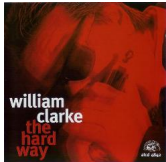


## William Clarke - The Hard Way (2009)

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### William Clarke - The Hard Way (2009)



*01 The Boss (4:26) 02 Five Card Hand (3:33) 03 Fishing Blues (3:13) 04 Evil (3:33) 05 Letter from Home (5:05) 06 My Mind is Working Overtime (3:14) 07 Last Monday Morning (5:56) 08 Moten Swing (4:10) 09 Blues is Killing Me (6:09) 10 Don't Treat Me Wrong (3:05) 11 Respect Me, Baby (4:31) 12 Other Side of Town (3:16) 13 Walkin' (4:41)* Personnel: William Clarke (vocals, harmonica); Greg Verginio, Jeff Ross, Alex Schultz (guitar); Jonny Viau (tenor saxophone); Troy Jennings (baritone saxophone); Fred Kaplan, Steve F'dor (piano); Tyler Pederson, Rick Reed (acoustic bass); Bob Newham, Eddie Clark (drums).

The harmonica is sometimes nicknamed the "Mississippi saxophone," but only a few players achieve the thick, blustery tone of a sax. William Clarke is one of those few, and on this album, *The Hard Way*, he pursues the saxophone analogy from his familiar field of the blues into the new territory of hard-swinging soul-jazz. Clarke, a West Coast disciple of George "Harmonica" Smith, has long been a fan of the tenor-sax-and- organ combos led by the likes of Willis Jackson, Gene Ammons, and Jack McDuff and now being revived as "acid jazz." Honking on his chromatic harmonica over the classic swing of his rhythm section, Clarke sounds like a straight-ahead jazz cat. With a subtle shift to a boogie beat or a slow moan, he's back in the blues again. ---Geoffrey Himes, Editorial Review

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