

# American Music

## The Blasters/Dave Alvin newsletter

AUGUST 2008

### Blasters shows

(Phil, John, Bill, Keith)

8/28 Reno NV at John Asguaga's Casino

8/29 Berkeley CA at The Uptown

9/1 Los Angeles CA at Safari Sam's

9/6 Long Beach CA at The Cellar

9/13 San Juan Capistrano at Coach House

10/24 Pomona Fairplex CA at Bike Week

### Dave Alvin & Guilty Men shows

8/22 Fallon NV at the Oats Park

8/31 Los Angeles CA at Safari Sam's

10/5 San Francisco CA at Hardly Strictly

Bluegrass Fest (W/ the Guilty Women)

11/1 San Diego at Acoustic Music show

12/31 Crystal Bay NV at Crys. Bay Casino

### The Knitters

8/24 New York City at Lincoln Center

8/29 Yosemite CA at Strawberry Fest

8/30 Los Angeles CA at Safari Sam's

# Blasters Change Drummers

**Latest news:** Jerry Angel has left the Blasters and Bill Bateman has joined. Bill is the original and first drummer for the Blasters (more on this story in this issue). -- Dave is recording DYNAMITE WOMAN for a Doug Sahm tribute record due out in 2009. -- Shout Factory (which bought HighTone Records this year) is releasing The Best of Dave Alvin: The HighTone Years on October 28, 2008. It features 3 unreleased studio recordings: DRY RIVER and OUT IN CALIFORNIA, recorded with a full band line up featuring Greg Leisz. Also included is Dave's solo acoustic version of DIXIE HIGHWAY BLUES. It also will include a live version of WHY DID SHE STAY WITH HIM that was available only on the Outtakes In California official bootleg live CD. There will also be 4 tracks from BLUE BOULEVARD and MUSEUM OF HEART that Mark Linett, Greg Leisz and Dave remixed. -- Dave Alvin is recording some voice-overs for the L.A. Grammy Awards Museum. -- Dave Alvin continues to release digital downloadable singles on DaveAlvin.net. The newest songs are WHO WILL BUY THE WINE and ALBUQUERQUE. -- Dave Alvin's official photographer Kurt Mahoney has released a new Reggae CD from his band "Roots Foundation." The title is Where The Heart Is, available from cdbaby.com or at [www.cherokeeaudio.org](http://www.cherokeeaudio.org) -- **AM**

## Dave Alvin Report on The Chris Gaffney Tribute CD

I have finished tracks by Joe Ely, Peter Case, Tom Russell, James McMurtry, the Freddie Fender recording of GLASS HOUSE, Robbie Fulks, John Doe, The Iguanas, Dan Penn, Dave Gonzalez, me, and Gaffney. Gaffney's song is a weird song. It's the last thing he recorded; his friend Stanley wrote it. The engineer and I used just Chris's voice and I overdubbed my band over it. It's called GUITARS OF MY DEAD FRIENDS. I was going to end the record with that. But like Johnny Cash's last record and the way it ends -- it's like Wow! - but too bleak. It works as an ending song, but now I think I may put TWO LUCKY BUMS on there -- so it's a bittersweet ending.

I'm waiting on possible tracks from Nick Lowe, Los Lobos, Buddy Miller, Big Sandy with the Straitjackets, and Alejandro Escovedo. The core band of the tracks I recorded in L.A. were me, Danny Ott, Don Hefington, Bob Glaub, Greg Leisz, and Wyman Reese. It'll be released in 2009 on Yep Roc records.

*This Issue: Bill Bateman on his return to the Blasters. Dave Gonzalez interviewed about the new Hacienda Brothers CD, and James Intveld on his new record 'Have Faith.'*

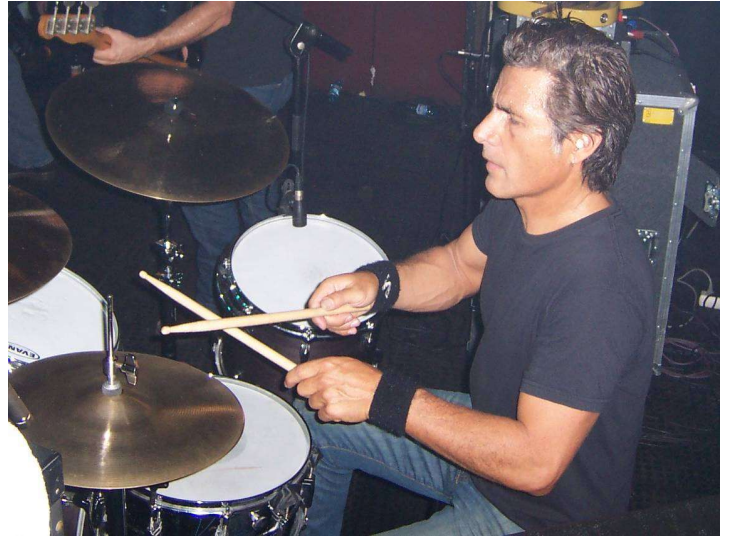
# Jerry Angel leaves the Blasters

Jerry Angel played drums for the Blasters for 14 years – longer than any other drummer in the history of the Blasters. He joined on June 17, 1994, and departed on June 23, 2008 – but not before he had made sure the Blasters would be good hands upon his departure. He called up Original Blasters drummer Bill Bateman and asked him to take over, after Jerry quit the band.

Jerry Angel was an important factor in keeping the Blasters active during some lean years in the 90's. He was always the first one to push the band and management for more gigs and more touring. It was his and Keith Wyatt's decision to boycott touring that ultimately forced the Blasters and Phil Alvin into finally releasing a studio album in 2004 called 4-11-44 after a gap of 18 years without releasing a studio recording.

Jerry finally left The Blasters when an opportunity came to join a band called Shurman - an alt-country band based in Jerry's town, Venice Beach, California. Shurman does just what Jerry always wanted for the Blasters – lots of touring. The band played 250 gigs in 2007. Check out Shurman on the web at [MySpace.com/Shurman](http://MySpace.com/Shurman) and their new album Waiting For the Sunset.

Jerry is a rockin' drummer, a great Blaster, and one of my best friends. We're all gonna miss him, and we won't forget the important contributions he made to the history of the Blasters. Best of luck Jer. –Billy Davis



# Bill Bateman Returns Home To The Blasters

*After an absence of 15 years, Bill Bateman has rejoined the Blasters; a band he co-founded in 1979 along with singer/guitarist, Phil Alvin. Bill has stayed busy in the interim founding, touring, and recording two albums with the infamous Red Devils; co-founding the Blue Shadows along with Javier Matos, and playing in the Cramps for almost two years. In addition to all of this, he recently started building drum kits for his new company called the Bateman Drum Company. Bill replaces Jerry Angel who played in the Blasters for past fourteen rockin' years.*

*Introduction and photos by John Bazz*



**AM:** Bill, welcome back to the Blasters

**Bill Bateman:** I'm happy. The Blasters are family and I didn't really have any getting back-in problems. It's just like I haven't seen my family for a while. It's easy. Phil and I are pal-ing pretty close – we're buddies again. So I'll be hanging out at the flop house (Phil's house) and hopefully we can learn some new songs to add to the set. This is just like the old days.

That's where it started back in the 70's. Phil and I would hang out in my living room playing and listening to records. Then when Dave got in the band, then it became Dave and Phil picking songs – and that worked.

**AM:** So how did it come about that you came back into the Blasters?

**BB:** Jerry called me on a Saturday morning early in June. He told me he was quitting The Blasters and joining Shurman – and he asked if I'd be interested in taking over his spot. I said: "I'll think that one over." He asked me to not tell anybody until Monday. On Monday he told our manager, Greg Lewerke, and then everybody started calling me, and I said: "Yeah I'm in."

So now Jerry is on the road with Shurman playing every day - which is what he needed. I wish I was playing everyday, but now at least I'm playing a little bit, and I'm a carpenter the rest of the time - the more gigs the merrier. But I don't want to give up being a carpenter, because now I have my own clients – one of them is a big producer who needs custom-installed doors on his studio. I like carpentry work because, just like building drums, I like working with wood.

**AM:** So how was the July tour with the Blasters? (ed. note – Bill first show back was on July 10, 2008 in Pasadena CA at the Levitt Pavilion.)

**BB:** The very first gig was in Pasadena. Some songs I haven't played before like WINDOW UP ABOVE, ALL YOUR FAULT, PRECIOUS MEMORIES, and REBOUND. They had to be worked up. It took me two weeks to get broken in. And now it's fine.

We're looking to add some new songs, whether they're new blues songs we've never done before, or rehashing some of the old ones like HIGHWAY 61 or I WISH YOU WOULD. Those are a different style that Keith doesn't really play - but I think he's a fast learner.

Keith is so busy running the Musicians Institute and teaching music, he really has a peripheral vision of music. He's actually over-qualified. On the road, he's a great guy who provides comic relief. He's never sick, never complains, and he drives like a champ. He doesn't get mad at Phil - he makes Phil laugh. He's a good guy to have around.

**AM:** Fill us in on what you have been doing the last few years.

**BB:** I joined the Cramps in July of 2004 (replacing Harry Drumdini) and played pretty much the rest of the year and played quite a bit. It was fun and happy.



When Lux and Ivy hired me, they bought me dinner and said the rule was no gray hair on stage and no drunkenness. You can't drink and then concentrate on stage. Lux does. He drinks everything he can, but he's the only one. Me and the bass player 'Chopper' (Steve Franklin) didn't get to drink. I had my hair dyed my color so it looked like my old hair. The make-up thing was something I just couldn't get into because of the sweating, and it would run down my face. I only did it a few times like at Halloween.

The Cramps are a pretty exciting band. It's electric, it's in your face, it's outrageous, it's bitchin' and everything. Ivy can really play guitar and has a tone like nobody else. And of course Lux is the front man from hell. They have that driving beat. It's wonderful.

Then 2005 came, and we didn't play or speak to one another the whole year. They were home enjoying all the money they made in '04. The whole year was

gone.

When spring of '06 came, I was hired by the Dave Alvin band. We were getting ready to do rehearsals because he had gigs the rest of the year. At that point, Ivy from the Cramps called me and said: "We have an August tour in Europe coming." I said: "Okay" and called Dave to tell him I couldn't do any gigs with Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men in August because of the Cramps tour. I asked if we could work around it, but he said "Nope. I have to hire another guy." So I got fired and he hired Steve Mugalian. I did the Cramps tour of Europe and finished up the last gig in London. While we were standing in the airport waiting to go home, our roadie started talking about Harry Drumdini and how he had cleaned up, and was out of rehab, and was flying right again. I saw Lux's and Ivy's ears perk up. The next day, I got a call from Ivy. She said they were gonna re-hire Harry because they love him so much, and she misses him. She said he was clean and sober and they want to hire him back. She said: "There are no hard feelings. It's nothing to do with you, Bill. He's like my little brother, and I gotta have him back." So, I got fired. Maybe I didn't fit in.

Then a week later, Chopper (Steve Franklin) got fired and they didn't give him a reason. They just sent his stuff home in a box with a letter that said: "Thanks for the good times. Better luck in the future and we'll see you around." He was the bass player for about 6 years. I thought they owed him a little more of an explanation. He was upset because at least I got a talking to, but he didn't.

So I haven't heard from Lux and Ivy since then, and I haven't even heard about them doing anything. I did see Harry; he was drunk and had to go back to rehab.

I liked playing with them, but it's over now. It was fun while it lasted. After that, I was playing sometimes with Rumble King. They're great guys. They would do a gig once or twice a month. All through 2005 -2007, I was working as a carpenter.

Then there was the Gene Taylor Blues Band in December of 2007 - which was a lot of fun. That might happen again.

**AM:** What happened to the Bill Batemen documentary that was shot at the King King?

**BB:** I don't know? I barely talk to King King owner, Mario anymore. When I do, he mentions that it's the next thing he has to do. I say: "Okay, give me a call." But then I never hear from him. It's on the back burner. It's in the back, waiting to get to the back burner (laughs).

He fired (director) Steve Olsen because he was too busy and planned to hire another director. The cameramen were supposed to be professional, but it turned out they weren't focused right. Mario was pissed and feels he has to re-shoot some of it. So he was so overwhelmed that he had to put it on the backburner.

**AM:** What is the status of the Blue Shadows?

**BB:** Big Jake (Javier Matos) has moved to Minneapolis and settled down - so any future tours would have to be planned with precision. If we had management and a booking agency, we could just hook up on the road and do a tour. It might just happen eventually. Jake keeps writing songs and they keep getting better. We recorded our finest song this year at my house with Chopper's recording studio and it's the most rockin' thing we've ever done. We have music, but no one gets to hear it.

Chopper moved in with me and has a Pro Tools studio in the house. He's real good with it. Whenever Jake comes to visit, we record songs. So the idea of having that band has not died. It's out there - it's just 2,500 miles from being convenient

**AM:** Are you still making drums for sale through the Bateman drum company?

**BB:** Yes, I've made 8 sets, but I just can't part with them. I have a customer in Finland who has to have a Bateman drum set at whatever cost. The drums are worth more than money to me. I don't really like to let them out of my possession.

**AM:** Will we see any of those sets on Blasters tours?

**BB:** No. On the Blasters tour, I brought the oldest set I own: an old Slingerland set I bought in a pawn shop in 1968. I still own that set. I don't know how I've been able to hold onto it all these years, but it's still in good shape. That's what I'm playing with the Blasters. It has the same Blasters logo that I painted on the skin in 1980.

I remember It was a hot July night in 1980 when the Blasters played the Club 88 with Gun Club and X and I cut myself real bad - I almost died. That was the set I was playing. Somebody took a picture of the drum set in the back room after the show. The white marine pearl drums looked red because there was so much blood on them.



I still have the photo. I cleaned 'em up since. If I was bleeding now, playing with bones for drumsticks, and wearing makeup - I'd probably still be in the Cramps now (laughs).

**AM:** What do you see for the future of the Blasters?

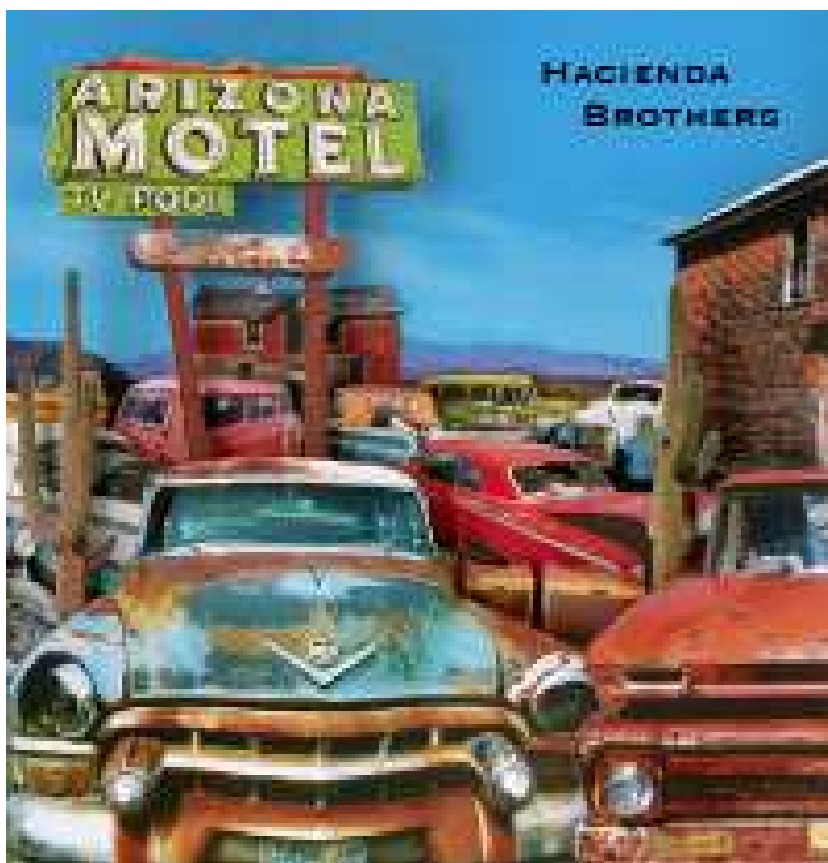
**BB:** I think another Blasters record and some more touring and try to run the Blasters business tighter. We need a new kick-start. A record would do that. It would be bitchin' if Dave would write some new songs for his brother. And what if Dave Alvin produced it? It would take something along those lines to get things going. Maybe I'll get Dave Alvin back in the band (laughs). It was always my job to get the guitar players anyway. I got Dave in the first place, then Fats, and when he died, I convinced Billy Zoom and then I got Hormel. Then I was out of the band. So we'll just have to see what happens. --~~AM~~

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## The Hacienda Brothers: Arizona Motel

*Dave Gonzalez of the Hacienda Brothers is currently on tour supporting the Hacienda Brothers' new release titled Arizona Motel. The tour is also a tribute to his fallen Brother and musical partner Chris Gaffney who passed away in April of this year. The CD was just released on June 24, 2008. Bros. guitarist and songwriter Dave Gonzalez is interviewed by American Music about the new album:*

*By Billy Davis*



We had been talking to Dan Penn about doing this record right after the last one (What's Wrong With Right). He was always calling and asking if Gaff and I were writing new songs and what they sounded like. He was always kicking our butt to write more songs. Dan and I started writing songs together for this record two summers ago when he asked me to come down to Alabama. His plan as producer was to write a couple of songs together and then let us pick a few other original songs we already had. That's how we started Arizona Motel.

So then we planned a session around the time of the Americana Music Awards in Nashville; The Hacienda Brothers were nominated for an award. That was fall of 2007. So we were down there for a week and recorded four songs with Dan Penn in his studio. We also used a song from a previous recording session with Dan.

We had a limited amount of time to record because we were on tour. It had to be planned very carefully. In December 2007,

we recorded the rest in Tucson at a studio called 'The Cavern.' We cut 7 more tunes in 4 days - 5 originals and two cover songs. Gaff wrote a great one right at the end of the session called SOUL MOUNTAIN. Between all of this, we were touring, so we were trashed by the time we were all done. It was tough on Gaff because he wasn't feeling good.

We played our last show together at Tuolumne, CA, at the Black Oak Casino. We had a great thing going on with the Hacienda Brothers. We were very good with arrangements, and input, and ideas. Gaff didn't like being in the recording studio that much. He likes to wing it, but the rest of us liked to be meticulous. Dan Penn is

like that, too. He likes to spend time to find the right groove, the right tempo, and the right key.

In January 2008, Gaff, Hank Maninger (Hacienda Brothers bass player), and I went back to Tucson to do some last overdubs. Incidentally, Hank was sick and could hardly sing, so Gaff wound up doing all the high harmony parts on the songs - and he kicked butt – that was only a couple of weeks before they diagnosed him. (ed. note – Gaff was diagnosed in February 2008 with liver cancer) He was incredible. Like the old boxer he was, Gaff just stayed in the ring until the very end and didn't get knocked out.

In February, while Gaff was sick we were speaking to him about the mixes. We told him we would hold off putting the record out until he got better and would make his big comeback, but he said: "No, I think you better put it out right now."

## *The Songs*

**A LOT OF DAYS ARE GONE** – Jeb Schoonover (Hacienda Bros. manager) has a great knowledge of music. I would bring songs to him, and he would give a little idea and more times than not Jeb would be right there. It's good to have someone to bounce ideas off of. I would turn demos into Jeb and he would figure out which we should focus on; then we would talk to Gaff about it. Both Jeb and Gaff were good at fixing little parts on songs that were already well on their way.

I wrote that song while I was waterskiing in Northern CA. I was a water skier all my life. That summer, my back was giving me problems, but I finally got up on the skis, and I grabbed the ski rope, and I said: "Man, a lot of days are gone and I'm still holding on." I came up with the verses right there out on the water. A few weeks later, I showed it to Jeb, and I said: "It needs a bridge." Right there we wrote the part: "Time is just a way of counting yesterdays. . ." - that was Jeb's line. I came up with: "Good times never hang around long enough to stay."

I was singing that one all along and Gaff never said he wanted to sing it. When we got in the studio in December, Gaff asked: "I'm singin' that one, right?" I said: "Well, if you really want to." I already had it cut with a finished vocal. It wasn't planned to be the lead off track.

Gaff didn't get the bridge like we intended, so it turned out to be a duet in the mixdown. Jeb liked the way Gaff did the intro. Jeb and few other people liked the way I did the bridge - so it became a duet. If we had more time to work with the song, we might have had him sing the whole thing.

Once we got the right formula, it became the lead-off tune on the record.

Gaff played piano on that song and a few others. We had a lot of great piano with Joe Terry on the Dan Penn sessions, but when we were doing this song back in Tucson, Joe wasn't there. The Cavern had a great grand piano, so I said: "I wish we could put piano on this." Gaff said: "Well, let me fiddle around with it." He did some timeless little licks at the beginning the song. When we heard that, it really made the song come to life.

Gaff was truly a naturally gifted musician.

**I'LL COME RUNNING TO YOU** – That's a Connie Smith song - a great 60's female singer with RCA Records. We wanted a real up-tempo number. We did that song in the first session way back when we recorded CRY LIKE A BABY. I was planning on singing that, and like the first song, after Gaff heard it come together, he said he wanted to do it, and he hit it out of the park.

**UNCLE SAM'S JAIL** – That came from the last songwriting session between me, Gaff, and Jeb in September 2007 at Jeb's house in Tucson. It was that week that we weeded through all the demos and decided what we would use on the album and what we wanted to take to Nashville to Dan Penn.

I was playing the Spanish guitar and playing a Johnny Paycheck song called THE CAVE. Gaff came up and said: "Play that again. I think I can do something with that." I strummed the same chords as he sang: "When I was just a young boy of eighteen. . ." Then I sang: "So many places I have never seen." Then we decided to flip those lines, and then Jeb jumped in there. The first two verses were done. We went out to the BBQ in the backyard, and then Jeb and I came up with the bridge. The really unique thing about that song is we put the bridge at the back of the song, and it became the chorus. It sounds like the bridge the first time it happens, and when it happens again, it's a chorus.

Gaff had a real strong feeling about Vietnam. He was right there in the thick of it, so when he started talking about it in this song, we all could relate because we're bummed out about the war going on now. I remember the war stories from my father in Korea. So, we all had plenty of things to add to it. It's a beautiful but heavy song.

**BIG TOWN CITY** – I’ve been trying to move out of San Diego for a while, but I’m always on the road or busy. My town used to be such a mellow place, but it’s gotten too crowded. The natives are getting pushed out. I was down in Alabama on another trip - This was before we wrote any songs for the album - Dan said: “Don’t write any more country songs. We need soul songs and ballads.” He said: “You have plenty of country songs.” But that one was in my mind, and I had to let it out. And I did it as a mid-tempo country-rock song. Hank arranged the harmony part.

**USE TO THE PAIN** – Dan and I wrote that one in Alabama. I was having a bad time with my back and I said to my dad: “I might have just gotten used to the pain.” He said: “You better write that down” - so I had the title. A few weeks later when I saw Dan, I told him that title and we wrote it with me on piano and Dan on acoustic guitar. I like that one. That’s real western soul. I had a real good feeling for that gulf coast southern country soul stuff. Dan came up with the melody in that.

**ORDINARY FOOL** – I was driving along and just pulled that one out of thin air. I had that little lyric, a melody, and a chorus. It just stayed in my head and wouldn’t go away. That’s a very special song that I wrote about a year ago. It was about three separate friends of mine who were getting married. I was overwhelmed by the amount of love they felt for each other, so I wrote that song.

I was trying to get the rest of the band behind it, but they didn’t like one particular line. Gaff was giving me a hard time. I gave him a hard time back and said: “If you’re gonna sing it, go ahead and write a line for it.” We were on the way to the AMA’s, and I reminded Jeb of it, and he said: “Hell, I’ll write the line.” The production by Dan Penn made that song so much better. He added the right tempo and the piano.

**LIGHT IT AGAIN CHARLIE** – The guys kept bugging me to play more guitar. After we had most of the tunes for the record, Jeb suggested we do an instrumental. I named the tune after the great blues harmonica player Charlie Musslewhite way back when I wrote it years ago. He is a long time friend of mine. Dan Penn heard it and liked it.

We played another instrumental called BROOTHERIZED for Dan too, but he liked LIGHT IT AGAIN CHARLIE more. We cut it for the What’s Wrong With Right sessions but already had an instrumental on that record. So we pulled it back out for the Arizona Motel Record.

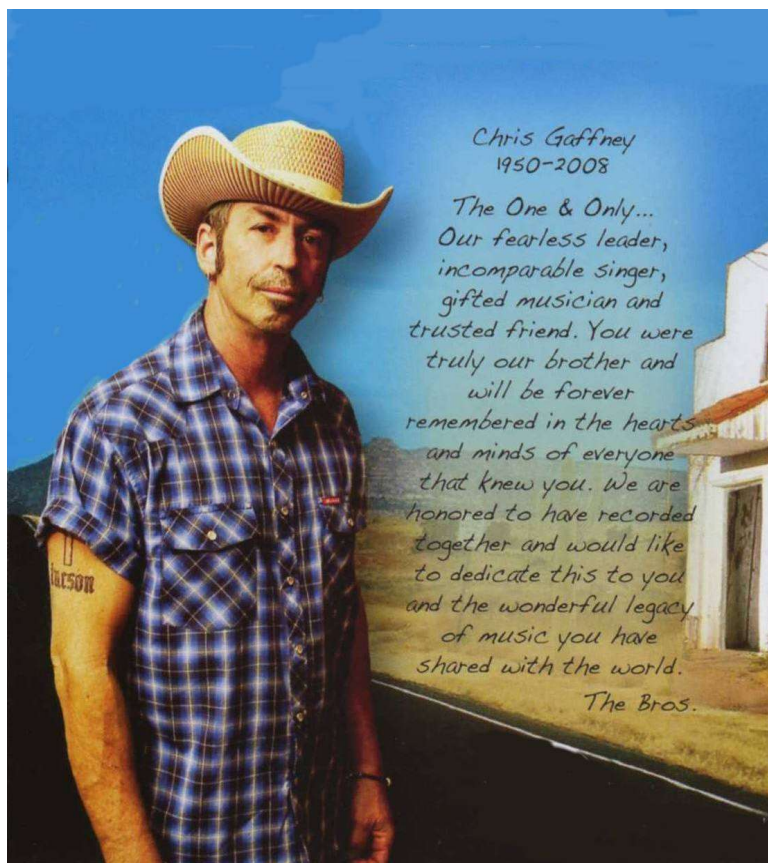
**SOUL MOUNTAIN** – I believe that was the last song Gaff wrote. I’ve heard Dave Alvin say there’s a song they wrote together, but I haven’t heard it yet. That was right around the Americana Music Awards trip when he wrote that.

We were working on another song on acoustic guitars, when he just grabbed the guitar and went into it, and it was all there. We said, “Wow, it’s like a long lost Sam Cooke song.”

**WHEN YOU’RE TIRED OF BREAKING OTHERS’ HEARTS** - That’s a song that I had on a Johnny Paycheck demo. We were looking to put a shuffle on the album, so I brought that in to the band, and they suggested we make it into a swing. When DB added that steel on there, it really came together swingin’.

**LOOK INTO THE FUTURE** – That’s one that Jeb and I wrote but the band didn’t really get behind it at first. But when the whole band played together on it in the studio, Gaff picked up the acoustic guitar and started playing and singing it – Amen.

**I STILL BELIEVE** – I wanted a very heart-felt song and decided to write that. One of my favorite albums by Johnny Paycheck is Take this Job and Shove It. There is a song that I like on there called FROM COTTON TO SATIN – so I





wanted to write a song like that. That kind of song is where I'm at right now.

**LONG WAY TO TOWN** – I wrote that when I was in the Paladins and would occasionally pull that one out with the Haciendas. I wrote that song on a long drive from the northwest heading towards California. I was up in the mountains, and I just thought: "It's such a long way to town." It never really fit in with the Paladins. We were a rockabilly and blues band. I was starting to write country tunes and needed an outlet for that. That's when I got with Gaff and Jeb and formed the Hacienda Brothers.

**DIVORCE OR DESTROY** – A Hank Williams Jr. song that Gaff always wanted to do. I'd like to mention something about this Arizona Motel record. Not only does Gaff have a great vocal and accordion style, but he was really great rhythm guitar player. We just all grew around the sound of his unique acoustic rhythm, which is a real a cowboy-style rhythm. I still don't know anybody who plays like that. So on this last record, it was cool because we cut the songs with us all playing at the same time, and Gaff played a lot of acoustic rhythm guitar on this record.

We worked well together like that. With a lot of the tunes I wrote, I sung first and Gaff would play acoustic guitar as we cut it. Only later Gaff would go back with the lyric sheet and sing over what we had cut.

**BREAK FREE** - A song that Dan Penn and I wrote. Dan came up with that title. He is a real 'lyrics-guy'. He likes them to be real good. Often I'll think we really have a good line there, but he says: "You know, we can beat that." Then we go in the next day and work on a song and 9 times out of 10, a better line comes. He is a perfectionist.

At the session, I really pushed Gaff do to the accordion on there, and I'm so glad he did it. It really complements the song. --~~AM~~

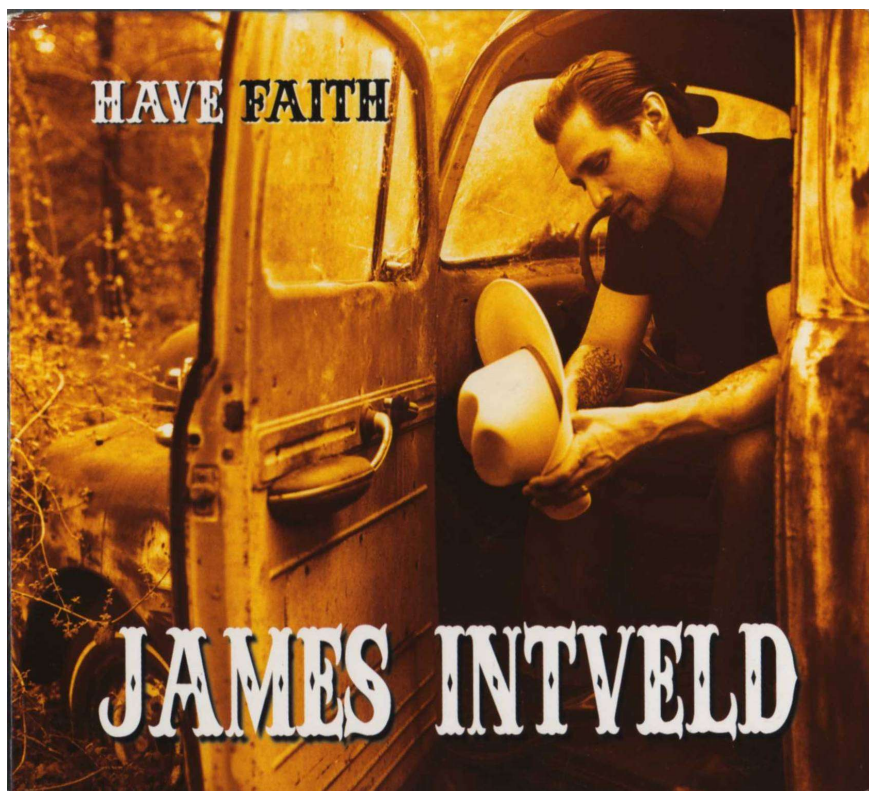
## *James Intveld's new CD Have Faith*

*James Intveld, former guitar player in the Blasters, has just released his third album called Have Faith on Molenaart Records. He is currently out on tour in support of it. On his stop in New York City on August 9, 2008, James talked about the making of the record.*

**James:** I started the album in Nashville with players there and then my sister got sick, so I went back to California to take care of her. I continued working on the record there at Bruce Witkin's Unison Music Studios. Bruce also flew out to Nashville with me to record the Jordanares on two tracks. He had never worked with them before and didn't want to miss the opportunity.

**AM:** How was it singing with the legendary Jordanares?

**James:** Oh it was great, but I already knew those guys from when my brother (Ricky Intveld) was in Rick Nelson's band. I met them back then in the 80's. I sang with them 20 years ago on some demos that we were cutting for Rick Nelson; a songwriter had hired us to record the songs and we were backed by





the Jordanares. Since then, they'd come out and see me play, or we'd go to dinner occasionally. It was nice to have them on my record. Especially on that gospel song I wrote called WALK WITH ME.

**AM:** I see there are a lot of singers on that track.

**James:** Yes. I also added the McCrary sisters – Linda McCrary and Kristie Morden. Linda is from the McCrary gospel family, which are big in Nashville. So we really beefed that track up.

**AM:** Tell me about some of the songwriters you co-wrote with like the familiar name of John Coinman.

**James:** We've been writing together for about 10 years. There are a few co-writes on this album. There is a song I wrote with Gary Nicholson out of Nashville called A WOMAN'S TOUCH. Then there's a song called LET'S GET STARTED that I wrote with a Nashville writer named Kostas. He wrote a bunch of big hits for Dwight and the Mavericks and others.

**AM:** Some of the cover songs are somewhat obscure.

**James:** PRETTY WORLD is one I've known forever by Wynn Stewart. He started the Bakersfield sound that they always say Buck Owens started. Buck and Merle listened to Wynn Stewart. He recorded that song as a #1 country hit in 1967. I wondered why no one else had cut that song, so I did.

Then I did a Johnny Paycheck song that Bobby Bare wrote called MOTEL TIME. I got Lloyd Green to play steel on the recording. He played steel on the original Johnny Paycheck sessions. He's a legendary steel player – one of the first to be put in the Country Music Hall of Fame. A great guy and a great player.

**AM:** I see Eddie Perez was involved in some recordings. He was your guitar player in the mid 90's.

**James:** Yeah Eddie played with me years ago until he moved to Austin, Texas, and then to Nashville. He's out playing with Dwight, Gary Allan, and Miranda Lambert. So when I moved to Nashville, we decided to get together again and start working on stuff. We tried to make a record and then Eddie got really busy so I went on by myself. I still see Eddie often out in Nashville.

**AM:** What was the last song you wrote for the new album?

*James Intveld is currently on a cross country US tour supporting his new Have Faith record that was released on August 12, 2008. The touring band consists of (l. to R. below) Storm Rhodes IV on lead guitar, James on vocal and acoustic guitar, Keely Lane on drums, and Gary Gomez on bass. They played an extended show in New York City at the Rodeo Bar in New York City on August 10, 2008 (below)*



**James:** It might have been SMALL TOWN BOY. A lot of people hear it. and they think it's about my brother. It sort of is but more about everybody's innocence as people. We grow up having dreams of what we want to be or what we were gonna do – then reality catches up with you. All those dreams are still there. but they die a death because they're no longer based in the optimism of youth. Sometimes you want to look back at that person who was a kid and wanted to do all these things.

**AM:** How did the cover of the CD come about?

**James:** I was visiting my friend Kylie out in Maynard, Texas, and her boyfriend is a photographer. There was an old truck on the property where they live. It was covered in leaves, limbs and bushes. I wanted to see what it looked like, so we pulled all the leaves off, and I opened the door. There were three tires inside stacked up like a chair. So I sat in the truck for a second to check it out. I turned, holding my cowboy hat, and at that moment, he snapped the picture of me. He took some other shots of me around the property. The next time I was in town, he said, "You have to see this shot I took of you." It was just one of those things where he captured a moment and that was the album cover. This album was a tough one to make, because it's been such a long time since the last one (2001, Somewhere Down The Road). I called the album Have Faith because it was such a hard time to get it together. You have to believe in yourself or you have to believe in something.

I had to trudge through and make something happen. I'm gonna try and stay on that path this time and make another record soon. It's difficult for me to make records because I want them to be good. I can't just go through it quickly. The problem is, I edit myself so quickly. Sometimes you just have to accept the way things are.

**AM:** Thanks, James. We can accept this one, no problem. It's a great album! --AM

*James Intveld's new CD Have Faith is available on his web site [www.JamesIntveld.com](http://www.JamesIntveld.com). Also available is his 2001 CD Somewhere Down The Road which has been remixed and a bonus track included called NOTHINGS GONNA STOP MY LOVIN' YOU.*



## **AMERICAN MUSIC: The Blasters / Dave Alvin newsletter**

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**contributing writer Tom Wilk**

**SUBSCRIPTION INFO:** Publishing 4 issues quarterly. Send \$10 for 4 issues (worldwide).

If paying by check, payable to **BILLY DAVIS**.

Mail to: **PO Box 210071, Woodhaven N.Y. 11421**

**e-mail:** [davistb@aol.com](mailto:davistb@aol.com)    **BACK ISSUE COPIES:** \$2.50 per issue worldwide

Online newsletter is free **[www.Blastersnewsletter.com](http://www.Blastersnewsletter.com)**



## Dave Alvin's DOG AND PONY SHOW

8 / 6 / 08

Dear friends, fans, and everyone else:

I'd like to let you know about a 3-day benefit called the Dog & Pony Show that some close friends and I have put together for this coming Labor Day weekend, Aug 30, 31 and Sept 1.

The past year has been very hard healthwise for many members of the California music scene. Four friends/ musicians of ours (western soul singer Chris Gaffney, superb guitarist Duane Jarvis, blues diva Candye Kane, and psycho-billy hot-rod Drac Conley) were all diagnosed with different forms of cancer and need our help to deal with the expense of their various treatments. Instead of putting on four different benefits, I thought it might make more sense to do one BIG one featuring many of the bands and musicians that have played with Chris, Duane, Candye and Drac through the years. Thus, the Dog And Pony Show was born.

Seeing how my late friend (and spiritual advisor) Chris Gaffney, always referred our gigs together as "dog and pony shows," I thought that his descriptive phrase would be a perfect name for the benefit (though he never did tell me which one of us was the dog and which one was the pony).

Sadly, as many of you may know, Chris passed away recently, but the good news is that Duane, Candye and Drac are doing fine and hanging tough through this rough time. Without going into a long dissertation on the state of healthcare in our country, I would like to point out that they still need financial help with their treatments and recoveries. All the money we raise at the Dog And Pony Show will be going directly to them (or in Chris's case, to his survivors) to cover their medical expenses.

If you are in California this Labor Day weekend, or even remotely nearby, I'd like to personally invite you to come to the shows. There will be great music, drinks, dancing, barbeque, some memories, some laughs, a couple of tears and a roomful of love. I'll see you there.

Dave Alvin





Howdy all,

The Blasters just finished a west Coast tour that took us from Seattle down to Hollywood, with stops in Winthrop, WA, Portland, San Jose, San Francisco, Santa Rosa and Sacramento; Eight shows in 2 weeks. That's more like a vacation than work, especially in light of the beautiful places we experienced.

Phil lost his voice after the second gig but had it back by fifth show - that's Rock and Roll folks. And for the uninitiated, Bill Bateman is back in the Blasters after a 15 year absence, replacing Jerry Angel on drums. Jerry quit the Blasters in June to join another group called Shurman. We all wish him the best in his new endeavor Enjoy the photos. -- John Bazz





