

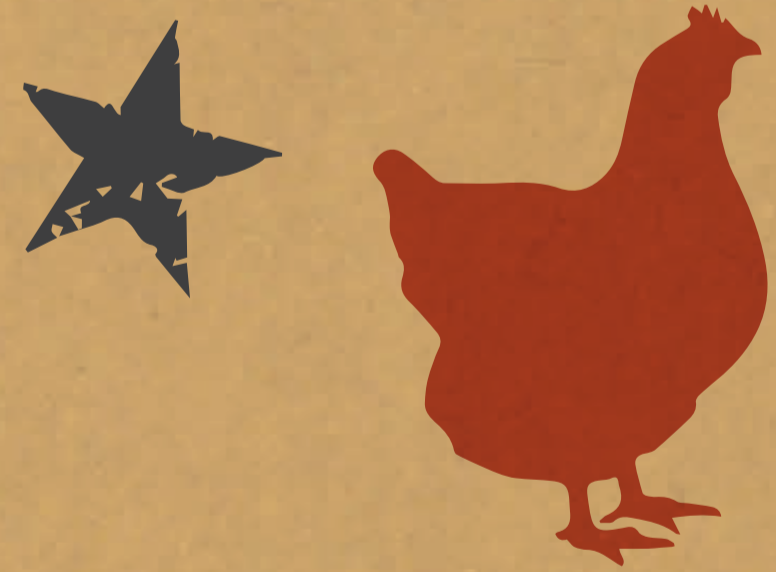


JAMES



**SUPER
CHICKAN**

JOHNSON



A LIFE IN BLUES



**FEATURING: CEDRIC BURNSIDE, BOBBY RUSH, CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE,
ADAM GUSSOW, KENNY BROWN, LALA CRAIG, CHIEMI FUJIO,
HEATHER TACKETT, AND JAMIESA TURNER.**



A FILM BY MARK RANKIN AND BRIAN WILSON



JAMES SUPER CHIKKAN

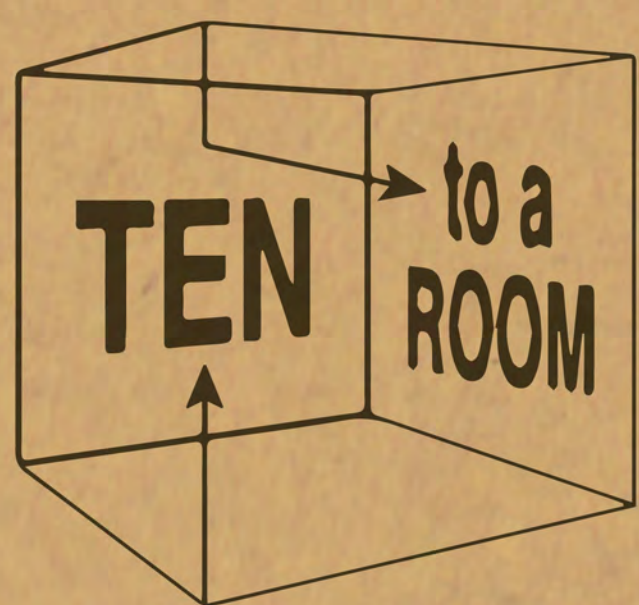


JOHNSON

A LIFE IN BLUES



FEATURING: CEDRIC BURNSIDE, BOBBY RUSH, CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE, ADAM GUSSOW, KENNY BROWN, JAXX NASSAR, BIG A SHERROD, LALA CRAIG, CHIEMI FUJIO, HEATHER TACKETT, RACHELLE COBA, SHINE TURNER, AND JAMIESA TURNER



A FILM BY
MARK RANKIN
AND BRIAN WILSON

SUPPORTED BY



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DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

This film was born out of a passion for telling the story of a musician who is one of the last of his generation. On a personal level, for co-director, Mark Rankin, it was a chance to bring some much-deserved attention to a musician who has been a great influence, both professionally and personally.

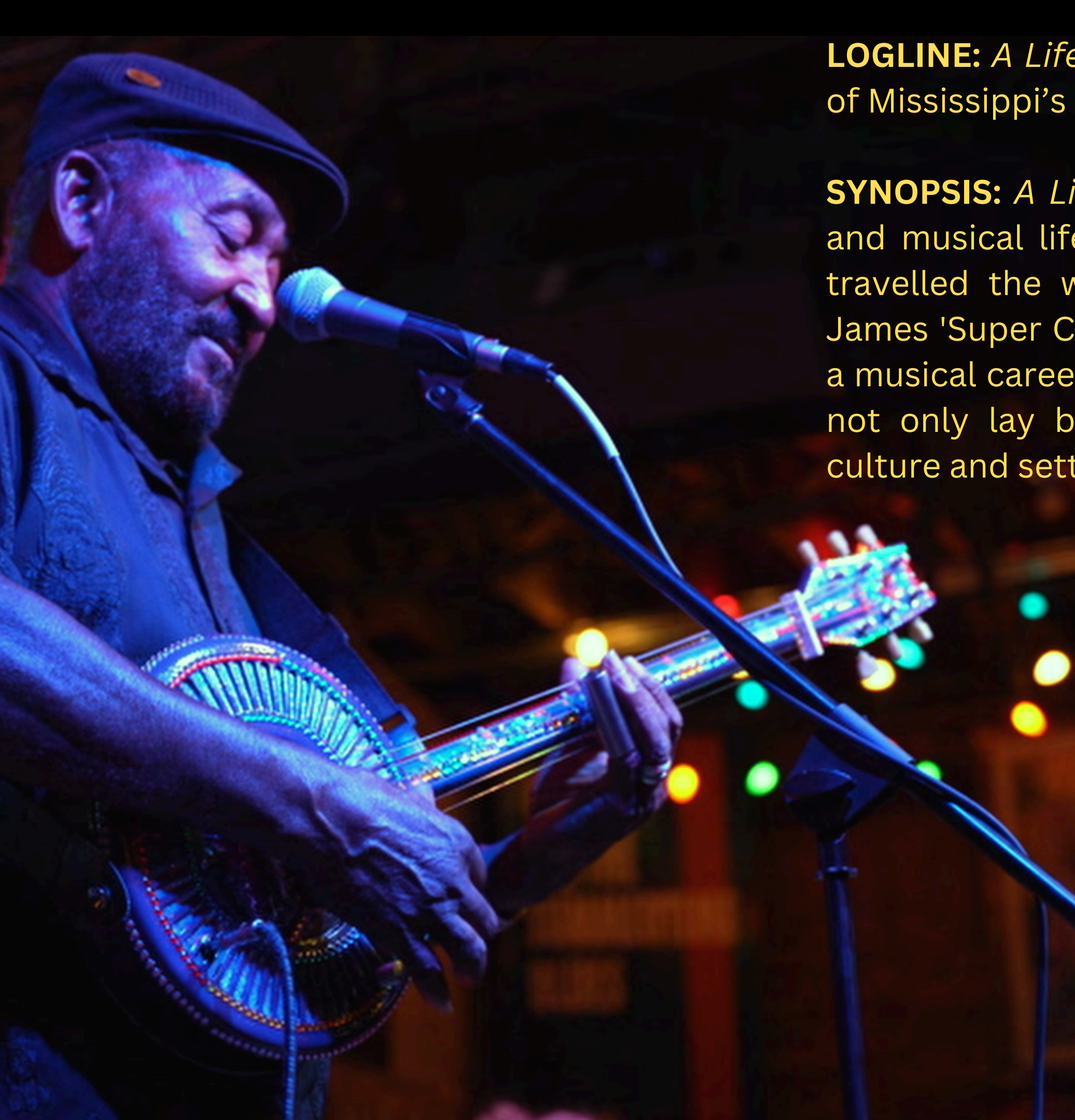


DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Mark Rankin is a Canadian independent filmmaker, musician and actor. *James 'Super Chikan' Johnson - A Life in Blues*, is Mark's first feature length film. Mark's previous writing, directing and scoring collaborations have included numerous award-winning short films, music videos and a web series. Mark has also worked as an actor having appeared in numerous Apple and Netflix productions. Mark is also the lead guitarist and songwriter with the popular Vancouver blues/rock band, The Mojo Stars.

Brian Wilson is a Canadian independent filmmaker and screenplay writer who has co-written and co-directed short films, music videos and a web series. *James 'Super Chikan' Johnson - A Life in Blues*, is Brian's first feature length documentary film. With a background in post-secondary education and educational technology, Brian is fundamentally motivated by the power of story as a means of exploring complex and dramatic themes in an accessible and engaging manner.





LOGLINE: *A Life in Blues* explores the personal and musical life of one of Mississippi's most treasured sons, James 'Super Chikan' Johnson.

SYNOPSIS: *A Life in Blues* both celebrates and explores the personal and musical life of one of Mississippi's most treasured sons. Having travelled the world sharing his own unique brand of blues music, James 'Super Chikan' Johnson, at the age of 73, still strives to balance a musical career while providing for his family. This film endeavours to not only lay bare Chikan's own story, but also examines how the culture and setting of the south has ultimately influenced his journey.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Runtime: 1 hour 20 minutes 21 seconds

Completion Date: January 25, 2024

Production Budget: \$10 000

Country of Origin: Canada

Country of Filming: United States

Language: English

Shooting Format: 4k



CAST & CREW

Directing/producing/cinematography/
editing: Brian Wilson & Mark Rankin

Additional camera: Junji Nagano

FEATURING

Cedric Burnside, Bobby Rush, Charlie
Musselwhite, Adam Gussow, Kenny Brown
Jaxx Nassar, Big A Sherrod, Lala Craig, Chiemi
Fujio, Heather Tackett, Rachelle Coba, Shine
Turner and Jamiesa Turner



LINKS & CONTACT INFO

Film trailer

<https://youtu.be/lliw-xU3XdE>

Film website

<https://alifeinbluethemovie.com/>

Images

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/zmt39sgpbeOuace3xzip/AOpBeXFijPlKESN9CpA8CG0?rlkey=9s9erei3zgtks6dm4izgkz09m&e=1&st=v13spx3p&dl=0>

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/a_life_in_blues/

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/people/The-James-Super-Chikan-Johnson-story/100088552697454/>

IMDB

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt33068551/>

Contacts

Mark Rankin/Brian Wilson: tentoaroom@gmail.com
604-505-8317

REVIEWS AND AWARDS

“Rankin and Wilson dig into the rich lore of Clarksdale, its connections to Robert Johnson and the mythical crossroads... A fast moving engaging film.”

—Jim Shahan Jr. Living Blues Magazine

“It’s a wonderful film that does something extremely rare in the world of blues documentaries, which is tell the story straight, without romanticizing its subject in any way... All in all, a superb film.”

—Adam Gussow (Satan and Adam)

“An intriguing outsider (Canadian) look at the career of Delta blues giant James ‘Super Chikan’ Johnson and the Clarksdale, Mississippi blues culture of which his work is an integral part.”

—Robert Muggé (Documentary filmmaker)

“James ‘Super Chikan’ Johnson: A Life in Blues is a joy from start to finish.”

—Eric Steiner (Editor Emeritus, Washington Blues Society)

“This is a film for blues lovers, yes...but also for anyone who likes to 'see' into the real world of everyday folks in a unique and compelling environment.”

—Big City Rhythm and Blues Magazine

Special Award Winner—Lane Doc Fest

Winner in Films About Music—Round the Globe Film and Music Festival



FAQs



Where is Super Chikan from?

Super Chikan was born in Clarksdale, Mississippi, a town he calls home to this day. Clarksdale has a long and storied history, being the birthplace of such historical blues players as Ike Turner, Big Jack Johnson and Sam Cooke. Currently, Clarksdale is home to Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram, one of the rising stars of the contemporary blues scene.

What is a diddley bow?

A diddley bow is traditionally a one-stringed instrument based on the Kora, which has influenced the development of the blues. Super Chikan is well known for hand crafting his own diddley bows which are much in demand for their creative and colourful designs.

How did you meet Super Chikan?

We met Chikan when we brought him to Vancouver in 2018 to do a series of shows with Mark's band, The Mojo Stars. Immediately taken with Chikan's passion for life and his life-long commitment to his music, we approached him to see if he would be interested in having a documentary made on his life. Chikan was enthusiastic and once the pandemic had ended, we headed to Mississippi to start filming.

How would you describe Super Chikan's music?

Super Chikan's music is a wonderful combination of deep blues, infused with his own Country influences, most of which can be heard in the storytelling nature of his lyrics.

What impact has making this film had on you as filmmakers?

Making this film has given us a much deeper appreciation of the richness of the blues and the Delta in general. Not only did we get a chance to spend some great time with Super Chikan, but met many wonderful people throughout Mississippi. Upon returning home after filming, we realized just how much Delta culture has gotten into our blood!

Is James 'Super Chikan' Johnson related to Robert Johnson?

Yes, he is! Chikan's grandfather was Johnson's first cousin, and not only was his grandfather related to the famed bluesman, but he also often played accompanying fiddle with Johnson.

Are there any special screenings for the film coming up?

Yes, The filmmakers, Mark Rankin and Brian Wilson, have been invited to screen the film at the world-famous Notodden blues Festival in Notodden, Norway in July/August, 2025. Super Chikan will also be performing.

Has Chikan ever been featured on a TV program?

Yes. Super Chikan was featured in an episode of 60 Minutes which aired in November 2023. The piece was focused on the state of blues in Clarksdale, Chikan's hometown, and featured, along with Chikan, Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram.

Who else is featured in the film?

Among others, A Life in blues features interviews with Grammy Award Winners, Cedric Burnside, Charlie Musselwhite and Bobby Rush.

Does A Life in Blues have distribution?

Yes, the film will be distributed by MVD Entertainment Group with digital distribution slated for April, 2025.