

Zydeco Good Times

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C.J. Chenier - Can't Sit Down

C.J. Chenier

[Can't Sit Down](#) (World Village 468109, 2011)

Zydeco accordion master [C.J. Chenier](#) is back with with an album titled [Can't Sit Down](#). Although Chenier belongs to one of the most famous Zydeco musician families in recent history, his music can equally be described as blues, where the dazzling accordion plays the role of the electric guitar or harmonica. *"You gotta add flavor,"* says the accordion phenomenon. *"When I started playing with my daddy, he played flavorful all night. He played blues, some boogie, he played some waltzes. He mixed it up. You put a good blues on there and it'll energize the rest of the album."*

[C.J. Chenier](#) recorded [Can't Sit Down](#) live, in just one session, at Rock Romano's Red Shack Studio in Houston, Texas. His goal was to capture the freshness of his music. and this is why he decided to produce the album himself.

"I figured that nobody knows better what I want than I do," he says. *"Nobody knows better how I want my accordion to sound. Nobody knows better how I want my band to sound. So I decided to stop going with other people's ears and start going with my own."*

The album includes pieces by C.J. 's father, the legendary Clifton Chenier, including the opening track 'Can't Sit down'. *"I really liked it so I said, 'OK, let's try this one,' and everybody fell right in. It just clicked. That's a sign that something is a keeper, when everybody can fall in and it feels good."*

One of [C.J. Chenier](#)'s original compositions is a tribute to his uncle, Cleveland Chenier. *"He's the grandfather of the washboard,"* says C.J. *"Nobody has the technique he had. My uncle Cleveland used to call me sometimes on Sundays and he'd say, 'I'm coming to pick you up. We're gonna take a ride.' We'd go ride around. He'd always have a half pint of Crown Royale in his top coat pocket. He'd pick me up on Sundays and him and me would hit a club here and hit a club there, and just have a good time."*

Curtis Mayfield's "We Gotta Have Peace" closes the album. *"That song reflects what I've been feeling,"* C.J. says. *"We need peace, we gotta have it. That's why I have my grandson talking in the beginning, because if we don't get it together, where is his future?"*

[Can't Sit Down](#) is a formidable Zydeco and blues album by accordion maestro [C.J. Chenier](#).