

For immediate release: *Blues on Beale Street, Memoirs of The International Blues Challenge* book

documentingBlues held the official debut of their photo book ***Blues on Beale Street, Memoirs of The International Blues Challenge*** on January 22, 2015 at the Silly Goose Lounge, in Memphis, TN during the 2015 International Blues Challenge.

Blues on Beale Street, Memoirs of the International Blues Challenge is the first book to be published about the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in its 31 year history. The expressive and beautiful photography of **Jenn Ocken** is accompanied by a series of personal experiences, short stories, song lyrics and quotes collected from a vast variety of International Blues Challenge attendees. The book is a collaboration between Jenn Ocken and writer **Greg “Slim Lively” Johnson**, both long time IBC volunteers, who will help you relive through photos and stories those who experienced the event firsthand.

documentingBlues donated 20% of the pre-ordered books to **The Blues Foundation’s Generation Blues Fund**, helping to raise scholarship money for young aspiring Blues musicians. “By raising scholarship money we are encouraging these kids to follow their passion, live the dream, and encouraging them to keep giving so much of what is beautiful inside them,” noted Ocken.

Ocken also set up a program called **“Buy a Book, Give a Book”** that allowed purchasers to buy a second book as donations that were handed out to each of the 103 young participants taking part in the 2015 IBC Youth Showcase held on January 23 in multiple clubs on Beale Street.

About Jenn Ocken, documentingBlues photographer from Baton Rouge, LA: Since the beginning of her professional career in 2002, Jenn Ocken has been working on building a library of images she calls her documentingBlues fine art of life collection. “Blues is an amazing art form. I love the experience of watching a musician perform with his or her whole heart! My photos are a direct expression of the feelings I have for these artists as they play. I strive to capture the emotions the musicians share with their fans as they are on stage performing. It is so powerful to think that, as musicians, they truly give of themselves to us. I am so thankful to be one of those fans that understand the beauty of the musicians’ art. It is my mission to reflect that beauty in my photographs.” Ocken’s eleven-year self-assignment has allowed her to document the IBC in Memphis, all in efforts to create *Blues on Beale Street Memoirs of The International Blues Challenge*.

About Greg “Slim Lively” Johnson, writer and blues society president from Portland, OR: Greg Johnson has been writing reviews, blues articles, musician bios and more for nearly twenty years, underscoring his deep passion for the blues. He gets why the musicians can’t stop playing, and his work encourages and inspires. “One of the most dedicated longtime blues aficionados, writers, nurturers, volunteers, friends, and support persons of the music we love that I know or have ever met. I’m proud and honored to call Greg ‘Slim Lively’ Johnson my friend.” - Michael “Hawkeye” Herman

For more information about “Blues on Beale Street, Memoirs of The International Blues Challenge,” Jenn Ocken or to order copies, visit www.documentingBlues.com/IBC or contact Jenn Ocken directly at 225-590-3731.

Here's what people are saying about *Blues on Beale Street, Memoirs of The International Blues Challenge*

"This book is really well done. Because you two understand the IBC you were able to 'document' it. I highly recommend this book to anyone who thinks The Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge is something special or to anyone who wants to be inspired in print about the music they love to hear." - **Jay Sieleman, President of The Blues Foundation**

"Buying the book was the icing on the cake for me (at the IBC in Memphis), Jenn and Greg." -**Michael Frank of Earwig Music, Chicago, IL**

"You're skill and passion for photography is just great!!! The world will see and hear the blues with your shots!" - **Reinald Jerome Pineda, pianist for the 2015 band finalist, Brat Pack from the Philippines**

"I absolutely LOVE my *Blues on Beale Street*! The book is absolutely fabulous! I can't put it down!!!" - **Terri Robbins, National Women in the Blues**

"LOVE the book! It is now one of my most treasured possessions." -**Karen Lovely, past IBC finalist from Portland, OR**

"You two have done a great thing with this book. Well done and congratulations." -**David Hughes, President of Spa City Blues Society, Hot Springs, AR**

"The book is awesome!!! Jenn Ocken and Greg Slim Lively Johnson did an amazing job. I have yet to look though it with out tears! So much hard work and good times documented forever!" - **Joe Whitmer, producer of IBC and Chief Operating Officer at The Blues Foundation.**

"You are a pure talent with no hype! Rare!!! I like you and your book! Memphis real!!! Yes!!!" - **Earle Farrell from KWAM 990 Memphis**

"*Blues on Beale Street, Memoirs of the International Blues Challenge* will be something to treasure and pass down. You can definitely see the passion and love poured into this great work!" - **Jennifer Pina, Mother of the Pina Brothers Youth Band from Wichita, KS**

"I knew this book would be a good representation of the International Blues Challenge, but when I was actually able to have it in my hands and see the photographs and read the quotes attached it went way beyond my expectations. The passion and care that went into this is the first thing that grabs you, it is a very powerful presentation of what the International Blues Challenge is all about. The quality and attention to detail is top shelf. You quickly realize that the International Blues Challenge is not so much about the competition of musician to musician or band to band, but rather a celebration of music and all that it adds to our lives. The fellowship and mutual support between all who attend the International Blues Challenge just leaps out. This book is a great addition to anyone's library!" - **Tony Frederickson, President of the Washington Blues Society Seattle**