

Time Out

Chicago

Cultural HEROES

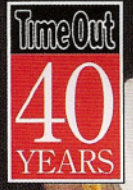
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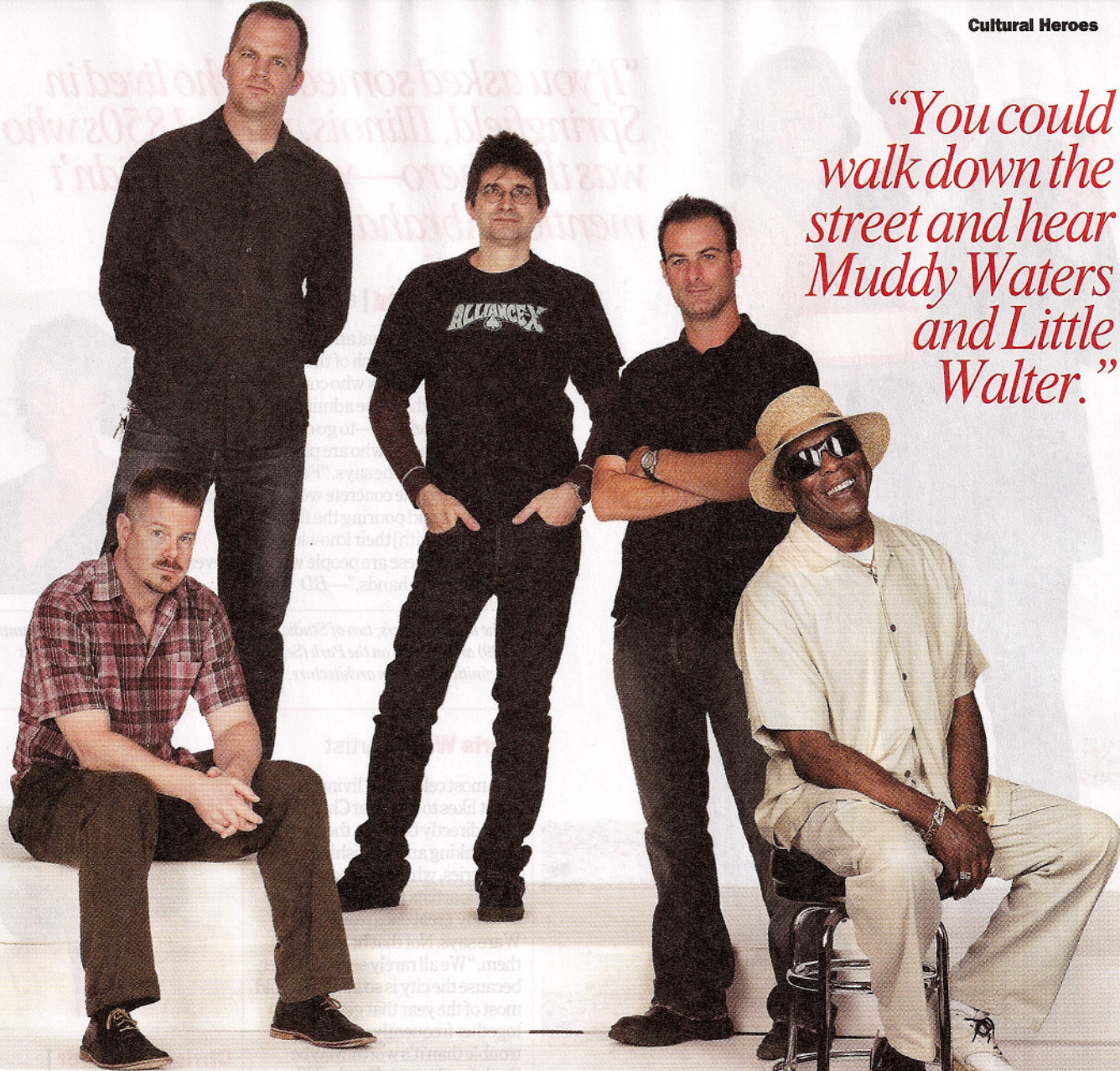
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“You could walk down the street and hear Muddy Waters and Little Walter.”



NOTEWORTHY From left, Vandermark, Ryan, Albini, Finkelman, Guy.

Ken Vandermark | jazz musician

You can throw out the MacArthur “genius” grant, the European fame and accolades, and even the acclaimed documentary about his life, *Musician*. Because Vandermark’s quintessential Chicago moment—“every time I hear Fred Anderson play at the Velvet Lounge”—has nothing to do with his own fame. It’s that humble attitude and devotion to the craft that have kept Vandermark’s remarkable career as a performer, promoter and godfather to the city’s great free-jazz-flowering genre moving forward. Although he was raised in New England (he moved here in 1989), few artists embody the working-class ideals of Chicago—constant performing and self-improvement, endless touring and lifting up those around you—better than Vandermark. —*Matthew Lurie*

This fall, Vandermark is releasing new albums on Not Two Records from his Resonance Project, as well as Collected Fiction (Okka Disk), a two-CD set of improvised duos with premier Chicago and European jazzers.

Buddy Guy | blues man

Toting his guitar from Louisiana to Chicago in 1957, Guy recorded for Chess Records in the '60s as a session man with blues elders such as Muddy Waters. As a solo act a few years later, he fused blues and rock, influencing greats like Hendrix and Clapton. But it’s the memories of those salad days of Chicago blues that stick out in his memory. “It was the heydays of Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf and Little Walter and all those people who made Chicago blues great,” he says. “You could walk down the street and hear Muddy Waters coming out of the club and Little Walter coming out of the other side—24/7—you couldn’t tell what day of the week it was. At the famous blues club the 708, you could hear Jimmy Reed and all the giants of blues. I made a dollar [or a] dollar and a quarter a night to play there.” —*John Dugan*

Guy released a new album, Skin Deep, in July and spent the summer on a world tour. He was recently honored with the first Great Performer of Illinois Award.