

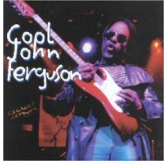
## Cool John Ferguson - Cool John Ferguson (2001)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 13 January 2016 17:14 -

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01. *The Cat Ate The Rat, The Rat Ate The Wizard* 04:45 02. *Here Comes Floyd* 03:42 03. *I Love You* 03:46 04. *Strollin' By The Waterfront* 04:44 05. *Miss You Like The Devil* 03:27 06. *Tater Done* 03:58 07. *Let No Woman* 03:25 08. *Pre-Alex Stomp* 03:07 09. *Send Up My Timbers* 03:53 10. *Log Cabin Woman* 04:13 11. *I Got A Right To Cry Sometimes* 07:29 12. *Cootie's Jam* 04:02 Cool John Ferguson - vocal, guitar Janet Daniels - drums F.C. – bass

“It didn’t matter where the music came from. I just learned it all – TV themes, blues, R&B, jazz, gospel – it all came in my ears and through my hands.” – Cool John Ferguson

Along with rules for holding the guitar, Cool John ignored just about everything folks had to say about genre and style. Known for a fiery rendition of the famous Jimi Hendrix Woodstock version of The Star Spangled Banner, Cool John is just as thick with gospel as he is with a raunchy blues. “A lot of my people came out of the Gullah tradition with roots in Western Africa, hard work and a hard life on the plantations, and worship in praise houses.” Cool John recalls. “When I turned five I started gigging in the Pentecostal church of my family. You can hear some of that gospel flavor in my playing, a lot of traditional African music mixed with the field and spiritual music.”

“Little John and the Ferguson Sisters” were featured entertainers on The Lowcountry Sing on Channel 5, a Charleston. But by the time Cool John was 10, he was also huddling over his transistor radio with an earphone (to hide from his gospel only parents) listening to WAPE, “the

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Big Ape", out of Jacksonville, Florida, soaking up any and all flavors of music. "I heard people like Wilson Pickett, the Beach Boys, and the Rolling Stones," Cool John remembers.

After graduating from high school in 1972, Cool John went on the road, joining the Earl Davis Trio playing jazz. He played a house gig at Latai Inn at Fripp Island Resort and played at four churches on Sundays. He played for five years with Stephen Best and the Soul Crusaders in black clubs all over South Carolina. Cool John continued to mix jazz, clubs and blues with church music and played on pop recordings with his niece, Esperanza. He even found a spot in the tent revival circuit. If it's music and its vibrant, it's good.

The result of all that playing and singing is a guitar marvel who can switch and blend, from songs like Golden Girls with a jazzy, calypso sway, he can move to Black Mud Boogie and conjure a rural, juke-joint jive. Cool John's audiences also sit in wait because sooner or later there will be a taste of some fiery guitar pyrotechnics and may be a chance to fit in a bit of call-and-return vocal/guitar work drawn from deep root in Piedmont Blues and Gullah song.

Cool John is equally eclectic in his response to venue. You can find him holding center stage in New York City at Lincoln Center Out-Of-Doors, in Australia at the Byron Bay Blues Festival, making a stop in church for gospel, or just sending it out to the rooftops at his regular Saturday night gig at the All People's Grill, a roadhouse north of Durham, North Carolina. A Strong collaborator, Cool John has put his guitar behind artists that include BB King, Taj Mahal, Kenny Wayne, Beverly Guitar Watkins and the Stylistics, and he has been honored two years running as Most Outstanding Guitarist by Living Blues Magazine.

In sum, there's not an audience large or small, young or old that Cool John Ferguson can't touch with his music. Take a witness from Taj Mahal who is proud to announce that, "Cool John Ferguson is among the five greatest guitarists in the world. He is a force to be reckoned with in the music industry. He is with the ranks of Jimi Hendrix, Wes Montgomery and Dajango Rienhart." --- Susan Simone, musicmaker.org

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