

eBLUESLETTER

Charlotte Blues Society

August 2022

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As former President and Vice President of Charlotte Blues Society over the past many years, I was blessed to have been able to follow in the footprints of those who started this amazing organization. We recently lost one of the founding members, Bill Buck.

I first met Bill through Nita Belk who performed together with Nita Belk and her soirée. His talent was evident, his love for music was genuine. We never sat down and had a heart to heart conversation and I could never say I was a close friend of his, that would be untruthful. The people who knew him best can tell you stories about Bill the man. I can only say that the musician I knew, or rather the musician I met on many occasions, was a fine one, a gentleman, and someone who garnered the respect of his peers. Charlotte Blues Society was blessed to have had Bill Buck along with Beth Polhammer as founding members of the society. Without them, CBS would never have come to fruition. To those who knew him best and were close intimate friends, I offer my sincere condolences. Charlotte Blues Society owes you a debt of gratitude.

Mary London Szpara

Playing the Blues with Bill Buck

By Michael Wolf Ingmire

Moving to Charlotte, with my wife Sharon, in 2004, I discovered a well-established Blues scene here. The folks at the Charlotte Blues Society and musicians like *Rusty Barkley and Lenny Federal* made me feel immediately welcome. In the course of time, I grew especially close to *Robin and Tony Rogers*.

I was blessed to have many phone conversations with Robin Rogers once I got settled into this town. Those conversations were almost always pertinent to our shared existence as musicians and as individuals seeking a higher spiritual ground on this bitter earth. I miss those conversations.

Robin and Tony had a Tuesday night residency at the *Double Door Inn*. Robin invited me out to play with her and Tony. One occasion was after I had been rified from the job that I originally came to Charlotte for at the beginning of June 2007. That first Tuesday after I lost my job, *Drummer Jim Brock and Bassist Bill Buck* were sitting in as the rhythm section that night. Much to my pleasure, we played two tunes with me on guitar, a Robert Johnson song and one by Jimi Hendrix.

I realized within those two tunes that Bill Buck was both a great bassist and a great guy. Bill was very even tempered and friendly. All of the musicians there; Bill, Jim, Tony and Robin made me feel the best I had felt since the days before I had lost my job. They all encouraged me to pursue playing music full time.

I had been playing in a band called **Michael Wolf and a Side of Blues** with another great **Bassist Randall Cowles and Drummer Frank Hoffman**. Regrettably, that band had pretty much run its course. Randall Cowles is now playing Bass with Bill Miller and is a great asset to Bill's band.

That night, talking outside of the Double Door, Bill and I decided to form a band together. As we both were apt on our perspective instruments, we decided to find a drummer and form a trio. Economical line-up, then and now.

Fairly soon after Bill and I met, we hooked up with a **Berklee School of Music Graduate, Drummer John Cuff**. Cuff is a stunning drummer. Within about a week, we had put together three sets of material; North Hill Mississippi Blues, like **R.L. Burnside and Junior Kimbrough**, New Orleans Funk like **Dr. John** and my originals, among other Blues & Roots music. After years of playing, Bill Buck and John Cuff stand tall among the rhythm sections I have worked with.

I always felt Bill was older than me. Found out recently that he was actually three years younger. His maturity and work ethic as a musician is still a touchstone to embrace. His tone and facility as a Bass player still amazes me. Bill, like my father, did service to our Country in the Armed Services. He was a kind, considerate, gentleman musician. Additionally, he was one of the best jazz guitarists in the area. His style recalled the jazz guitar great, Joe Pass. At the time that we started playing together he was teaching guitar at Howren Music and at Charlotte Catholic. Bill had an impeccable Blues pedigree with his time with **Tone Deaf James & the Bedrockers**. A stunning band who played the Southern Blues circuit and who backed up Blues legends like **Frank Frost**, among many.

Back in 1993, Bill formulated the idea, along with **Beth Pollhammer, James Linton, and Nick Karres (Owner of the Double Door Inn)**, to establish a Blues Society. Their shared respect of the Blues, as an art form, developed into what we know today as the **Charlotte Blues Society**.

I have some special memories of Bill that I would like to share here:

1. Bill was a vegan and was one of the healthiest people that I knew. He was trim and in good shape. Probably due to the 40 to 50 mile bike rides that he consistently did as a weekly form of exercise. He pursued a martial arts study as part of his health care discipline. On gigs and on the road, he always brought his own food, known affectionately as "Bill's Lunch."
2. Bill was always moving on stage. During one song that we covered, **Sonny Landreth's "Congo Square,"** there is a point where the band drops out and the guitar solo took place, unaccompanied, in the forefront. At the peak, Bill would do a stationary leap that would have made Pete Townsend envious.
3. Bill Buck was a great supporter of the creative thought and process. I had an open forum with Bill to bring in original material. That support extended to drummers John Cuff and equally creative drummer Mike Scarboro (Who replaced Cuff in the latter part of 2008). With the exception of some of the bands I had played with while living in Virginia and the Charlotte based A Side of Blues band; The rhythm sections of Michael Wolf & the Voodoo Brothers were totally supportive of original material, even material that had previously languished on my back burner.
4. Michael Wolf and the Voodoo Brothers played several noteworthy gigs in the first three years of our four year plus stint. Gigs such as **First Night In Charlotte** (Freezing on a New Years Eve), **2009 and 2010 appearances at Mac Arnold's Cornbread and Collard Green Festivals**, among many.
5. We also joined forces with the Charlotte Blues Society, in July 2011, for a Benefit for Charlotte music fan, **Liz Thomas**, who was suffering with Stage Three Melanoma. Also appearing at that Benefit were such regional stalwarts as **Matt Walsh, Robin & Tony Rogers, Shane Pruitt, Sonny Skyzz, The All Blues Band, Jill Deneen, The King Bees** among others. A great moment for the Blues community. We ended up losing Liz a few months after this benefit, but all involved demonstrated a fierce love for Liz and a higher human principle articulated by music.
6. The Voodoo Brothers had a last hurrah when we entered the **Blues Showcase for the Jeff Cheen organized Charlotte Music Awards at Benchwarmers in Salisbury, NC**, in November 2011. We won for **Best Blues Band of 2011**.

On December 8, 2011, at the Halton Theater, we accepted our award and a delightful print of a photo of **SRV** taken by famed music photographer, **Jan Jenson**. Both photo and award rest on my shelf. We played one last song. It was our last appearance together.



I was honored to play music with Bill Buck, John Cuff and, ultimately, second drummer Mike Scarboro for a period exceeding four years. Our music had both quality and passion. Referenced on the bottom of this article are some live performance YouTube videos from June and July 2011 at the legendary **Double Door Inn**.

As we all know by now, Bill Buck died unexpectedly on June 17, 2022 in his Charlotte apartment. As of today's date, July 8, 2022, I still don't know the cause of Bill's death. There is now another missing piece in the collective heart of the Charlotte music community.

Some local musicians shared my sentiments, and more, about Bill Buck:

Tony Rogers stated the following: "Met Bill at CBS late 1999-1998, he was part of the house band. We had Military service, music and lifting weights in common. Bill was kind of my hero. Because he was so disciplined in his pursuit of music and health and because he was such a nice guy. Great conversationalist. The kind of guy that you aspire to be, but fall short of the goal."

Local Blue Dog Junction guitarist, Bryan Porter, also contributed the following about Bill Buck: "For many years Bill and I would get together and chat about all things life, not just music. I would pick his brain about music. We would get together at the house and jam and I would always talk him into a mini lesson about theory and what not. Despite all of this, it wasn't his knowledge about music that was the biggest gift he gave me as a musician. Bill gave me the confidence and courage to be myself as a musician and to get out of my own head."

Time and space allowing, I am sure many of the area's musicians would share similar stories and perceptions about Bill Buck. He was a musical partner, mentor and teacher to many of us. It is not what we do in this life that is meaningful, it is who we touch throughout our life that counts.

In closing, as previously promised, we have a literary, New Orleans Second-Line funeral tribute to Bill:

Michael Wolf & the Voodoo Brothers, "Blues is My Business," June 2011, Double Door Inn.

<https://youtu.be/xCrutxkjfuc>

Same night, June 2011, Double Door Inn, "Heated Hoodoo" Special Guest Bryan Porter on Guitar. Bryan filmed song one and two.

<https://youtu.be/QwDG7AtgPkA>

July 2011, Finale at the Double Door Inn, Liz Thomas Benefit, "In the Basement." Voodoo Brothers with Joy Almond, Sheila Grady Carlisle and Jillie Dineen. Filmed by Jan Jenson.

<https://youtu.be/GZ6gnoUJS0I>



Photos by Jan Jenson

REMEMBERING BILL BUCK (FEB. 28, 1960 - JUNE 17, 2022)



We are saddened to announce the death of Bill Buck, co-founder of the Charlotte Blues Society. He passed on Friday, June 17, 2022 in Charlotte.

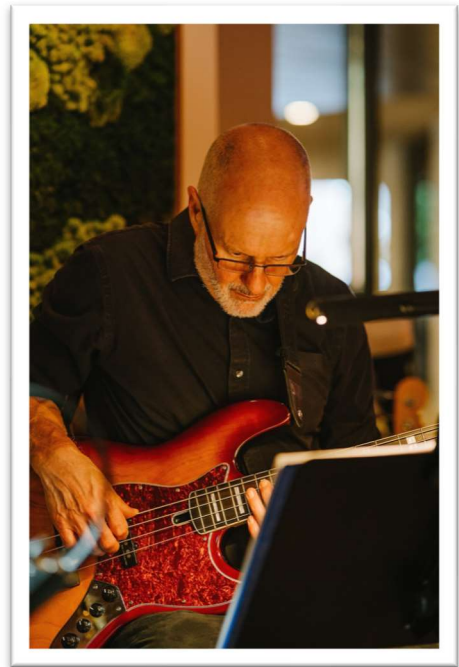
Bill was a veteran, a father, a teacher, and a musician. In the early '90s, he was a member of the band, *Tone Deaf James & the Bedrockers*, traveling throughout the "chitlin circuit" including appearances at the King Biscuit Blues Festival in Helena, Arkansas. In addition, they would be the back-up band for individual guest artists at CBS meetings. In more recent years, he played with *Nita B & Her Soiree* and as a duo with Nita performing jazz. Bill also taught bass and jazz guitar. He was frequently seen on the Double Door stage playing bass during CBS jams.

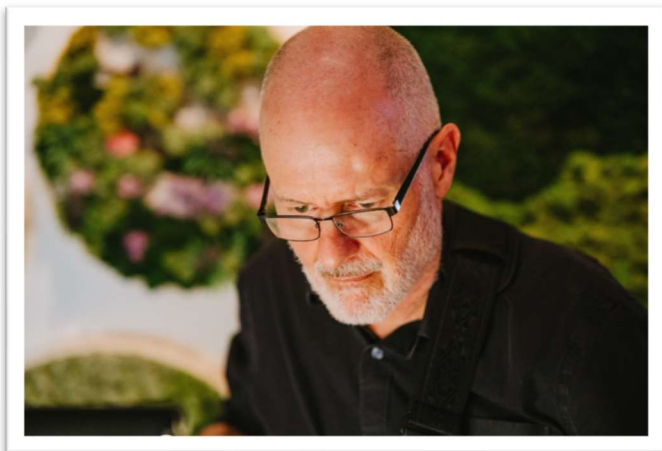
The Charlotte Blues Society is proud to sponsor a Memorial Jam in Bill's honor July 31 at Smokey Joe's Cafe. Doors at 3PM, Jam at 7. Backline provided.

Proceeds from the Memorial Jam will go to fund a "brick-for-the-blues" at the Blues Hall of Fame to honor Bill.

There will be opportunities for everyone to say, sing, play or pray. Help us celebration his life, **July 31, 2022.**





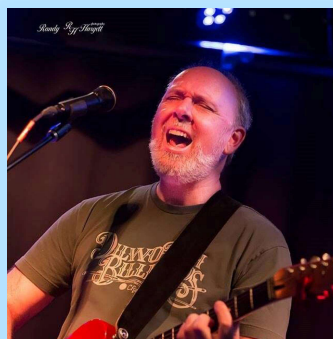


UPCOMING BLUES SUNDAYS



AUGUST 7, 2022
MIGHTY FINE BLUES JAM WITH
RON SHEEHAN

Neighborhood Theatre
511 36th St., Charlotte, NC
7PM doors, 7:30PM show



SEPT 4, 2022
MIGHTY FINE BLUES JAM WITH
DAVE FORAKER

NEIGHBORHOOD THEATRE
511 36th St., Charlotte, NC
7PM doors, 7:30PM show



Blues Jam Guidelines are posted to the www.charlottebluessociety.org downloads page.

Sign-up is required at the show. Sign-up EARLY!!! Like when you arrive, mon.

Oct 2, 2022

Blues Challenge returns. Open to Bands and Solo/Duo acts.

Applications open June 15, 2022.

*IBC [rules](#) apply.

Nov 6, 2022

Stay tuned. We are cooking up some blues!

Dec 4, 2022

Christmas Bash with Johnny Burgin

Raffles, Silent Auction, Prizes

Check him out on [YouTube](#)

CONTESTS!

The Road to Memphis Begins in Charlotte! Competition scheduled for Sunday October 2.

Enter as a Solo/Duo or Band.

Win the Charlotte Blues Challenge and you would represent the Charlotte Blues Society in

Memphis January 2023 at the

[International Blues Challenge](#).

Download the Entry Form Below.

Pay the \$50

registration fee on line.

If you are interested in Helping with this Challenge in any capacity, Please contact a board member.

The Charlotte Blues Society is searching for Blues Bands & Solo/Duo Performers who are ready for the stage & their next big break at the Charlotte Blues Challenge



Sunday October 2

**Register and rules at Charlottebluessociety.org
Neighborhood Theater
511 E. 36th St. Charlotte 28205**



International Songwriting Competition

[International Songwriting Competition | The #1 Song Contest for Songwriters](#)

WHAT IS ISC?

The **International Songwriting Competition (ISC)** is an annual song contest whose mission is to provide the opportunity for both aspiring and established songwriters to have their songs heard in a professional, international arena. ISC is designed to nurture the musical talent of songwriters on all levels and promote excellence in the art of songwriting. Amateur and professional songwriters and musicians from anywhere in the world are invited to participate. ISC has the most prestigious panel of judges of all the songwriting and music contests in the world, offering exposure and the opportunity to have your songs heard by the most influential decision-makers in the music industry.

WIN CASH, PRIZES, RECOGNITION, AND EXPOSURE!

ISC will be running special promotions for its 2022 competition providing additional opportunities and the chance to enter until early 2023.

Logo Contest 30th Anniversary of CBS

Submit as many entries as you would like using the submission form on the [web page](#). Students and Artists encouraged!

Get Creative and see your art on our 30th Anniversary Merch & Swag!

Contest begins April 1, 2022 and ends February 1, 2023.



MORE LOCAL SHOWS AND FESTIVALS

<p>Mac Arnold & Plate Full O Blues Friday August 12, 6-9PM Matthews Community Center</p>	<p>Jack White Thursday August 25 Charlotte Metro Credit Union Amphitheatre</p>	<p>John Coltrane International Jazz and Blues Festival Sept 3-4 Oak Hollow Festival Park High Point, NC</p>
<p>15th Annual New River Blues Festival Sunday Sept 4, 1-6PM Grassy Creek, NC</p>	<p>GA20 Wednesday Oct 12 The Fillmore Charlotte</p>	<p>Marcus King Tuesday Oct 25 The Fillmore Charlotte</p>



Albert Castiglia at USNWC July 7, 2022

RAFFLE GUITAR
Fender Starcaster Strat
with Black Metallic finish



Signatures include:

- ◆ Eddie Turner
- ◆ Christone "Kingfish" Ingram
- ◆ Vanessa Collier
- ◆ Laura Chavez
- ◆ Samantha Fish
- ◆ Jamie McLean
- ◆ Albert Cummings
- ◆ Tinsley Ellis
- ◆ Luke Winslow-King
- ◆ Roberto Luti
- ◆ Diane Durrett
- ◆ Albert Castiglia
- ◆ Damon Fowler
- ◆ Tommy Castro
- ◆ Danielle Nicole
- ◆ plenty more to come...

Tickets on sale NOW until April 2023
 \$10 each

Purchase online at our website or at a show.

We get such great support from all the Blues Artists that come through Charlotte.

THANKS!

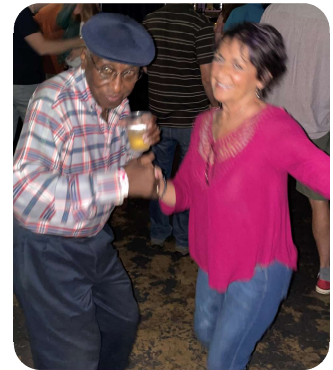
Guitar donated by our past President, Mary London Szpara.



Bruce, Bonnie, Damon & Ken after the show.



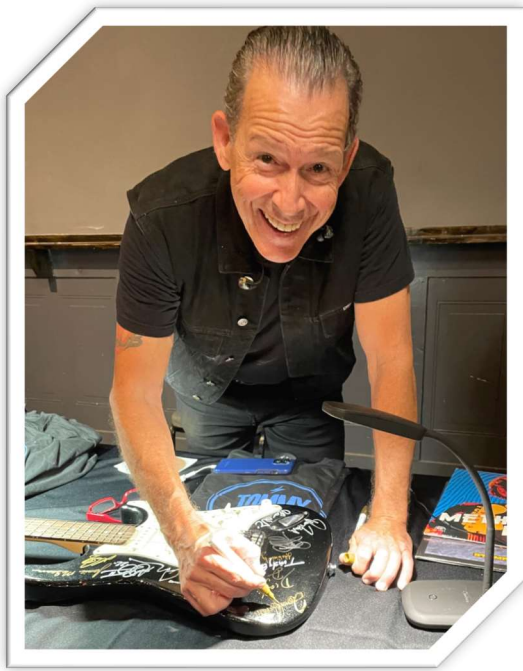
Damon Fowler adds his name to the 2023 guitar.



Mr. Roy & Betsy cutting the rug at Damon Fowler show.



Damon Fowler, Neighborhood Theatre on July 13, '22



Tommy Castro and Tinsley Ellis
They were all smiles after finishing a great show at the Neighborhood Theatre.
Here they are signing the 2023 Raffle Guitar.

Danielle Nicole completes an amazing month of blues shows.



2022 Blues Blast Music Award Nominees*Vote for your Favorites now!***Contemporary Blues Album**

Anthony Geraci – Blues Called My Name
 Ronnie Earl and the Broadcasters – Mercy Me
 Tommy Castro – A Bluesman Came To Town
 Altered Five Blues Band – Holler If You Hear Me
 Carolyn Wonderland – Tempting Fate
 Dave Weld & The Imperial Flames – Nightwalk
 Christone “Kingfish” Ingram – 662

Traditional Blues Album

Diunna Greenleaf – I Ain’t Playin’
 Duke Robillard – They Called it Rhythm and Blues
 Kenny Neal – Straight From The Heart
 Sue Foley – Pinky’s Blues
 Louisiana Red & Bob Corritore – Tell Me ‘Bout It
 Bob Stroger & The Headcutters – That’s My Name

Soul Blues Album

Trudy Lynn – Golden Girl
 Robbin Kapsalis and Vintage#18 – Soul Shaker
 The Love Light Orchestra – Leave The Light On
 Wee Willie Walker & Anthony Paule Soul
 Orchestra – Not In My Lifetime
 Zac Harmon – Long As I Got My Guitar
 Sugaray Rayford – In Too Deep

Rock Blues Album

Beth Hart – A Tribute To Led Zeppelin
 Levee Town – Trying to Keep my Head Above
 Water
 Big Al & the Heavyweights – Love One Another
 Eric Gales – Crown
 Tinsley Ellis – Devil May Care
 Chickenbone Slim – Serve It To Me Hot

Acoustic Blues Album**2022 Blues Blast Music Award Nominees**

Eric Bibb – Dear America
 Corey Harris – The Insurrection Blues
 Hector Anchondo – Let Loose Those Chains
 Catfish Keith – Land of the Sky
 Big Creek Slim & Rodrigo Mantovani- Stone In My
 Heart
 Tas Cru – Broke Down Busted Up

Live Blues Album

Hurricane Ruth – Hurricane Ruth Live at 3rd and
 Lindsley
 The BC Combo – The Garage Sessions
 Rodd Bland and the Members Only Band – Live on
 Beale Street
 Ann Peebles and The Hi Rhythm Section – Live In
 Memphis
 Peer Gynt – Live In Hell
 The James Harman Band – Sparks Flying Live In
 1992

Historical Or Vintage Recording

Dave Specter – Six String Soul
 Mark Hummel Presents East Bay Blues Vaults
 1976-1988
 Paul Oscher – Rough Stuff
 Lowell Fulson with Jeff Dale & The Blue Wave
 Band – Lowell Fulson Live!
 Big Jack Johnson – Stripped Down in Memphis
 Bob Corritore & Friends – Down Home Blues
 Revue

New Artist Debut Album

Hogtown Allstars – Hog Wild
 Memphisissippi Sounds – Welcome To The Land
 Malcolm Wells and the Two Timers – Hollerin’ Out
 Loud
 Horojo Trio – Set The Record
 John Winkler – Juke’s Blues

2022 Blues Blast Music Award Nominees

Buckmiller Schwager Band – To Memphis and Back

Blues Band

The Love Light Orchestra

Tommy Castro & The Painkillers

Altered Five Blues Band

Wee Willie Walker & Anthony Paule Soul Orchestra

Kilborn Alley Blues Band

Male Blues Artist

Sugaray Rayford

John Németh

Eric Gales

Tommy Castro

Christone “Kingfish” Ingram

Tinsley Ellis

Female Blues Artist

Diunna Greenleaf

Sue Foley

Trudy Lynn

Carolyn Wonderland

Vaneese Thomas

Beth Hart

Sean Costello Rising Star Award

Robbin Kapsalis and Vintage#18

Kat Riggins

Gabe Stillman

Ben Levin

Jose Ramirez

Memphissippi Sounds

Producer

Eric Corne

Kid Andersen

Tony Braunagel

2022 Blues Blast Music Award Nominees

Mike Zito

Jim Gaines

Tom Hambridge

Electric Guitar

Chris Cain

Ronnie Earl

Eric Gales

Duke Robillard

Christone “Kingfish” Ingram

Albert Castiglia

Acoustic Guitar

Corey Harris

Doug MacLeod

Eric Bibb

Guy Davis

Hector Anchondo

Catfish Keith

Slide Guitar

Dave Weld

Sonny Landreth

Gabe Stillman

Michael van Merwyk

Catfish Keith

Derek Trucks

Bass Guitarist

Bob Stroger

Rodrigo Mantovani

Danielle Nicole

Willie J. Campbell

Scot Sutherland

Jerry Jemmott

2022 Blues Blast Music Award Nominees

Keyboards

Anthony Geraci
 Kenny “Blues Boss Wayne”
 Ben Levin
 Jim Pugh
 Victor Wainwright
 Kevin McKendree

Drums

Derrick D’Mar Martin
 Tom Hambridge
 Tony Braunagel
 Kenny Smith
 Alan Arber
 June Core
 Cedric Burnside

Harmonica

Pierre Lacocque

2022 Blues Blast Music Award Nominees

Jason Ricci
 Dennis Gruenling
 Bob Corritore
 Kim Wilson
 Billy Branch

Horn

Jimmy Carpenter
 Vanessa Collier
 Marc Franklin
 Vince Salerno
 Doug Woolverton
 Terry Hanck

Vocalist

Diunna Greenleaf
 John Németh
 Vanesse Thomas
 Sugaray Rayford
 Beth Hart

Taste of Charlotte

Sept 30 - Oct 2

*Truist Field
 (Knights Baseball Stadium)*

*324 South Mint St.
 Charlotte, 28202*



FOOD, FUN, MUSIC for the whole family!

Fri 11am-11pm
 Sat 11am-11pm
 Sun 11am - 4:30pm

www.tasteofcharlotte.com

Volunteers needed to staff the beverage booth. We use this to fund our shows. Food coins will be shared with Volunteers. Multiple 4 hour shifts available.

Contact Flynn Wolfe at flynnwolfe@gmail.com

QUEENCITYJAMSESSION.COM
 August 19-21, 2022

Join the Charlotte Blues Society for three days of great music & libations!!



<https://www.queencityjamsession.com>

2921 N. Tryon St.
 Charlotte NC 28206
Charlottebluessociety.org



Memberships fuel the music. Please renew or join NOW. Makes a great gift!

RED HOT'n BLUES REVIEWS

by Marty Gunther

PHANTOM BLUES BAND - *BLUES FOR BREAKFAST*

LITTLE VILLAGE FOUNDATION

www.phantomb bluesband.com

Top Los Angeles session players who've been working as Taj Mahal's Grammy-winning backing band for decades while maintaining their own identity, too, Phantom Blues Band calls out superstar guests to honor their beloved keyboard player Mike Finnigan - who succumbed to cancer last year -- on this one, and the results will have you grooving from the jump.

Ruthie Foster, Bonnie Raitt, Curtis Salgado, Mike's son Kelly and others turned out to celebrate the life of one of the most soulful artists ever to sit at the 88s, and all of the proceeds from this effort will be donated to the Mike Finnigan School for Music at Stiefel Theater in Salina, Kan. Jim Pugh handles keys in his absence, but Finnigan's present, too, in sessions recorded prior to his passing.

The hits come fast and often, beginning with "I'll Take What I Want." Don't miss "Get Involved," "Move on Up," "OK I Admit It" featuring Mike on vocals, "Country Boy," "Laughin' & Clownin'," "I Know You Don't Love Me" and "Stuff You Gotta Watch."

MISS BIX - *BRING IT*

BLUE HEART RECORDS BHR 026

www.missbix.com

After making a name as smooth jazz vocalist and then children's music when she teamed with Dick Van Dyke, Miss Bix fuses West Coast, Hill Country and New Orleans blues on this album, which features contributions from fellow vocalists Keeshea Pratt and Tiffany Pollack, keyboard player Tom Canning, guitarist Franck L. Goldwasser and harp player Jimmy Z.

A follow-up to *We Don't Own the Blues*, her 2017 tribute to the Delta, it's an uplifting effort that puts an optimistic spin on survival in a world filled with social injustice, political strife, COVID and personal tragedies that include losing her home in a California wildfire.

A multi-layered, all-original mixed-bag treat, tune in to "Ain't No Such Thing," "You've Got a Nerve," "Cocktail Hour," "Trail of Tears," "Red Walls," "Cheer Up, Sallie Mae," "Daddy Why," "You Better Believe It" and "Movin' On."

DENNIS JOHNSON - *REVELATION*

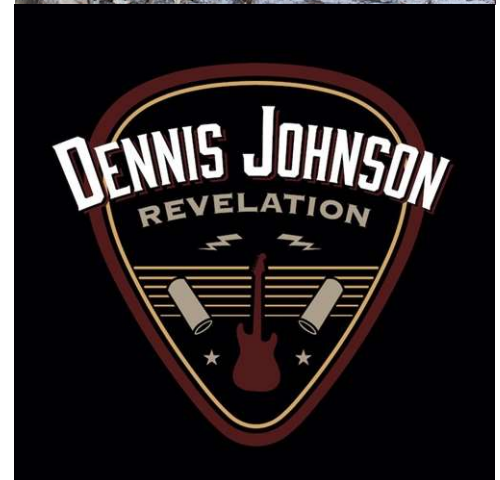
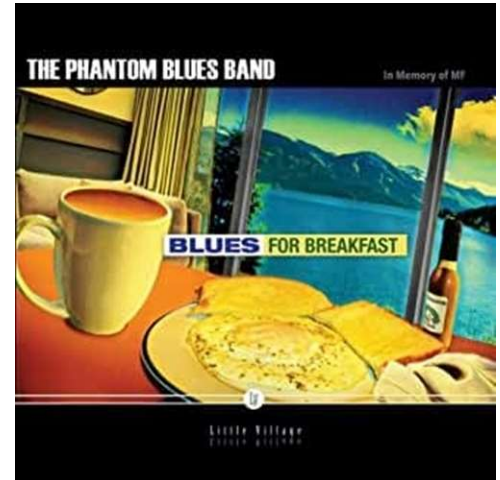
SELF-PRODUCED CD

www.dennisjohnsonslide.com

Based out of San Francisco, Dennis Johnson is one of the foremost slide guitarists in the U.S., and he packs an emotional punch with his latest CD, using a smorgasbord of stylings to take listeners on a jaw-dropping journey across the broad spectrum of the blues.

Influenced by Roy Rogers and David "Honeyboy" Edwards, Johnson possesses a stinging attack that's so seemingly effortless that he can trick you into believing he's playing two guitars at once. He penned six of the ten cuts here, backing up his playing with strong vocals while working in full-band settings.

A treat for the ears and a textbook for young guitarists, too, give a listen to "Going Down," "Talk to You," "Revelation," an exceptional cover of "32-20 Blues," "Lonesome Valley," "Ramblin'," "Two Lights" and "Don't Owe You a Thing."



RED HOT'n BLUES REVIEWS

by Marty Gunther



BOB MARGOLIN & BOB CORRITORE - *SO FAR*

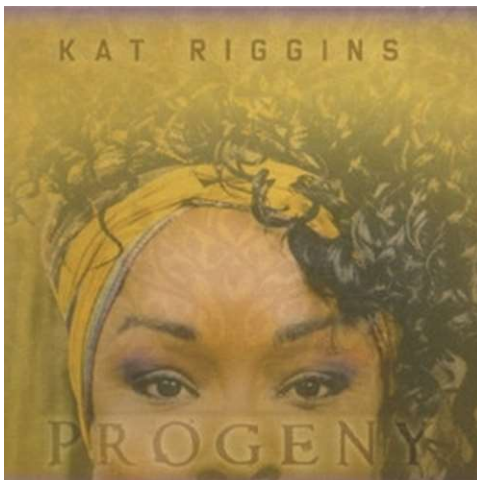
VIZZTONE LABEL GROUP

www.vizztone.com

Stars in their own right and partners with Bob Stroger in the Bobs of the Blues, guitarist Bob Margolin and harp player Bob Corritore have worked together frequently for decades but team as a duo for the first time for this set of straight-ahead, laid-back, acoustic blues.

The duo first crossed paths in 1974 when Margolin appeared with Muddy Waters at Corritore's high school in suburban Chicago. The 13 tunes here are free of amplification and include eight originals, two of which feature an appearance from ex-Conan bandleader Jimmy Vivino on six-string and vocals.

"Steady Rollin' On" eases out of the gate with Margolin on the mic. Other pleasers include "Running Through High Water," "It Makes No Difference," "Outrage and Inrage," "Broken Heart," "Salt River Stomp," "Red Hot Kisses," "What If," "Blessings and Blues," "I Want to Go Home" and "Little Machine."



KAT RIGGINS - *PROGENY*

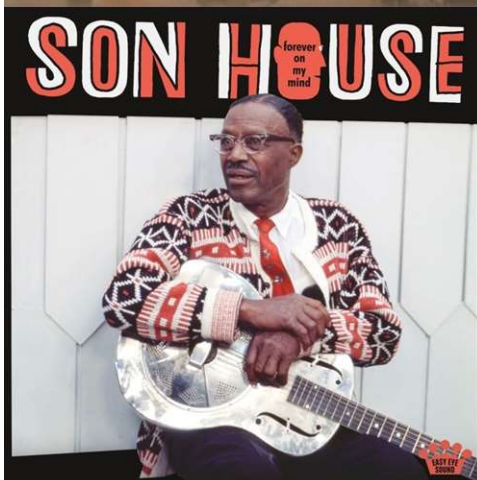
GULF COAST RECORDS

www.katriggins.com

A petite powerhouse who's now an international sensation after emerging from the South Florida blues scene about a decade ago, Kat Riggins shines like a diamond on this set of contemporary, all-original tunes that range from soulful ballads to high-energy blues-rock and a taste of gospel, too.

Produced by Mike Zito, who also provides guitar throughout, and brimming with grit, this one features backing from former Freddie King keyboard player Lewis Stephens and guest appearances from labelmate Albert Castiglia and Melody Angel, a rising star based out of Chicago.

From the determined opener, "Walk On," to the cautionary "40 25:40," which takes you to church to close, you don't want to miss this one. Other pleasers include "Sinkin' Low," "Warriors," "Walk with Me Lord," "My City," "Cross the Line," "Woahman" and "Mama."



SON HOUSE - *FOREVER ON MY MIND*

EASY EYE SOUND EES-024

www.easyeyesound.com

Here's a treat for lovers of first-generation country blues. Pre-War superstar Son House recorded the music on this disc only a few months after he was "rediscovered" in 1964 by future Blues Hall of Famer Dick Waterman, Nick Perls and Phil Spero who tracked him down after he "vanished" in the '40s.

The eight tunes in this set were captured live at Wabash College in Indiana, when Son was still playing in the unadulterated style of his past. The tapes remained on a bookshelf for 58 years being remastered and released by Waterman in partnership with Easy Eye label owner/Black Keys front man Dan Auerbach.

Son's voice is powerful, and his slide play on National Steel guitar is deeply nuanced and emotive throughout. Give a listen to "Forever on My Mind," "Preachin' Blues," "Empire State Express," "Death Letter," "My Black Mama, Part 2," "The Way Mother Did" and more. Essential listening!

RED HOT'n BLUES REVIEWS

by Marty Gunther

FONKY DONKEY - *DONKEYLAND*

SELF-PRODUCED CD

www.getfonkydonkey.com

Formed in Little Rock, Ark., in 2019, this veteran four-piece ensemble has already found a welcome home on the festival circuit across the Mid-South, delivering a rock-steady collection of original, slide guitar-based blues and roots with hints of Memphis, Hill Country and the Delta, too.

Guitarist Gil Franklin and guitarist/harp player Ben "Swamp Donkey" Brenner - president of the Arkansas River Blues Society - team to pen all of the material on this one and share vocals with drummer Lance "Bug Tussle" Womack. Lynn Fitzgerald handles bass duties. If you like your music downhome and funky, you'll enjoy "Queen of the Devil's Den," "Mozark Line," "No Peace," "White River Blues," "Too Broke to Pay My Dues" and "When Gilbo Sings the Blues."

TODD SHARPVILLE - *MEDICATION TIME*

DIXIEFROG RECORDS

www.dixiefrog.com

It's been 12 years since British guitarist Todd Sharpville released *Porchlight*, an emotion-packed effort penned after the deaths of both his marriage and his father, but he returns with a vengeance with this humor-infused roller-coaster ride that deals with agony -- his separation from his beloved daughters after the divorce, an event that literally landed him in a mental hospital for two months in the '90s.

A musician who's worked with blues and rock royalty on both sides of the Atlantic for decades, Todd reunites with Duke Robillard, who produced his last one and his quartet. Recorded in Rhode Island, it features guest appearances from harp player Sugar Ray Norcia and guitar powerhouse Larry McCray, both of whom join him for duets, along with a four-piece horn section with Roomful of Blues roots.

Despite the deep themes, this one will lift your spirits. Tune in to "Walk Out in the Rain," "Get Outta My Way," "Tangled Up in Thought," "Brothers from Another Mother," "Medication Time," "God Loves a Loser," "Money for Nothing," "Stand Your Ground" and "I Don't Need to Know Your Name."



LEW JETTON & 61 SOUTH - *DEJA HOODOO*

ENDLESS BLUES RECORDS LJEBR032022

www.61south.com

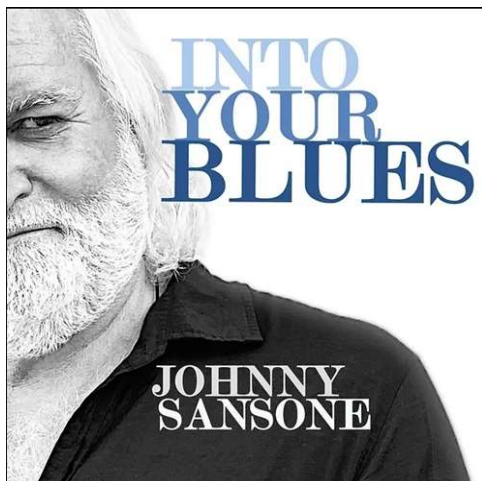
Based out of Paducah, Ky., Lew Jetton & 61 South have made a living playing honkytonks, juke joints, dive bars and festivals for 30 years, and they celebrate both their longevity and their anniversary with this 16-tune collection that's culled from their four previous, well-received CDs.

Jetton's a sweet tenor who doubles on guitar and vocals, fronting a five-piece unit that also features Sam Moore and Dan Bell on guitar and keys. A former Sirius/XM *Bluesville* "Pick to Click," they're augmented by guest appearances by piano player Bob Lohr (Chuck Berry), Carl Perkins bandleader Wes Henley, Legendary Shack Shakers harp player J.D. Wilkes and others.

Barroom blues at its best, tune in to "Waffle House Woman," "I Been Cheated," "Mexico," "Move On, Yvonne," "Keeping Me Awake," "Who's Texting Me," "Drinking Again," "Getting Colder" and "Will I Go to Hell."

RED HOT'n BLUES REVIEWS

by Marty Gunther



JOHNNY SANSONE - *INTO YOUR BLUES*

SHORT STACK RECORDS SS1013

www.johnnysansone.com

The son of a saxophonist who worked with Dave Brubeck during World War II, multi-instrumentalist Johnny Sansone has been a fixture in the New Orleans music scene for decades but takes a break from the sounds of the Big Easy to deliver this pleasing set of original, steady-rocking blues.

Johnny puts his accordion on the shelf, accompanying himself on harp and resonator guitar and getting helping hands from Jason Ricci and guitarists Little Freddie King, Mike Morgan and Johnny Burgin. Add Sansone's warm voice, a horn section and backing vocals from Tiffany Pollack and it's a winner on all counts.

The music simmers from the opener, "Into Your Blues." Other pleasers include "Pay for This Song," "Desperation," "Blowin' with Fire," "People Like You and Me," "The Getaway," "Something Good Going On," "Single Room" and "Southern Dream."



SASS JORDAN - *BITCHES BLUES*

STONY PLAIN RECORDS SPCD1450

www.sassjordan.com

The undisputed queen of Canadian rock, Montreal-based Sass Jordan has worked alongside everyone from Aerosmith and the Stones to Van Halen, but she cut new ground in 2020 with *Rebel Moon Blues*, which established her as an individual to be reckoned with in the blues, too. This follow-up proves that stellar effort was no fluke.

Possessing a huge, gritty set of pipes, Sass is both a Juno Award winner and an actress who starred off-Broadway in *Love, Janis* - based on the life of Janis Joplin and toured the world in *A Bowie Celebration*. She's backed here by the Champagne Hookers, an all-star group that includes multi-instrumentalist Steve Marriner.

The Mighty Mississippi runs deep here. Pleasers include "Still Alive and Well," "Chevrolet," "Even," "Still the World Goes Round," "Sailin' Shoes," "Ain't No Big Deal on You" and "Change Is Coming."

HUBERT DORIGATTI - *A WALK WITH BLIND BOY: THE SONGS OF BLIND BOY FULLER*

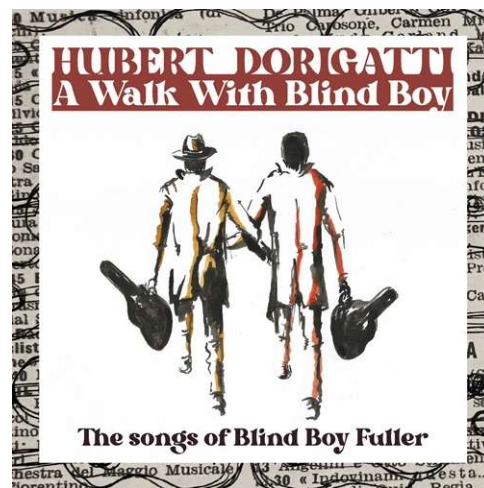
APPALOOSA RECORDS

www.hubertdorigatti.com

Based out of the Tirolian Alps in northwest Italy, guitarist Hubert Dorigatti delivered a terrific set of contemporary blues in 2021, but turns the clock back a century with this stunner, lovingly dipping into the catalog of North Carolina bluesman Blind Boy Fuller and delivering a masterpiece of fingerpicked acoustic pleasers.

A former trumpet protégé who put the horn aside in his teens to study classical six-string at conservatories in Trento and neighboring Austria, Hubert loves jazz, but his respect for first-generation blues comes through on each note of this set, which features sparse accompaniment.

Blind Boy's smiling from the Great Beyond over this one. You'll enjoy "Walking My Troubles Away," "Get Your Yas Yas Out," "Meat Shakin' Mama," "Screaming and Crying Blues," "Weeping Willow," "Mama Let Me Lay It on You," "Jitterbug Rag" and "Mankind Blues."



RED HOT'n BLUES REVIEWS

by Marty Gunther

MICHAEL RUBIN - I'LL WORRY IF I WANNA

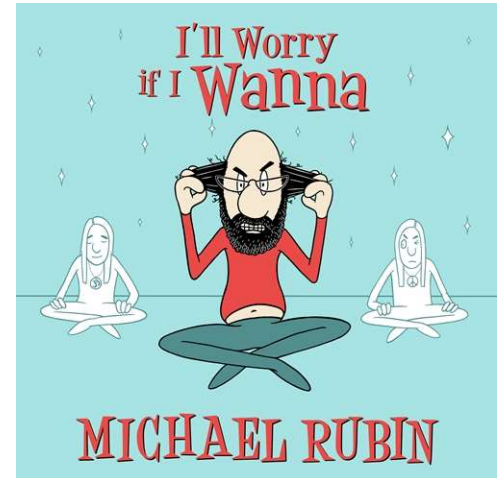
MANY HATS RECORDS

www.michaelrubinharmonica.com

Texas-based multi-instrumentalist Michael Rubin is one of the most innovative harmonica players in the world, and finally gets a chance to shine here after being in the shadows for decades in the classroom and as a sideman. Backed by guitarist Mike Keller and other Austin-based talents, he delivers an all-original set that's humorous, interesting and a lot of fun, too.

A quirky musical theorist who was taught by Rick Estrin, Gary Primich, Andy J. Forest and others, Michael's skills include being able to produce the full range of a chromatic harp on a simple diatonic. His originals deliver a taste of the Lone Star State, the Big Easy and more.

"Little Rabbit" puts his skills on display to open. And don't miss "Go Milk Your Own Cow," "Kama Sutra Girl," "Can We Break Up Again," "I'll Worry If I Wanna," "Beer Belly Baby," "Fourth Coast" and "Chain Letter Blues."



CLIFF STEVENS - BETTER DAYS

RED FLAGG RECORDS RF558-2

www.cliffstevens.com

A passionate songwriter and guitarist, Montreal-based Cliff Stevens toiled as a sideman for years, acquiring addictions along the way that led to his downfall. But he's risen like a phoenix since achieving sobriety in 1998, something that comes through loud and strong with this well-fashioned, introspective CD, his fifth solo release since his recovery.

Now a college graduate with a master's degree, Cliff penned 11 tunes in this 12-song set that includes blues-rock, traditional and country blues, all of which are devoid of pyrotechnics but full of emotion. He's backed by former Paul DesLauriers drummer Sam Harrison and other top talent.

You'll enjoy "Better Days," "Passion," "No Room Left," "Time for Me to Go," "Light of an Angel," "I Love You Still," "You Hurt Me," "I Been Thinking About You" and "Slim Picking."



MIGHTY MIKE SCHERMER - JUST GETTIN' GOOD

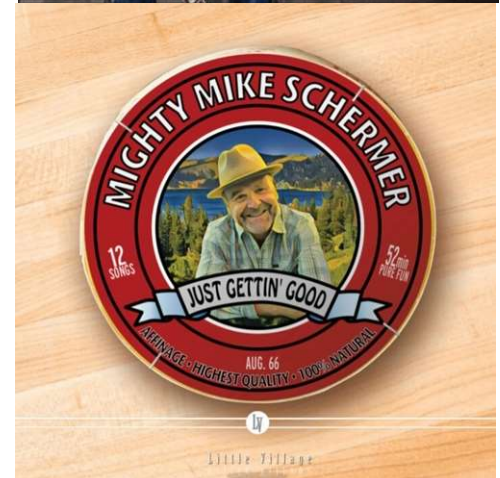
FINEDOG RECORDS/LITTLE VILLAGE FOUNDATION

www.mighty-mike.com

Considered by Tommy Castro as "probably the best blues guitarist, singer and songwriter you've never heard of," Mighty Mike Schermer worked for years with Marcia Ball, Angela Strehli, Maria Muldaur but shines bright on this all-original CD. It's promoted as 52 minutes of fun, and it's all that and more.

This is the eighth solo album for the native New Yorker who's divided most of his life between Austin and his California home. This one rips and runs from the jump and features top Bay Area musicians along with guest spots from John Nemeth, sax giant Terry Hanck and other major talents.

A soulful, energetic set, you'll love "Just Gettin' Good," "Leave More (Than You Take Away)," "This Is Where My Love Is," "The Hungry Dog," "Gypsy Ways," "Let's Make Time for Love," "Kimmy Gimmee," "Silence" and "It's Not Me, It's You."

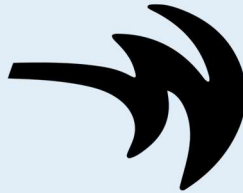


A member of the CBS board since 2018, Marty Gunther is no stranger to the area or the Blues. A native Rhode Islander who attended App State, his first exposure to the music came through Muddy Waters at Newport in 1960. His complete baptism into the Blues came in 1966 when Howlin' Wolf was crawling across the Newport stage and singing "Moaning at Midnight." A longtime member of the Chicago blues community, where many international stars were close friends, he was taught by harmonica payer Sugar Blue, and co-founded the Nuclebusters, one of the hardest working bands in South Florida, where he resided previously. In addition to writing the "Red Hot 'n Blues Reviews" column and contributing occasional articles, Marty's an in-demand journalist across the Blues spectrum. Senior writer at Blues Blast Magazine, he's also a contributor to The Groove, the monthly newsletter of the Crossroads (Ill.) Blues Society, and his CBS reviews appear regularly in Chicago Blues Guide.

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www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org