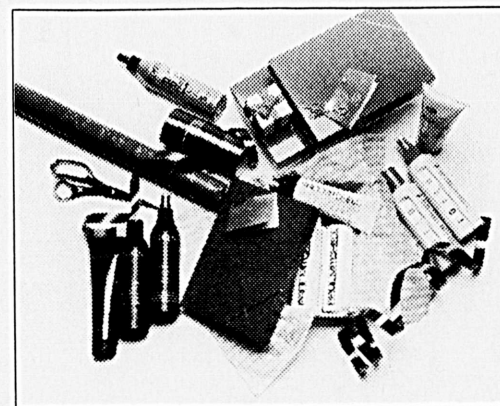
The genesis of Edward Scissorhands and its outlandish plot goes back to his own adolescence, when he worshipped horror films, had dreams of becoming a movie maker, and was possessed by traditional adolescent fears of not belonging.

Edward is a lethal weapon — unless he's very careful, he can accidentally stab or gash himself or others. Yet, he's also an artist. He's a wonderful gardener — clearing weeds, tending his flower garden, and refashioning bushes and shrubs into marvelous representations of animals.

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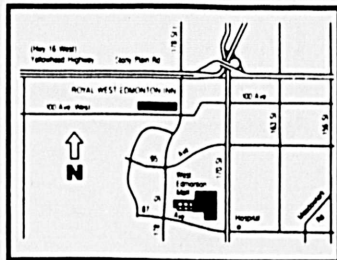
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