

**SOUTHSIDE DENNY**

## **Press kit**

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**[www.southsidedenny.com](http://www.southsidedenny.com)**

# Biography

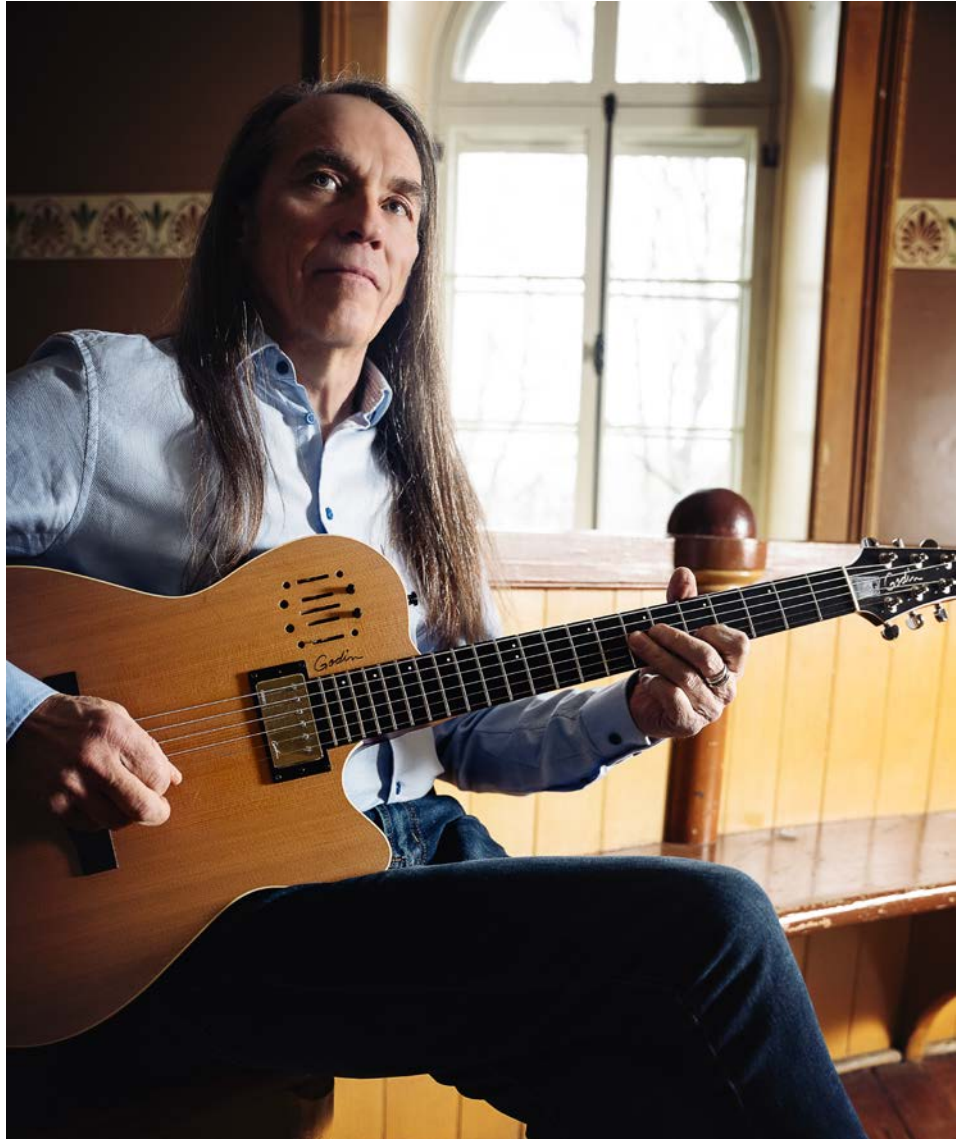
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Solo acoustic guitarist, electric blues rocker, and composer Southside Denny was born and raised in South Bend, Indiana. He began gigging while still in high school, and by the mid-1980s, he was playing throughout the midwestern United States and in parts of Canada while building a solid reputation in the Chicago and Michiana-area blues scene.

In the early 1990s, Denny earned a regular gig at Buddy Guy's Legends, in Chicago, and also performed regularly with Luther Allison, Sugar Blue, and Pinetop Perkins. During this period, he expanded his reach, appearing as an opening act for a Who's Who of Chicago blues acts that included Ray Charles, Lonnie Mack, Buddy Guy, Albert Collins, Stevie Ray Vaughn, and Taj Mahal. He also shared the stage with many legendary rockers including The Beach Boys, John Fogerty, Edgar Winter, BTO, Three Dog Night, and Styxx.

In 1999, Denny was the second recipient to receive the Ole Harv Award for lifetime promotion of blues music in the Michiana area. A year later, he represented the State of Indiana at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis. In 2008, he captured third place at the Montréal Grand Prix de la Guitare.

Having lived most of his life in South Bend—he lived briefly in Chicago, and in Phoenix, Arizona—in 2007, he relocated to Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He has since performed at the International Festival du Jazz de Montréal, the International Festival du blues de Mont Tremblant, Riverfront Blues, Trois Rivières en Blues, and other venues.



In 2019, Chicago label Blujazz Records reissued Denny's Rollin' Home album. His latest album, Heal It, was released in May 2024. He is now working on his tenth album as he continues to play on both sides of the border.

# Quotes

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“Denny’s playing has matured and grown consistently more interesting. There’s a buttery sweetness to his playing on the acoustic guitar, whether he’s doing a driving primal blues, or something more rhapsodic. One minute he’s sounding polyrhythmic and tribal and the next he’s delicately picking an evocative bliss-filled instrumental – tunefully reassuring us using grace notes, brief slides, and harmonics to send out an intensely hopeful message. It’s clear he used the pandemic to perfect his technique on the acoustic guitar and his use of the instruments dynamics are just phenomenal.”

- **George Schricker,**  
**Director of the Wild Rose**  
**Moon in Plymouth, Indiana**

“If you listen to Southside Denny Snyder, you’ll dig deep down to the roots of the Blues. He took the Blues from the past, gave him some new, modern clothes and let him live right between us, where he should be, like a long time missed friend.”

- **Erhard Albrecht,**  
**Radio Weser.TV 90.7 MHz,**  
**Bremerhaven Germany**

“He plays with good air between the notes and restraint, even when he plays with abandon.”

- **Steve Jones,**  
**Blues Blast Magazine**

“Denny is like taking a look at the blues of yesteryear, but with a modern punch. He is at home with an acoustic for some poignant Blues as he does with an electric belting out great Chicago tunes. His writing is refreshingly modern, yet still gives the air of reminiscence.”

- **Dave Barker, Dave’s Blues Mix.**  
**- Star FM Community Radio,**  
**Tasmania, Australia.**

“Je n’en connais peu d’autre ici comme lui... Denny propose plusieurs instrumentaux savants en guise de clins d’œil aux grands maîtres...électroacoustiques et totalement électriques où se rencontrent avec harmonie, dextérité et passion.”

- **Dan Berhman - Son & Image**

“Good energy, nice raw guitar...the kind of distortion I like...”

- **Bruce Iglauer, President of**  
**Alligator Records, Chicago**

“Full Circle is a fabulous collection of styles and guitar playing. Great blues tracks like Perfectionist Blues alongside the moody slide of Lac Echo or the wonderful fingerpicking of Nothin’ Doin’ and City Slicker. I shall look forward to playing some of this on future shows.”

- **Ashwyn Smyth - Digital Blues**  
**Gateway, United Kingdom**

“...although he shares in common with other Indiana blues artists a Chicago-based sound, his is not of the usual generic 1950’s... shows far more identity to the sophisticated urbanity of Buddy Guy than to SRV- a most refreshing approach...He gets down, that’s all there is to it.”

- **George Fish - Nuvo magazine,**  
**Indianapolis**

## Denny has been opening act for

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Ray Charles  
Stevie Ray Vaughan  
Styx  
Buddy Guy  
Bachman-Turner Overdrive  
Luther Allison  
The Beach Boys  
Edgar Winter  
Lonnie Mack  
Three Dog Night

Taj Mahal  
George Thorogood  
Albert Collins  
Koko Taylor  
Legendary Blues Band  
Lonnie Brooks  
Bernard Allison  
Johnny Copeland  
The Kenzie Report  
Magic Slim

Son Seals  
Honey Boy Edwards  
Luther Johnson  
Rod Piazza and the Mighty Flyers  
Fenton Robinson  
Guy Davis  
Martin Deschamps

## Denny has performed on stage with

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Sugar Blue  
Luther Allison  
John Fogerty  
Pinetop Perkins

Larry McCray  
Lefty Diz  
Duke Tumatoo



## Videos

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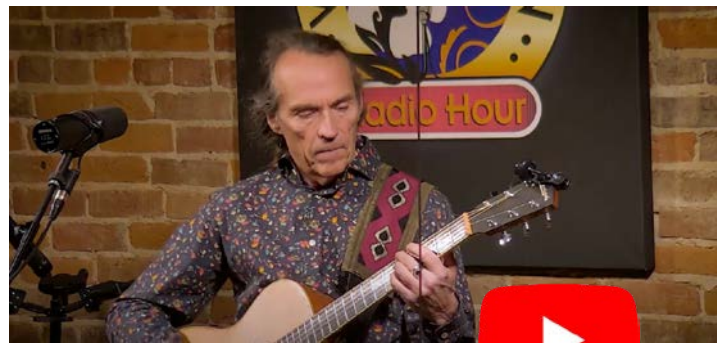
### Slidin'

Wild Rose Moon in Plymouth, Indiana

November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Southside Denny performs Slidin' solo acoustic. Special thanks to George Schricker, Jim Yocom, and Nate Butler.

<https://youtu.be/Aml7hASeSsU>



### Cornfield Gringo

Wild Rose Moon in Plymouth, Indiana

November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Southside Denny performs Cornfield Gringo live. Special thanks to George Schricker, Jim Yocom and Nate Butler.

<https://youtu.be/iWtAAs7lqjg>

## Articles

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### Full Circle, an 8<sup>th</sup> album for Southside Denny Snyder

2011

[This article is a translation from French to English.]

Exceptional guitarist « Southside » Denny Snyder will present his new album at Repentigny City Hall on Sunday, March 29 at 14:30. The show will be hosted by Dan Behrman, host of the Friday Blues Show at Espace Musique de Radio-Canada.

Leaving the United States for Quebec which he loves, Denny has come to settle in Repentigny. His talent

has attracted the attention of several managers including the Montreal Blues Society who will be present at the event. This recognition from the industry actually encouraged Denny to record his first Quebec production Full Circle, which includes everything Denny likes to play: instrumental music, solo or accompanied songs.

Several musicians will accompany Denny on stage, including Lindsay Pugh from Sault-Ste-Marie on bass, Simon Meilleur from Montreal on drums, as well as harmonica player Rick L. Blues, a well-known musi-

cian in Quebec. In addition, we will have the pleasure of hearing Denny sing in duo with his young daughter Lorrie.

From electric to acoustic, it's a musical journey that is offered to you in the company of this urban legend in his hometown of South Bend, near Chicago. Come discover a great blues artist, now from Quebec, « Southside » Denny Snyder. For more information: [www.dennysnyder.com](http://www.dennysnyder.com) or Denny Snyder Music Salon at 450-470-1117. Free entry.



# The First Edition of LA BLUES\*BOUFFE DE FARNHAM

2007

[This article is a translation from French to English.]

The first edition of *La Blues\* Bouffe de Farnham* took place under a blue sky wrapped in thick, fluffy cumulus clouds, just like a good blues tune that alternately soothes and gets you dancing when the sun breaks through. The some 400 people who attended were treated to Southside Denny at his best, playing an electrifying acoustic blues. Such mastery of his instrument can only come from passion, love, and a long road paved with influences gathered along the way in a career that began in Indiana, then Chicago, and eventually led him here out of love for a beautiful Quebec woman. Another

reason why we can claim that Quebec women are the most interesting on this planet. Keeping a festival crowd engaged with an acoustic guitar requires nerve, daring, and a healthy dose of coolheadedness, three qualities that Southside Denny has in abundance, as he served up only original compositions from a repertoire that seemed both varied and endless. A name to remember for those who would like to take a guitar course from an excellent passionate pedagogue.\*

Jean Sicotte

## BLUES GROOVE

Volume 2, Issue 5

JUNE, 2002



### CD REVIEWS

By George Fish

#### Southside Denny *Rendez-vous Blues*

Magra Multa Media SSD 0798

South Bend's Southside Denny is another one of those outstanding Indiana blues artists who've emerged lately, and yet another blues powerhouse with a new CD that I'm so glad to review in *Blues Groove*. Backed by only bass and drums on *Rendez-vous Blues*, Southside Denny does mean, expressive vocals and superb guitar solo, with no second-track rhythm guitar overdubs. He is easily one of the most proficient blues guitarists in Indiana. While he shares in common with other Indiana blues artists a Chicago-based sound, his is not the usual generic 1950's based, but bears far more affinity to the more sophisticated approach of the late 1950's-early '60's Buddy Guy. His white-guy blues show, of course, that basic Black-blues-music-cum-sophisticated-lyrics-borne-of-more-education approach, but that does not deny his most substantive

blues authenticity, which shows far more identity to the sophisticated urbanity of Buddy Guy than to Stevie Ray Vaughan – a most refreshing approach. All this shows on *Rendez-vous Blues*, with its 12 originals and one Johnny Winter cover, 11 vocals and one excellent instrumental, "Buttkicker." Southside Denny plays electric guitar on most cuts, National Steel guitar on three, including creative slide on "Slidin'" and an appreciative adaptation of "Dark Was the Night" on "Petite Barbecue." Southside Denny doesn't do blues-rock, but he rocks. He gets down, that's all there is to it.

*George Fish is a professional blues writer/reviewer since 1987. His reviews have been published in Living Blues and Blues Access magazines, as well as NUVO Newsweekly and various Indiana blues publications.*

# Snyder feels renewed

By **TOM CONWAY**  
Tribune Correspondent

“**S**outhside” Denny Snyder has been performing electric blues music with his band for more than a quarter of a century.

In recent years, however, the guitarist has focused on solo acoustic shows, and in 2003, he released his first “me and a guitar” album, “Eclectic,” a collection of folk, classical and even flamenco instrumental songs.

Now comes Snyder’s second acoustic album, “Roots and Branches.”

“The ‘Eclectic’ CD was such a radical departure from what I had done before, I felt that I should do something that is maybe a little bit closer to what I was known for,” Snyder says. “Some of the tunes are still kind of in that ‘Eclectic’ vein, some of the instrumentals. I guess I’ll always pretty much be considered a blues artist. I’ll always love the blues. I decided to mix it up a little bit.”

“Roots and Branches” opens with the instrumental “Blame It on Leo,” a tribute to acoustic guitar virtuoso Leo Kottke played in Kottke’s propulsive finger-picking style.

Two of the album’s other instrumentals, “Autumn” and “Cornfield Gringo,” are extensions of a couple of songs, “Snowflake” and “Breath of Flamenco” respectively, from “Eclectic.”

The standout blues tracks, “Money” and “You Would Think by Now” are wry social commentaries that are destined to be crowd-pleasers at Snyder’s gigs.

In addition to a rail against corporate corruption, “Money,”



Tribune Photo/SANTIAGO FLORES

“Southside” Denny Snyder’s new album, “Roots and Branches,” features him on acoustic guitar. He will perform the album start-to-finish at 4 and 7 p.m. today at Hoosierdad’s in Mishawaka.

## In concert

“Southside” Denny Snyder performs at 4 and 7 p.m. today in a CD release party for “Roots and Branches” at Hoosier’s Dad’s, 4609 Grape Road, Mishawaka. Admission is \$7. For more information, call (574) 277-5038.

one of five songs with vocals on the album, also includes the singer’s intention to “cut all of my costs, fire the band, hitchhike to my gigs.” Snyder does say the band would still play the occasional gig, but he is most excited about his acoustic work.

“I wrote that verse a long time before I started playing solo,” he says. “I almost cut it out because I thought that doesn’t sound very good to be saying that. I think it is kind of funny, so I left it.”

Although his guitar tech-

nique is as amazing as always, Snyder’s singing has never sounded so assured and natural.

“When I am playing and singing, I can really hear myself sing,” he says. “I never thought about it before. When it is really loud bass and drums and loud electric guitar, it turns into a volume struggle. A lot of times you don’t hear yourself very well. I think that I can hear better, and feel more confident singing now.”

After playing for more than 25 years, Snyder says going acoustic has rejuvenated him.

“I started feeling, after all of the years, the electric stuff had gotten stagnant,” he says. “Maybe because it is such a big change, I feel like I have reached another level of playing and singing. It feels really good. I guess that most people would think of somebody playing that long, you would start to get bored with it, but I feel like it is so new and exciting again.”

# BACK TO THE BLUES

Southside Denny's latest album leaves rock behind and returns to the music he loves.

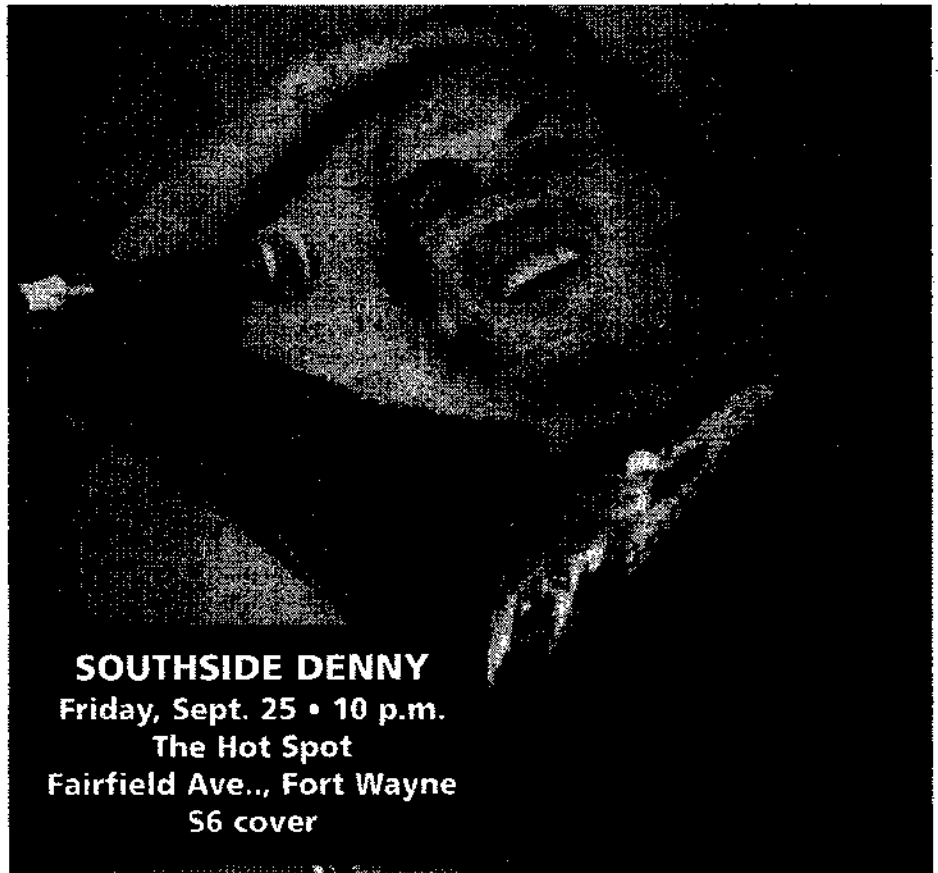
By Darren Hunt

Rockin' blues artist Southside Denny, aka Denny Ray Snyder, answers the phone at his home in South Bend with a quiet, unassuming hello reminiscent of the kind of greeting I remember from friends while growing up. It's an accurate first impression. The 39-year old Denny begins, continues and ends our 45-minute conversation with not a hint of pretension, not a note of impatience. If anything his demeanor grows more affable as the interview progresses. Not bad considering my upfront confession of not having known who he was until only a few weeks prior — a fact that Denny chuckles at and lets lay. The South Bend native has more important matters on his mind, including a new CD set to be released in less than two weeks and a slew of scheduled gigs around the region to support it. One date, September 25, will put Southside Denny at Fort Wayne's own Hot Spot.

"This one really feels good," observed Snyder, referring to his latest CD, *Rendezvous Blues*. "It's only my second release, but it has what I feel is some of my best original material to date."

That original material would be 12 of the 13 songs on *Rendezvous Blues* that Denny began writing over three years ago while living in Montreal, Canada.

It was Montreal that Snyder retreated to just after the release of his 1994 CD *Rollin' Home*. The exodus was, in part, to get a fresh perspec-



**SOUTHSIDE DENNY**  
Friday, Sept. 25 • 10 p.m.  
The Hot Spot  
Fairfield Ave., Fort Wayne  
\$6 cover

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## Southside Denny

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

tive on 20 years of writing and performing blues. It worked in more ways than one. Not only did he get some new insight on his art, but he met a nice girl, a native of Quebec. The couple now have two young daughters and are settling back in Indiana.

"The time in Canada was really helpful," noted Denny. "There's an entirely different attitude there than in the States. The French call it *joie de vivre*, which translates in English as a "love for life," and I really saw that there. So a lot of the material on *Rendezvous Blues* grew out of spending time around different people, different perspectives than what I grew up with. I highly recommend Canada for anyone wanting something different."

And after 20-plus years Snyder still recommends pursuing music for anyone who feels it's their passion, even when it means, as it has for him, less-than-significant riches.

"The money," notes Snyder, "as odd as it

sounds in this day and age, is just not that important."

What's important for Snyder is that he continue to nurture the love for blues that began at age 12 when a guy in his neighborhood showed him some chords on his cheap acoustic guitar. The young Denny played the same chords over and over until he learned a few more. Soon he began applying what he had learned while listening to the records of Eric Clapton, Muddy Waters and Freddie King. Then, in 1975, at the tender age of 17, Denny had a chance meeting with Freddie King's former rhythm guitarist, Luther Allison at a bar in South Bend called Vegetable Buddies. The two would meet over the next five years on several occasions. Each meeting for Denny was like going to a really cool teacher who has the kind of lessons you really want to learn. Then, in 1980, Allison moved to France where he lived for the next 16 years, amassing an impressive European and U.S. fan base. (The guitar great died last July after a battle with cancer.)

"He was one of those players who brought his personality into his music. Everything about him was the real deal," remembers Snyder.

Following his mentor's lead, Southside Denny continues to hone and perfect his own angle, which means playing in excess of 150

dates a year. Some of the venues Snyder routinely plays include Buddy Guy's *Legends* in Chicago. Snyder has a great deal of respect for the guitar "god" and says that some of the Windy City artists who don't appreciate Guy are probably just jealous.

"Hell, when no one else in the Chicago area would even look at us twice, Buddy Guy gave us a chance. The thing about Buddy is that he's very open-minded ... he likes variety within blues and that works well for us."

Variety was an earmark of Snyder's 1994 release, *Rollin' Home*, which included soul, 12-bar blues and more rock-based tunes. It's also part of his live shows which feature covers of Freddie King, Muddy Waters, Lonnie Mack and, on occasion, a rendition of James' Brown's "Cold Sweat." While Snyder and his bandmates, bassist Lindsay Pugh and drummer Bill Nix, are still big fans of mixing up their sound, trying new things, Snyder points out that *Rendezvous Blues* is more blues-based than *Rollin' Home*.

"On *Rollin' Home* I was in a more experimental mindset. With this one I felt most of my inspiration coming straight from the source of not only the great traditional players, but also directly from my own experiences ... getting that honesty in there which is something that I feel is really starting to happen after all these years."

# the SOUTHSIDE BLUES Denny Band

## Southside Denny Leads With His Versatility

by Ken Davis



photo by Steve Toepp

"You know, thinking about Ray Charles the main thing that smacks me in the face in his versatility," said Southside Denny, speaking about his band's role as opening act for Ray Charles in Saturday's Firefly Festival debut.

"I mean, he's done everything! Country, soul, jazz, rhythm and blues, rock 'n' roll and standards!"

Denny's well aware that his band, which includes longtime Chicago blues players Jay Davenport on drums and Frank McClure on bass, was booked for their reputation as a traditional blues act. That rep — and Denny's own expertise on acoustic, electric and slide guitar — has kept the trio busy touring the U.S. and Canada as well as playing regular gigs at Buddy Guy's Legends in Chicago, the Windy City's premier blues stomping place.

Still the South Bend-born bluesman plans to "grab everybody a little bit," with a showcase of his trio's versatility and even a few new songs.

"We only have 45 minutes so we'll mix it up real well with a lot of diverse elements," he said. "Not only traditional blues but an instrumental, a funk groove, a rock tune and something that swings."

This will be Denny's third time performing at St. Patrick's Park. He previously opened there for Three Dog Night in '87 and played a summer blues fest there with Duke Tumatoc a few years back.

The guitarist and his band are currently working on a new album, which will be Denny's fifth recording, at South Bend's Miami Street Studios. Studio owner John Nuner is co-producing the project with Denny.

"We should have something together by the end of the summer," he said.

"This time we'll do compact discs and probably some cassettes too."

The only cover version being recorded is Willie Dixon's dark and brooding, "It Don't Make Sense." Originals include Southside's Hendrix-influenced "No Time," Davenport's "Dan Ryan Blues" and a Davenport/Denny effort, he described as "Robert Cray-style soul."

"It's really been nice to be recording so close to home, I can really take my time for a change," said Denny, who previously did his recording in suburban Chicago. "We've got three songs close to done and we hope to get three or four more done in the next few weeks."

The Southside Denny Band opened for Charles on June 19 with a new as yet untitled instrumental that featured Denny playing slide on his vintage National Steel guitar. Covers of traditional blues including "Boot Hill" and Buddy Guy's "That's No Lie" paced the trio's show of Mostly originals.

Drummer Jay Davenport's collaboration with Denny, "It Only Breaks My Heart" was a Stax-flavored blast of '60s soul that found Denny's vocals arching up to a higher plane. "She's My Everything Woman" and "No Time" evoked the legacy of Jimi Hendrix' Band of Gypsies. Denny's Stratocaster leads broiled over a bed of low frequencies stoked by bassist Frank McClure. Davenport's ode to the joys of Chicago's principal expressway: "The Dan Ryan Blues" closed the 35-minute set with Denny's slide guitar prowess on the Gibson SG and memorable lyrics including the line: "...this ain't no road, it's a parking lot."



## CD CHANGER

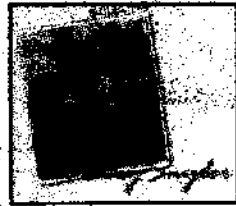
CAPSULE REVIEWS OF THE LATEST CDS

# Area guitarist a standout on imaginative 'Eclectic'

## Denny Snyder

### "Eclectic" (Above All Music)

As his alter ego Southside Denny, Denny Snyder has been a mainstay on the local blues scene for more than 20 years, releasing five independent albums in that time. With his latest CD, "Eclectic," Snyder is set to conquer the coffeehouse circuit as well.



"Eclectic" is a collection of 12 stunning acoustic instrumentals, with arrangements ranging from contemplative moments to "in-the-pocket jams." With the Southside Denny Band, Snyder has proven that he can machine-gun a flurry of notes on electric guitar, so the relaxed, carefree mood he sets here comes as a pleasant surprise.

There are, of course, the traditional blues numbers — "Chicken Feed," "Petite Berceuse" and "Scuffin'" — that Snyder has staked his reputation on. His mastery of the six-string, both finger style and strumming, on these songs is phenomenal, at times giving the guitar a dobrolike effect.

But it is his imaginative foray into other musical idioms — folk, classical and even flamenco — that gives meaning to the album's title. Of particular note are the CD's closing songs, "Breath Of Flamenco" and the hauntingly beautiful "Lullaby," serving as a display of his diverse guitar skills and as a harbinger of things to come for this talented guitar virtuoso.

"Eclectic" showcases Snyder's ability to create a warm space where no words are necessary. As he says in the CD's liner notes, this is "bare-bones music, void of any opinions or agenda. Some peaceful music for a troubled world."

you can order it online at [www.dennysnyder.com](http://www.dennysnyder.com).

— Tom Conway, Tribune Correspondent

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