

## Mp3 Mike Kindred - Handstand



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Boogie-Woogie, barrelhouse, sultry, sleazy, piano Blues. "Two guys, two days, one room, live." 14 MP3 Songs

**BLUES: Piano Blues, BLUES: Texas Style Details:** Mike Kindred is no ordinary blues pianist. Over the past thirty odd years he has penned a blues classic, worked with blues legends Stevie Ray and Jimmie Vaughan, Lou Ann Barton, Lightnin' Hopkins, Big Mama Thornton and James Cotton. He's toured extensively with Johnny "Clyde" Copeland, Gatemouth Brown and Delbert McClinton. A stint with the incredible Joe Ely band of the early 80's saw him working across North America and Europe sharing stages with the likes of The Rolling Stones, Linda Ronstadt and The Clash. Through it all he has developed and maintained a unique, "personal" style that transcends traditional blues borders by incorporating elements of jazz, gospel and rock. Buoyed by his father's encouragement to explore his "swing sensibility" while taking classical piano lessons as a youngster, Dallas native Kindred stretched out and discovered the many facets of jazz. He was particularly drawn to the piano of Oscar Peterson and Herbie Nichols, while at the same time listening to John Lee Hooker and Elmore James. And then there was Boogie-Woogie. "I've been playing Boogie-Woogie all my life, it seems", says Kindred. As a teenager he co-founded Krackerjack, a hard rocking blues band that featured the rhythm section of Tommy Shannon and Uncle John Turner. In Austin, that band went through a succession of guitarists including Stevie Ray Vaughan. That association led to Triple Threat with Stevie Ray, Lou Ann Barton and W.C. Clark and co-writing the song that would eventually, as he relates, "be my greatest success, my calling card, the song that has paid my bills for 13 years and made me a homeowner, "Cold Shot"." After 20 years of being an experienced and in demand sideman, Kindred decided that, "My apprenticeship was over and it was time to do what I do best." The band Shakedown followed, with limited success, followed by a series of duos. Then the business side of the music scene intervened. "It's hard to keep a band

together, keep the players happy and keep the jobs coming in. The economics of the scene in Austin are such that everyone is a free agent; they go where the money is." 1999 and 2000 saw Kindred working primarily as a hired gun in the studio where a producer who heard him warming up one day encouraged him to "record that stuff." Which is where Loudhouse Records enters the scene. Producer and label owner Booka Michel took on the project of recording an all-piano record with Mike Kindred and a drummer. "Booka has an eclectic enough label that he figured an album like this would work", said Kindred, "and he introduced me to a killer drummer in Dexter Walker". The result is an album that showcases 14 original songs and the incredibly steady and strong left hand of Mike Kindred. It's there, holding down the bottom end along with Walkers' kit, while Kindred's left hand explores jazz, rock and a touch of New Orleans for good measure. "Because we're not working in a traditional trio format with a bass player, my left hand always has to be there, playing the bass line with the drummer", Kindred explains, "but that leaves my right hand free to showcase my personal style of blues that has jazz strains and other touches". The recording itself was "not an easy session", according to Kindred. "We rehearsed it and went into the studio (Cedar Creek Studios in Austin) with the expressed intention to strictly let people hear what happens when a piano player and a drummer sit down. There were no overdubs, save for a couple of vocals." As such, the recording has a spontaneity and live feel that invites the listener right into the studio for that session. However, it's not easy recording an album of blues piano that has the dynamics to keep you listening time after time. Kindred has accomplished just that, with rolling barrelhouse, boogie, down 'n' dirty blues, jazz chording and a touch of blues-rock. No easy feat, but then Mike Kindred has over 3 decades of first hand experience with audiences and musicians to draw from. With the release of his Loudhouse Records debut "Handstand" Mike Kindred has served notice that he's ready to share his personal musical vision with the world at large. Open your ears and take it in.

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