

Eric Johanson

Bio - Fall 2024

Eric Johanson is not your typical rock or blues artist. His music strikes a compelling balance between gritty rock intensity and deep blues emotion, delivering a sound that feels both raw and refreshingly original. Johanson's skillful guitar playing and distinctive voice form a captivating blend that is drawing increasing attention from audiences and critics alike.

His newest album, *The Deep And The Dirty* (2023), continues to make waves, debuting at #1 on the Billboard Blues Chart. Since its release, Johanson has been on a whirlwind tour, hitting stages across the US and Europe in over ten countries. The buzz around him is real—he was named one of Guitar Player magazine's 25 best new blues guitarists and earned a spot in Total Guitar magazine's Top 50 blues guitarists of all time. Industry veterans have also taken notice, with Bob Lefsetz remarking, "It's like he digested all the music of the sixties - just like those musicians listened to the progenitors - and kept the flame a-burnin'. This guy has a place in the firmament."

Born and raised in Louisiana, Johanson's roots run deep in the blues and rock traditions. His early years were spent performing at local venues and leading underground rock bands. After experimenting with his style, and a stint living overseas, Johanson returned to New Orleans and quickly became a sought after guitarist, blending his southern roots with a forward-thinking approach.

It wasn't long before his unique style caught the eye of blues luminary Tab Benoit. Benoit signed Johanson to his new Whiskey Bayou record label, producing Johanson's debut solo record, *Burn It Down* (2017). The album established Johanson as a skilled guitarist with a deep connection to blues traditions, yet also someone unafraid to push boundaries. The two embarked on a two-year tour, with Benoit himself playing drums in Johanson's band during his opening sets.

Johanson's sound soon gained the attention of Luther Dickinson (North Mississippi Allstars), who produced Johanson's sophomore album, *Below Sea Level* (2020). The album marked a creative leap for Johanson, combining raw, emotional songwriting with heavier guitar tones and darker, more introspective themes.

For his most recent album, *The Deep And The Dirty*, Johanson teamed up with producer Jesse Dayton, crafting what many critics are calling his strongest work yet. The album's raw, powerful sound and masterful guitar playing are further illuminated by meaningful and catchy songwriting. As *American Songwriter* put it, "Johanson pens solid material that, like Hendrix, displays his guitar prowess but within the borders of melodies and lyrics that push the boundaries of blues/rock."

Over the past few years, Johanson has toured extensively, both as a headliner and support act for prominent artists such as Samantha Fish, North Mississippi Allstars, Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, The Record Company, Walter Trout, and more. His live performances are known for their high energy, powerful vocals, and dynamic guitar solos. There's a sense that Eric is always pushing himself—redefining what it means to be a blues artist in the 21st century.