

## BLUES PROJECT 2015: SWEET HOME CHICAGO

### 1. George Thorogood- Goin' Back

**Introduce:**        **Jake Snider - guitar**  
                          **Anastasia Sellers - organ**

Here in Valparaiso, Indiana we live in the shadow of Chicago, and whether we like it or not, the Windy City affects our time, our business, our news, our culture, and various other aspects of our life. The land Chicago sits on today was first settled by a French-speaking black man named Jean Baptiste Point DuSable who established a successful trading community with the local Pottawattomie Indians in 1779. For the most part, It was sparsely populated lowlands that even the natives didn't want until the 1830's when it was willed into existence by businessmen who saw the economic potential in the swampy piece of real estate. Its value, they recognized, lay in a potential canal that could be built to link the Chicago River to nearby Lake Michigan, and thereby become the lynchpin of a major water highway, connecting the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. But by the time the canal was completed in 1848, railroads were becoming the preferred means of freight transportation. Determined not to be eclipsed by technology, these businessmen decided to also invest in the railroads, eventually managing to make Chicago the hub of all western rail traffic. All lines would lead to Chicago. It became not only the link holding together water traffic across the country, now it was also the funnel that all rail traffic would have to go through as well. With so much commerce flowing through, it's no wonder that the Windy City has grown to become the third largest city in the US.

Chicago is a city with grit and perseverance, brains and brawn. One that rebuilt after the Great Fire of 1871 bigger and stronger than ever before. One that wowed the world with the grand "White City" of the 1893 World's Fair where it introduced the Ferris Wheel to the world. One that was home to the nation's first skyscraper. But it was also a place where people often played by their own rules, where gangsters like Al Capone flourished and political corruption was commonplace. It is known as the Windy City, The Second City, The City of Broad Shoulders, The Hog Butcher for the World - "Sweet Home Chicago."

Chicago often bills itself as the "Home of the Blues," but the story of the blues does not start here. Far from it. Its roots lie in the fertile soil of the Mississippi River Valley, deep in southern America. African slaves, laboring on southern plantations, would sing to communicate, to provide rhythm for their work, and to provide hope for their souls. Their Field Hollers, Work Songs, and Spirituals all helped to form the musical, emotional, and rhythmic DNA of the blues.

Some of these enslaved Africans attempted to escape along the underground railroad to gain their freedom. For the approximately 2-3% of slaves who did escape to the North, one of the many "stations" of the underground railroad was the famous Quinn Chapel in Chicago, established in 1844. Its members were known to hide fugitive slaves in basement tunnels underneath the church before being smuggled to safety. Others made Chicago their final destination, and the congregation helped to integrate these newcomers into the city.

Many of the songs the slaves sang referenced aspects of that perilous journey to freedom. One of these is the spiritual, "Now Let Me Fly," which talks about the desire to go to Zion, another name for Jerusalem, or the Biblical Promised Land of the Israelites. It's not difficult to imagine slaves singing these lyrics and feeling the desire to "fly" to their "Zion" - the North, or as it was often called, "the Promised Land."

**Introduce:**        **Julia Fezatt, Elli Bezotte, Hunter Howard, Gracie Ault - leads**

## **2. Spiritual - Now Let Me Fly**

After slavery was abolished by the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, African-Americans could no longer be held in bondage. In an economic sense, however, most African Americans were still chained to plantations in what was known as sharecropping. Plantation owners would divide up their property, allowing former slaves to live and farm a plot of land in exchange for a portion of their harvest. In addition, planters would provide sharecroppers the tools, supplies, and food they needed on credit. At the end of each year, however, many sharecroppers found themselves in debt to the planter for all that they had borrowed throughout the year. If former white slave owners could not own black people legally, then they would own/control them economically.

This sharecropping culture spawned a style of music known as the blues. In reality, the blues was just a modified form of the songs that had been sung in the South for generations. Instead of the call-and-response field songs of the slave era, a lone sharecropper might sing those same melodies while providing his own accompaniment on a guitar. This music grew very well in the fertile soil of the Mississippi Delta where musicians like Charley Patton and Son House began. There was no Delta bluesman, however, that had the lasting impact of Robert Johnson. Legend has it that Johnson went to the crossroads and sold his soul to the devil in exchange for his ability to play the blues. His legend has only grown larger since his murder at the age 27. Little did he know that one of his songs would go on to become a theme song for the Windy City - "Sweet Home Chicago."

**Introduce: Gracie Ault - guitar/vocals**

## **3. Robert Johnson - Sweet Home Chicago (1937)**

Between 1916-1970 millions of African-Americans left the hard work and poor wages of the rural South and traveled up north to cities like Chicago to try and make a better life for themselves. On average, blacks could earn more than three times as much in the north as they did in the south. In large part, this Great Migration was spawned by the industrial employment opportunities created by World Wars I and II. In addition, with farming becoming increasingly mechanized throughout the 20th century, the need for agricultural laborers steadily declined. In addition, natural disasters like the infestation of the Boll Weevil and the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 ruined many southern crops, and for many sharecroppers, motivated them to hit the highway and start over up north. Where African-Americans had predominantly been a southern, rural people, they now became increasingly urban. In 1900, 75% of blacks lived on farms, while by 1970, only 25% did. This completely transformed the makeup of northern cities like Chicago, where, by 1970, blacks made up more than 33% of its total population. Most of these newcomers came from Mississippi, and they brought their blues with them. Big Bill Broonzy was one of these migrants, traveling from the Mississippi Delta and becoming one of the cornerstones of Chicago Blues. He was a superb guitarist, talented performer, and one of the most generous fellows you'd ever meet. Most bluesmen who made their way to the Windy City got advice, a meal, or a gig from Big Bill who helped to nurture a burgeoning blues community in Chicago.

**Introduce: Fruteland Jackson - guitar/vocals**

## **4. Big Bill Broonzy - Key to Highway (1940)**

The Great Migration brought thousands of African Americans to Chicago looking for jobs. And during WWI, with many young men overseas fighting, there were plenty to be had. But once those veterans came back from the war looking for work, many became resentful of the African Americans who had filled those positions. And there were other new ethnic groups arriving in Chicago as well, looking for jobs and housing. All of this competition led to heightened racial tensions. When a black teenager was killed by a white man while swimming at a Chicago

beach, all of that built up tension boiled over. The police didn't pursue the white man witnesses said was the perpetrator of the crime, and this led to 13 days of violence on Chicago's South Side, leaving 38 people dead, 537 injured and 1,000 black families without homes.

Its no wonder that the black residents of Chicago still had the blues, and their music could be heard emanating from clubs around the South Side. The blues in the city around this time had a more urban feel to it, in large part due to an instrument that was far more common here than it was in the cotton fields of Mississippi, the piano. Often featuring a strong female vocalist, ala Bessie Smith, the blues coming out of Chicago was largely piano based, and a little more polished than the Delta Blues from the past. This song by Chicago pianist "Big Maceo" Merriweather gives you a sense of that sonic change.

**Introduce: Ruthie Marfoe - vocals**  
**Julia Fezatt - piano**  
**Alex Clanton - violin**  
**Owen Rittgers - cello**

### **5. Maceo Merriweather - Worried Life Blues (1941)**

The blues wasn't the only music to be transported to Chicago by the Great Migration. Around the turn of the century, a fresh musical style known as jazz emerged from the cultural melting pot of New Orleans. It blended traditional blues elements with more European instrumentation, and the results were irresistible. By the 1920's, Jazz swept the nation and became the soundtrack of the decade. But ironically, New Orleans' Jazz never really reached national prominence until it moved to Chicago.

The Red Light district in New Orleans was called Storyville, and it was here that Jazz developed, along the district's main drag, Basin Street. In 1917, however, New Orleans closed Storyville, and Jazz performers who were steadily employed there were out of work. Many found their way up north to Chicago; among the thousands was Louis Armstrong. Before he was encouraged to come to Chicago by band leader King Oliver, Armstrong was relatively unknown outside his home of New Orleans. It was in Chicago that he made his first recordings and began to develop as a bandleader himself.

**Introduce: VHS Jazz band**

### **6. Basin Street Blues (1928)**

Most of the Chicago migrants gravitated to the part of the city known as the "South Side." With its factories and stockyards, there were jobs available, and this part of town became home to an increasing number of African-Americans. In the 1920s, areas on the South Side like "Bronzeville" and "The Stroll," became musical and cultural centers of black life, and if you wanted to come to hear the hottest jazz in the country, played by the best in the business, this was the place to be.

**Introduce: Elli Bezotte to read report by Becca Green**

**Introduce: VHS Jazz band**

### **7. Louis Armstrong - Struttin' With Some Barbeque (1927)**

By the 1930's, the epicenter of jazz had shifted from Chicago to New York where the Harlem Renaissance was in full swing. The blues, however, didn't go anywhere. Still a more accessible location for migrants from Mississippi, Chicago continued to attract some of the most talented bluesmen in the South. One of those was John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson.

Today, the harmonica is an integral part of the Chicago Blues sound. Probably more than anyone else, Sonny Boy Williamson is responsible for that. He made the harmonica a featured instrument, often playing in a call and response style against his vocals. Sonny Boy played the harp with a dexterity and authority that blew audiences away, paving the way for other harp players like Rice Miller and Little Walter. Sonny Boy also took a page from the jazz songbook, and featured a strong rhythm, including an upright bass and drummer, making his music much more danceable than earlier blues. In fact, his recording of "My Little Machine" in 1940 is the first recording of a Chicago blues ensemble with drums. The expression of his harp and the rhythm of his music would lay the foundations of what was to come. Unfortunately, Sonny Boy died at the age of 34 when he was mugged outside his South Side home, a sobering reminder of the daily risks of living in Chicago's urban environment.

**Introduce:**        **Abby Rochford - vocals**  
                         **Blake Rittgers - bass**  
                         **Gerry Hundt - harp**

#### **8. Sonny Boy Williamson I - My Little Machine (1940)**

Born McKinley Morganfield in Rolling Fork, Mississippi, Muddy Waters' life is a microcosm of the story of Chicago Blues. He grew up a sharecropper on the Stovall Plantation, playing guitar at parties and generally for his own enjoyment and emulating other Delta bluesmen like Robert Johnson and Son House. But a turning point came when in 1941, Alan Lomax discovered him while making field recordings for the Library of Congress. He drove up to Muddy's shotgun shack on Stovall Plantation and recorded him right there. Muddy later recalled in *Rolling Stone Magazine*, "Man, you don't know how I felt that Saturday afternoon when I heard that voice and it was my own voice. Later on he sent me two copies of the pressing and a check for twenty bucks, and I carried that record up to the corner and put it on the jukebox. Just played it and played it and said, 'I can do it, I can do it.'"

In 1946, Muddy left the Delta, hopped on the Illinois Central train, and headed north to Chicago, hoping to make it as a musician. Like many migrants, Muddy relied on the help of friends and relatives who were already up north while he got settled. In fact, it was his uncle who gave him his first electric guitar, which allowed him to be heard above all the noisy crowds and urban commotion. Playing his down-home Mississippi Delta blues through an electric guitar was the perfect marriage of the familiar and the modern, and he began to set himself apart in the Chicago music scene. When Polish immigrant Leonard Chess heard him, he decided to sign Muddy to his upstart record label, Aristocrat records. One of these first recordings was "I Can't be Satisfied," which became a regional hit, and Muddy never looked back. He had electrified the blues. Chicago would never be the same.

**Introduce:**        **Declan Murray - drums**  
                         **Kenny Thurman - bass**  
                         **Justus Thomas - guitar/vocals**

#### **9. Muddy Waters - Can't Be Satisfied (1948)**

With the success of Muddy Water's "I Can't Be Satisfied," brothers Leonard and Phil Chess decided to buy a larger space at 2120 South Michigan Ave., and Chess Records was born. From Muddy Waters and Howlin Wolf, to Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley, all of the greats recorded at this location. More than any other company, Chess defined the

sound of Chicago Blues. Leonard Chess took care of his artists while they were recording for him. In fact, he was famous for giving his artists Cadillacs and generous advances when in need. But before you start patting him on the back, you also must realize that these gifts weren't really gifts. They were paid for through some creative accounting and shady contracts. In the end, many artists only got a fraction of the royalties that they deserved, and found out in later years that they didn't fully own the rights to their songs, or weren't compensated fairly for the work they did. Regardless, the reign of Chess Records in Chicago was truly a magical time where the seeds of Rock and Roll were planted, and the Chicago Blues became legendary. Elmore James is just one of a long list of legends to record for Chess Records, and this is his signature song.

**Introduce:           Head Honchos  
                              Lilly Letnich - guitar**

#### **10. Elmore James - Dust My Broom (1951)**

It's said that Maxwell Street is the "Birthplace of the Chicago Blues." From the late 19th century until 1994, Maxwell Street was home to an open air market every Sunday. Market Day was a multi-ethnic extravaganza, with Blacks, Poles, Italians and Jews, all looking for a bargain. These Market Days had an almost fair-like quality to them, with street performers, evangelists, and product demonstrations everywhere you turned. The air was filled with the smells of cooked Vienna Sausages from the nearby Armour meat packing plant, and food vendors specialized in what became known as the Maxwell Street Polish - a sausage topped with grilled onions, peppers, mustard, and a whole pickle. (If you've never had one, you can try get one in the lobby during intermission.) Blues musicians from Mississippi saw Maxwell Street as a steady gig, and many would come out to perform on the street hoping for tips from shoppers. But with the hustle and bustle of the commerce, it was impossible to hear a meager acoustic guitar. Performers turned to microphones, amplifiers, electric guitars, basses, and drums to get their message out, but they needed someplace to plug in. Jewish business owners were, more often than not, willing to extend an extension cord to these musicians, knowing that by attracting people toward the store, they had a better chance of making a sale. Consequently, Maxwell Street came to be filled with the sounds of the electrified Chicago Blues each Sunday. Many famous artists first played on Maxwell St such as Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, Little Walter, and an amazing harp player named Rice Miller, better known as Sonny Boy Williamson II.

**Introduce:           Nick Wagenblast - drums  
                              Gerry Hundt - vocals/harp**

#### **11. Sonny Boy Williamson II (Rice Miller) - Eyesight to the Blind (1951)**

Running north from New Orleans, through the Mississippi Delta, and on up into Canada, Highway 61 has become known as the "Blues Highway," on which countless numbers of bluesmen from the Mississippi Delta have traveled on their way to Chicago.

**Introduce: Daniel Owens to read report on Highway 61 by Sam Behrend**

Chicago blues guitarist Jimmy Rogers (not to be confused with the famous country singer) was a member of Muddy Water's first band along with Little Walter on harmonica. His journey to the Windy City follows Highway 61 from the Mississippi Delta, to Memphis, to St. Louis before finally ending up in Chicago, Illinois. His song, "Chicago Bound," chronicles that journey.

**Introduce:           Sydney Grenier - piano  
                              Max Bailey - vocals**

## **12. Jimmy Rogers - Chicago Bound (1954) w/ Little Walter**

### **INTERMISSION**

Don't let his name fool you; harmonica wizard Marion "Little Walter" Jacobs was a giant on the Chicago blues scene. Originally from the deep South, Little Walter arrived in Chicago at the age of 17. Like many newcomers, he cut his teeth at the crowded outdoor markets on Maxwell St., and realized that if he was to be heard over all the hustle and bustle, he would have to amplify. But Walter didn't just amplify his harp to get louder, he used electricity to expand his musical palette, experimenting with sonic textures to enhance his instrument's power and effect, and was the first harmonica player to do so. Joining Muddy Waters and Jimmy Rogers in 1948, these founding fathers, together known as the Headhunters, electrified the Chicago Blues sound and became the standard by which all other groups were judged. But Little Walter's career wouldn't be limited to merely a sideman. During a Muddy Waters' recording session at Chess in 1952, Leonard Chess reluctantly allowed Walter to record an instrumental that he had been playing live for some years. "Juke" as is was retitled, shot up the R&B charts to #1 and launched Walter's solo career. Between 1952-1958, he scored 14 top 10 hits and achieved national fame. Unfortunately, Little Walter's penchant for drinking, gambling, and just general trouble-making were legendary; once he even drove his Cadillac through the large picture window in front of the chess studios after a financial argument with Leonard Chess. Eventually his wild lifestyle got the best of him and he died from wounds he suffered in a street brawl at the age of 37. But with his dirty, amplified sound and his saxophone-like harmonica riffs, Little Walter's playing revolutionized the blues and changed the sound of Chicago forever.

**Introduce:**        **Caleb Goldfarb - vocals**  
                         **Kate Remijan - maracas**  
                         **Luke Brown - organ**  
                         **Nick Wagenblast - congas**

## **13. Little Walter - Mellow Down Easy (Willie Dixon - 1954)**

After Little Walter hit it big on his own, he left Muddy's band to pursue his solo career, and was replaced by newcomer Junior Wells, a transplant from Memphis. Like Little Walter, Wells would use his time with Muddy Waters as a springboard for a solo career. His most famous album was the legendary *Hoodoo Man Blues*, also featuring the guitar work of Buddy Guy. But what is a "Hoodoo Man?" If you listen to much Chicago Blues, you're bound to hear puzzling terms like "mojo hand," "John the conqueror root," or "black cat bone." These terms, among others, reference a set of Southern superstitions called "Hoodoo." In Hoodoo, a Hoodoo Man, or a Root Doctor, can concoct specific recipes of roots, herbs, rocks, and oils to mix together in a small flannel bag called a "mojo hand." If carried on your person, this mojo hand will supposedly bring you good luck, money, success with the ladies, or produce various other results, depending on the ingredients that are placed inside. These superstitions used to be quite prevalent in places like the Mississippi Delta and Louisiana, and references to them were found in many early Delta Blues songs. So quite naturally, these references also found their way into many Chicago Blues songs as well. In large part, these references are just ways to make the music feel more authentic by paying homage to the culture of their heritage.

**Introduce:**        **Hunter Howard - guitar**  
                         **Chad Clifford - vocals**

## **14. Junior Wells - Hoodoo Man (1965)**

Unlike most of the Chicago migrants who came from Mississippi, Etta James hails from Los Angeles, California. By the time she signed with Chicago's Chess Records, James had already achieved national acclaim, topping the R&B charts in 1954 as part of the vocal group, The Peaches, with their song "Dance With Me Henry." Etta James, however, was not simply a blues artist. She was a multi-faceted vocalist who recorded ballads, jazz, and pop as well. Her powerful vocals and dominant personality made her a dynamic performer who would achieve success not only on the R&B Charts, but also "crossing over" to white audiences as well. With her universal appeal, James helped to bridge the gap between R&B and Rock and Roll, creating many disciples along the way, such as Adele and Beyonce. Her list of awards is staggering - 6 Grammys, 17 Blues awards, and membership in the Rock and Roll, Blues, and Grammy Hall of Fames. One of her most famous songs recorded at Chess was "I'd Rather Go Blind."

**Introduce:**        **Kylie Staples, Julia Fink, Ollie Grcich, Rebecca Roe - vocals**  
                         **Luke Brown - organ**  
                         **Chris Zart - sax**  
                         **Anjie Brooks - vocals**

### **15. Etta James - I'd Rather Go Blind (1960)**

One of the defining qualities of the Chicago Blues is its ego. Artists like Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, Howlin' Wolf and others were eager to tell listeners about their masculinity, their toughness, or their prowess as lovers. Songs like "I'm Ready," "Who Do You Love," or "I'm a Man," were full of bravado, a feature of Chicago Blues that has been adopted by many of today's hip hop artists. While easy to dismiss this as empty boasting, consider that for over two centuries, the United States had told African Americans that they were not human beings but property. Then, after finally being given citizenship, for another century Jim Crow laws and economic segregation communicated to blacks that although they were now Americans, they were not quite as American as whites. Three hundred years of denying a people's humanity apparently will lead blacks to believe that America was not getting the message. Imagine the liberation that someone like Muddy Waters felt when he came to Chicago, plugged in his electric guitar, cranked up the volume on his microphone, and told the world "I'm a MAN!"

There were few women who could stand toe-to-toe with these powerful Chicago bluesmen but one who could was Etta James. In her 1955 declaration, W.O.M.A.N., Etta reminded everyone just how strong and independant a female could be.

**Introduce:**        **Holly Letnich - vocals**  
                         **Lilly Letnich, Gracie Ault, Ruthie Marfoe, Chloe George, Abby Rochford - bkg vocals**  
                         **Madeline Grenier - organ**  
                         **Kate Remijan - tamborine**  
                         **BF Brass**

### **16. Etta James - W.O.M.A.N (1955)**

For over a century , Chicago was the biggest meat packing industry in the country. During various eras in the city's history, rotating immigrant groups, including African-Americans, provided the bulk of the labor force for the famous Chicago Union Stockyards, slaughterhouses, and meat packing plants.

**Introduce: Nick Marrell to read report on the Stockyards by Alaina Kurt**

When Chester Burnett, better known as Howlin' Wolf, wrote the classic song "Killing Floor," he wasn't talking about Chicago's meat packing industry. According to Wolf's guitarist Hubert Sumlin, Wolf was referring to an instance when he and his wife, Helen, were arguing and she shot him full of buckshot, almost killing him. But by using the metaphor of a "Killing Floor," Wolf was conjuring up a vivid image from the slaughterhouses that all Chicagoans would understand.

**Introduce:**        **Logan Conrick - drums**  
                         **Killer Ray Allison - guitar/vocals**  
                         **BF Brass**

### **17. Howlin' Wolf - Killing Floor (1964)**

Ellas McDaniel, or Bo Diddley, as he was better known, was one of the most important figures in American music. He was well-versed in the blues and recorded at Chess records with blues giants like Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf, but he had a sound and a swagger all his own. Born in Mississippi, he was living in Chicago by the age of 6, and learned to play violin through his local church. But after seeing John Lee Hooker perform, he decided that the guitar would be his musical destiny. With knowledge that he learned at Foster Vocational school as a teen, he built his own iconic, rectangular guitar and experimented with electronic effects for his amplifier. He cut his teeth down on Maxwell Street, signed to Chess Records, and went on to become one of the first "guitar slingers" in the burgeoning rock and roll genre. As a musician, Bo Diddley was more concerned about his rhythm than his melodies; many of his songs are just one or two chords, but his rhythms are infectious. He created what is known as the "Bo Diddley Beat," a rhythm that can be found in countless styles of music today. Whereas in the music of Muddy Waters you can hear glimpses of the cotton fields of the American south, in Bo Diddley's music, you are transported back even further, to the drumming of their African homeland.

**Introduce:**        **Annalee Cvelbar, Julia Fezatt, Mary Biggs, Mira Carlson - bkg vocals**  
                         **Luke Brown - congas**  
                         **Kate Remijan - maracas**  
                         **Jake Snider - vocals**  
                         **Sam Carlson - guitar**

### **18. Bo Diddley - Who Do You Love (1957)**

During WWII, a second big wave of migrants arrived in Chicago looking for work, and this caused overcrowding in many South Side neighborhoods. Many began to expand to the West Side of the city and by the 1950s and 60s, an expanding West Side community began to appear. The West Side became a very segregated territory with white residents moving out to other neighborhoods. With this "white flight," the quality of schools and other city services began to suffer, sometimes disappearing completely. Teachers, professionals, and businesses all moved out, leaving the West Side with sub-par schools, abandoned storefronts, and dilapidated housing. It was a community that the city chose to ignore. At one point, the city even stopped garbage pickup to some West Side communities, leaving trash to pile-up in the streets, attracting rats, roaches, and pests of all kinds. Adjacent white neighborhoods used real estate tactics like redlining to keep blacks out, restricting the freedom of blacks from living wherever they wanted, creating segregated and decaying black communities. Dr. Martin Luther King even came to Chicago in 1966 to try and raise awareness of these urban housing problems, renting an apartment on the West Side. It was in this overcrowded and dilapidated area of town that a new, angrier style of Chicago Blues emerged that featured expressive vocals and explosive lead guitar playing from artists like Buddy Guy, Magic Sam, and the great Otis Rush.

**Introduce:**        **Kylie Staples - vocals**



**Logan Conrick - guitar**  
**Michael Schaefer-Murray - guitar**  
**BF Brass**

### **19. Otis Rush - I Can't Quit You Baby (Willie Dixon - 1956)**

Railroads have played a pivotal role in Chicago's development. One of the most important railroads was the Illinois Central, which ran from the Gulf of Mexico to Chicago, snaking through the Mississippi Delta. Some larger Delta plantations even had spurs that connected directly to the main line, providing easy access for sharecroppers to travel north and bring the blues to Chicago with them during the Great Migration.

Many of these trains were equipped with elegant sleeping cars, known as Pullman Cars. The Pullman Palace Car Company was founded in Chicago by George Pullman in 1867. Pullman not only built the rail cars, but he leased them to railroad companies fully staffed and operational. Pullman thought that newly freed slaves would be great as service staff in these cars, and hired thousands of African-Americans as porters, becoming the largest employer of blacks in the country. Often, these porters carried with them copies of Chicago's black newspaper, *the Defender*, and distributed them at railroad stations throughout the south. *The Defender* did much to persuade southern blacks to come to the Windy City. Billing Chicago as the "promised land," it organized migrant clubs and offered group discounts on train fare. By distributing these papers, the Pullman Porters greatly encouraged migration to Chicago. These porters, however, were growing increasingly frustrated with their working conditions. Forced to work long hours for low wages, they also had to pay for their own uniforms, meals, and shoe polish to shine customer's shoes. Their wages reflected only a fraction of the hours they worked, and while passengers were resting peacefully in their fancy sleeping berths, porters were given no time or place in which to sleep. These conditions prompted the porters to unionize, and in 1925 they formed the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters, the first African American union, to fight for better working conditions. A decade later, they were finally successful at gaining concessions from the Pullman company, a moment that historians recognize as one of the first steps in America's Civil Rights Movement.

When Chicago bluesman Jimmy Reed sang "Big Boss Man," one can't help but reflect on the story of those Pullman Porters.

**Introduce:**        **Nate Kaufman - vocals**  
                         **Hunter Howard - vocals**  
                         **Jack Wilburn - guitar**

### **20. Jimmy Reed - Big Boss Man (1960)**

Chicago Blues would not be what it is today without the genius of Willie Dixon. Born in Vicksburg, Mississippi, Dixon was a Gold Gloves boxer and string bass player who signed with Chess Records in 1952. Over time, Dixon became a jack of all trades, writing songs, producing, playing bass, recruiting new talent, arranging music – you name it, he did it. He was the man behind the scenes who wrote many of today's best known blues songs, and played stand-up bass on almost all of the classic Chess records. In the 60s, he assembled an all-star blues band and spread the blues throughout Europe. Furthermore, numerous bands like the Allman Brothers, the Stones, and the Doors have recorded Willie Dixon songs, unfortunately, sometimes without Dixon credit for authorship. In fact, Willie Dixon had to sue Led Zeppelin in court to receive royalties for songwriting contributions to "Whole Lotta Love" and "Bring it On Home." In his later years, he founded the Blues Heaven Foundation, housed in the old Chess building on Michigan Ave., to preserve the legacy of the blues and help blues artists fight for the back

royalties and compensation that they deserve. This year will mark 100 years since Dixon's birth, and the Blues Heaven Foundation has many exciting events planned to celebrate his life and incredible body of work.

**Introduce:**        **Lilly Letnich - vocals**  
                         **Kate Remijan - tamborine**  
                         **Chloe George, Elli Bezotte, Ruthie Marfoe - bkg vocals**  
                         **BF Brass**

### **21. Koko Taylor - Wang Dang Doodle (Willie Dixon 1965)**

The story of the Hound Dog Taylor is the story of the Chicago Blues. Once a Mississippi sharecropper, Hound Dog found his way to Chicago's Maxwell St. in the 1940s. He played around the city for decades, becoming an institution in South and West Side clubs, but it wasn't until he was 55 years old that he got his big break.

**Introduce: Sydney Grenier to read report on Hound Dog Taylor and Alligator Records by Madeline Grenier**

**Introduce:**        **Quintin Danzi - guitar**  
                         **Kate Remijan - tamborine**

### **22. Hound Dog Taylor - Give Me Back My Wig (1971)**

The heyday of Chicago blues has come and gone, and so have the lives of such greats as Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Sonny Boy Williamson and the rest. But there is one that is still alive and kicking - Buddy Guy. The son of a Louisiana sharecropper, he learned to play on a home-made 2 string Diddley Bow when he was just 7. When he was 21, he hopped a train and made his way to Chicago, where he heard that he could make three times as much as he was in the South. But when he got there, he couldn't find work. He was going days without eating, and was actually contemplating going back to Louisiana. But one fateful night at the 708 Club in Bronzeville, Buddy convinced Otis Rush to let him play a few songs before his set started. The owner was so impressed that he hired him on the spot. Some patrons began talking to Buddy and he revealed how hungry he was, and one of them stepped away to make a call. A little while later, Muddy Waters walked in with some Salami and a loaf of bread and said, "I'm Mud. I heard you're hungry." By 1960, he was a session man at Chess Records, accompanying the greats like Muddy, Wolf, Sonny Boy, Little Walter. His playing has been a huge influence on many rock and rollers like Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, and Jeff Beck. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2005, given a Kennedy Center Honor by the President in 2012, and just a couple weeks ago, was awarded a lifetime achievement award at the 2015 Grammys to go along with his 6 other Grammy awards.

Today, Buddy own's Legends, the premier blues club in Chicago, and plays there each January for sold out crowds. In addition to Legends, and a handful of other Chicago blues clubs, since 1984, Chicago has hosted the "Chicago Blues Festival," which is the largest free blues festival in the world, attracting some half million people each year. For three days in June, world class blues musicians descend on the Windy City to play on multiple stages throughout Grant Park. This year, they'll be paying tribute to the great Willie Dixon. If you've never been, its worth checking out; the Southshore will take you right there. You may just hear Buddy Guy play the blues...

**Introduce:**        **Planetary Blues Band**  
                         **Greg Guy - guitar**

**23. Buddy Guy - Meet Me in Chicago**