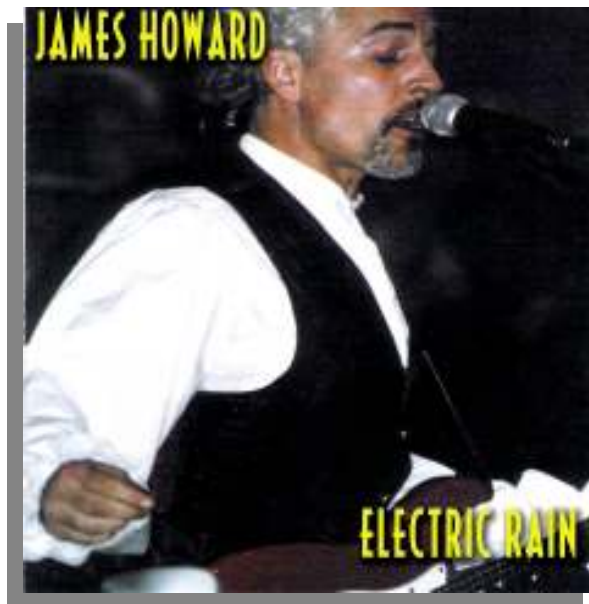


# ROCK & BLUES NEWS

## CD Review

By Lee Cotten, Editor



At first listen Howard seems to be just another very good psychedelic-blues-rock guitarist with an undistinguished vocal delivery. But he's also a songwriter of great depth; he wrote everything here except 'House of the Rising Sun'. From Northern California, Howard writes songs of depression that are not depressing and he opens with four in a row. Just when you might be tempted to toss the CD in favor of something a little more fun, he plays "Chicken Lips", a rompin' instrumental. Later he throws in a fantastic 5-minute instrumental version of "Rising

like none I've heard before. In fact, the last half of the CD has several really fine numbers: "A Girl like You", "Arrow through my Heart" and "With the Radio On". But the piece de resistance comes at the end. "Open Up My Heart" is a slow soul-blues in the Otis Redding vein. Whew, what emotion! As for Howard, he's tougher to categorize than you might think- sort of a Jimi Hendrix on guitar with John Lennon's voice and vision. Very interesting.