



FILM MOVEMENT®

Presents

# I AM THE BLUES

A film by Daniel Cross

*“When the music takes flight, it’s a thing of beauty. Heartache never sounded so good.” –  
National Post*



**U.S.A, Canada / 2015 / Documentary/ English  
106 min / 1.78: 1/ Stereo 2.0 and 5.1 Surround Sound**

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Assets:

Official US Trailer: TBD

Downloadable Images: <http://iamthebluesmovie.com/>  
<http://www.filmmovement.com/filmcatalog/index.asp?MerchandiseID=565>

## **SYNOPSIS**

I AM THE BLUES takes the audience on a musical journey through the swamps of the Louisiana Bayou, the juke joints of the Mississippi Delta, and the moonshine-soaked BBQs in the North Mississippi Hill Country, visiting blues musicians rooted in the genre's heyday, many now in their 80s, still living in the American deep south and touring the Chitlin' Circuit. In addition to Bobby Rush, who won a Grammy Award this year for Best Traditional Blues Album, musicians Barbara Lynn, Little Freddie King, , Lazy Lester, Henry Gray, Carol Fran, Bilbo Walker, Jimmy "Duck" Holmes, RL Boyce, LC Ulmer, Lil' Buck Sinegal are also featured in the documentary.

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

From juke joints to church halls, I AM THE BLUES travels the back roads with the last of the blues legends such as Grammy Award-winning artist Bobby Rush, Barbara Lynn, and Little Freddie King.

## **LOGLINE**

I AM THE BLUES takes the audience on the musical journey, visiting with the last original blues artists.



Bobby Rush (right)

## CREDITS

### CREW

<b>Director</b>	Daniel Cross
<b>Producer</b>	Bob Moore, Daniel Cross
<b>Cinematography</b>	John Price
<b>Editor</b>	Ryan Mullins
<b>Screenplay</b>	Daniel Cross, Marco Luna



### FEATURING

**Bobby Rush:** 83 years old, was awarded as “Best Male Soul Artist” at the Blues Music Award and was nominated for the Grammy Award in 2000 and 2014. In 2017, he won his first Grammy Award for his album, “Porcupine Meat.”

**Barbara Lynn** (pictured, above): 75 years old, an American rhythm and blues and electric blues guitarist, singer, and songwriter. She is best known for “You’ll Lose a Good Thing” (1962).

**Henry Gray:** 92 years old, an African-American blues piano player and singer. He is credited with helping to create the distinctive sound of the Chicago blues piano.

**Jimmy "Duck" Holmes:** 70 years old, an American blues musician and proprietor of the Blue Front Café on the Mississippi Blues Trail, the oldest surviving juke joint in Mississippi.

**Lil' Buck Sinegal:** 73 years old, an American blues and zydeco guitarist and singer. He was inducted into the Louisiana Blues Hall of Fame in 1999.

**Lazy Lester:** 84 years old, an American blues musician who sings, plays the harmonica and guitar. His career spans the 1950s to the 2010s.

**Carol Fran:** 84 years old, an African-American soul blues singer, pianist and songwriter. Fran is best known for her string of single releases in the 1950s and 1960s and her later musical association with her husband, blues guitarist Clarence Hollimon.

**Little Freddie King:** 77 years, an American Delta blues guitarist. His style is based on that of Freddie King, but his approach to country blues is original.

**LC Ulmer:** an American delta blues musician and performer for over half a century, playing at festivals and clubs throughout the United States and elsewhere, but particularly in the Deep South. He often performed in his younger days as a one-man band. Ulmer died on February 14, 2016, at his home in Ellisville, Mississippi, of natural causes, at the age of 87.

**Bud Spires:** Harmonica player and longtime musical companion of blues legend Jack Owens. He also accompanied Jimmy “Duck” Holmes. Spires died on March 20, 2016 at the age of 82.

## SELECT PRESS FOR I AM THE BLUES

"Director Daniel cross goes deep into the Deep South blues scene with this terrific documentary...One of the most striking aspects of the film is how beautifully shot it often is." – Robert Whitehead, ***Vulture Hound***

"For his latest documentary, I AM THE BLUES, Canadian filmmaker Daniel Cross travels down to Bayou country for a look at one of the most influential styles of music in history...Cross wisely shows reverence to the music, and in some of the film's best moments I AM THE BLUES plays like a concert film taking place in natural environments instead of concert halls and arenas... The music and personalities in I AM THE BLUES are enthralling, making it well worth seeking out." – Andrew Parker, ***Toronto Film Scene***

"As the musicians talk, I AM THE BLUES works as an oral history of their music, and of the still active Chitlin' Circuit of performing venues, where back in the wickedness of segregation, African Americans felt free of danger...I AM THE BLUES evokes that sentiment in an authentic manner befitting its subject." – Maurie Alioff, ***Point of View Magazine***

"Joyful and exultant...." Molly Laich, ***Missoula Independent***

"I was quietly blown away by Daniel Cross's new documentary I AM THE BLUES....There is something miraculous in this patient little film, which lends an ear to weathered old musicians, going about their lives in the backwaters of the Louisiana Bayou and the Mississippi Delta....The director leaves ample room for the music, and it will take your breath away." – T'Cha Dunlevy, ***Montreal Gazette***

"The music and personalities in I AM THE BLUES are enthralling." – Andrew Parker, ***Toronto Film Scene***

"I AM THE BLUES is a lovely film, made with a light, respectful touch." – Marc Glassman, ***Point of View Magazine***



Jimmy "Duck" Holmes

## **BIOGRAPHY - Director Daniel Cross**

Daniel Cross is a Canadian documentary filmmaker, producer, and activist whose films deal with social justice. Alongside with Mila Aung-Thwin, a director and producer, Cross is co-founder of EyeSteelFilm, a Montreal-based Canadian Cinema Production Company. He made two films entitled *THE STREET: A FILM WITH THE HOMELESS* and *S.P.I.T.: SQUEEGEE PUNKS IN TRAFFIC* where hundreds of homeless people from Montreal share their stories with him. Both films received theatrical distribution, international broadcast and critical acclaim. Cross also has experience in TV, having directed and produced the Gemini-nominated *TOO COLOURFUL FOR THE LEAGUE* and *CHAIRMAN GEORGE* on the stations CTV, BBC's *Storyville* and TV 2 (Denmark). *CHAIRMAN GEORGE* won awards at the AFI/Silverdocs and at Guangzhou Documentary Festival. A graduate of Concordia University, Cross is active in the film community, serving on the Boards of CFTPA, Observatoire du Documentaire and DOC (formerly CIFC). He also teaches film production at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec, and before that he taught at University of Regina in Regina, Saskatchewan.



### **FILMOGRAPHY:**

*THE STREET: A FILM WITH THE HOMELESS* (1997)

*S.P.I.T. - SQUEEGEE PUNKS IN TRAFFIC* (2001)

*TOO COLOURFUL FOR THE LEAGUE* (2001)

*INUUVUNGA: I AM LNUK, I AM ALIVE* (2004)

*CHAIRMAN GEORGE* (2005)

*I AM THE BLUES* (2015)

### **SELECTED FESTIVALS & AWARDS**

70th Golden Sheaf Awards: Best Documentary, Best Director 2017

Canadian Screen Awards: Best Documentary Feature Film Award, 2017

Canadian Screen Awards: Best Documentary Feature Film Cinematography Award, 2017

*Mondes En Images*, Cucuron, France, Best Film and People's Choice Award, 2017

35th Jean Rouch Film Festival, the BARTÓK Prize, 2016

Indie Memphis Film Festival, Soul of the South Film Award, 2016

Indie Memphis Film Festival, People's Choice Award, 2016

Cinema on the Bayou, Best Documentary "Catfish" Award, 2016

2016 IDFA Festival, World Premiere

2016 SXSW Int'l. Film Festival, North American Premiere

2016 Hot Docs Int'l. Documentary Film Festival – Don Haig Award

2017 Pan African Film Festival

2017 Salem Film Festival

## **ABOUT FILM MOVEMENT**

Celebrating its 15th year, Film Movement is a North American distributor of award-winning independent and foreign films based in New York City. Film Movement has released more than 250 feature films and shorts culled from prestigious film festivals worldwide, and last year it had its first Academy Award-nominated film, Naji Abu Nowar's THEEB. Film Movement's theatrical distribution strategy has evolved to include promising American independent films, documentaries, and an even stronger slate of foreign art house titles. Its catalog includes titles by directors such as Hirokazu Kore-eda, Maren Ade, Jessica Hausner, Andrei Konchalovsky, Andrzej Wajda, Diane Kurys, Ciro Guerra and Melanie Laurent. In 2015, Film Movement launched its reissue label Film Movement Classics, featuring new restorations released theatrically as well as on Blu-ray and DVD, including films by such noted directors as Eric Rohmer, Peter Greenaway, Bille August, Marleen Gorris, Takeshi Kitano, Arturo Ripstein, and Ettore Scola. For more information, please visit [www.filmmovement.com](http://www.filmmovement.com).