

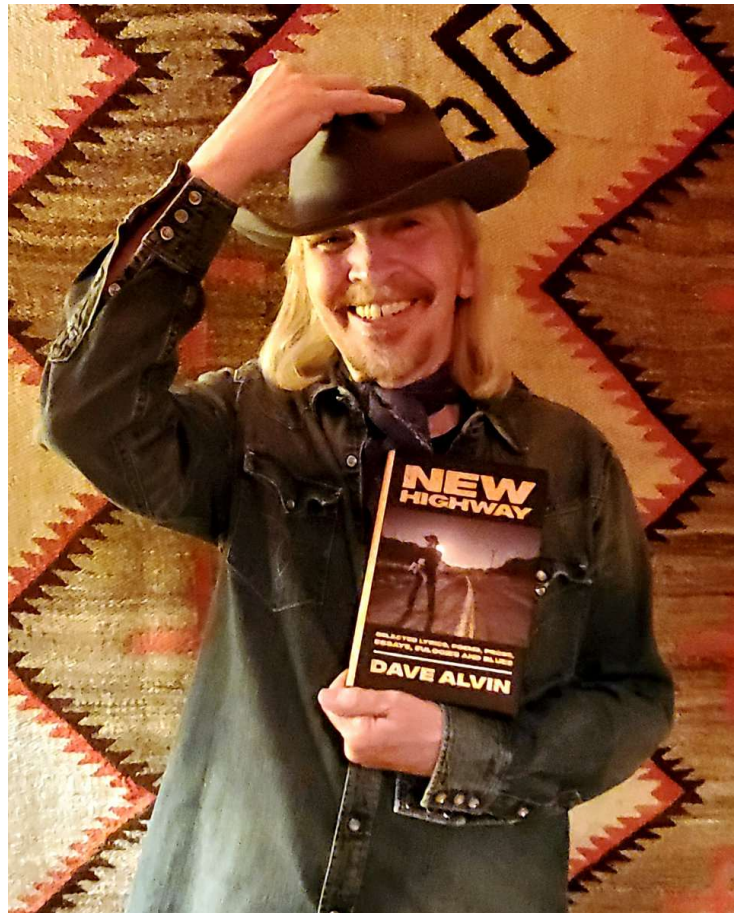
# American Music

## The Blasters/Dave Alvin newsletter

JANUARY 2023

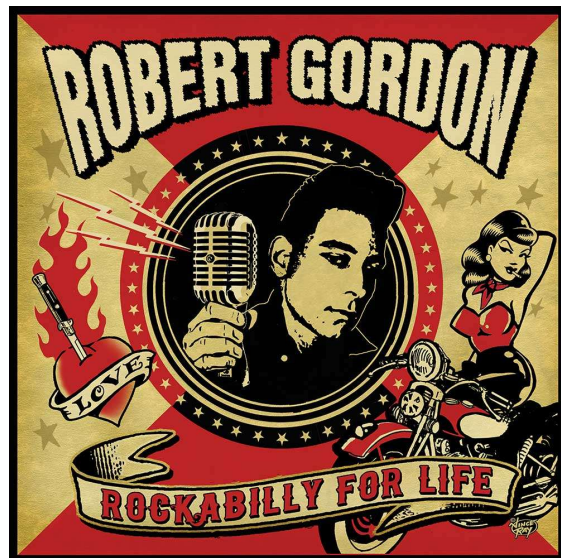
# Dave Alvin Book Released

**Latest News:** In October 2022, Dave Alvin released a new book called New Highway: Selected Lyrics, Poems, Prose, Essays, Eulogies and Blues. II III Keith Wyatt reports on the current state of Phil Alvin and the Blasters: "We're all looking forward to seeing Phil recover from his recent medical setbacks. It's a long, gradual process, but he's being well cared for and we're hopeful that in the new year we can start talking about next steps. Until then, thanks to everyone for their support and concern." II III Yep Roc Records celebrated the 11th anniversary of Dave Alvin's Eleven Eleven album on Nov. 11 with the release of an expanded edition on vinyl and CD. The bonus tracks are SIGNAL HILL, BEAUTIFUL CITY 'CROSS THE RIVER and a duet with Candye Kane called NEVER TRUST A WOMAN. II III The 'Outlaw Country West' Cruise sailed November 3-8 from Los Angeles to Mexico. Dave Alvin performed two shows with the Guilty Ones playing completely different sets of songs. Jimmie Dale Gilmore was scheduled, but had to cancel because of COVID. Skip Edwards joined them on piano. Dave: "I really enjoyed playing my first cruise. Steve Berlin [of Los Lobos] joined us on SO LONG BABY GOODBYE on sax in the first show." (((cont. page 2 )))

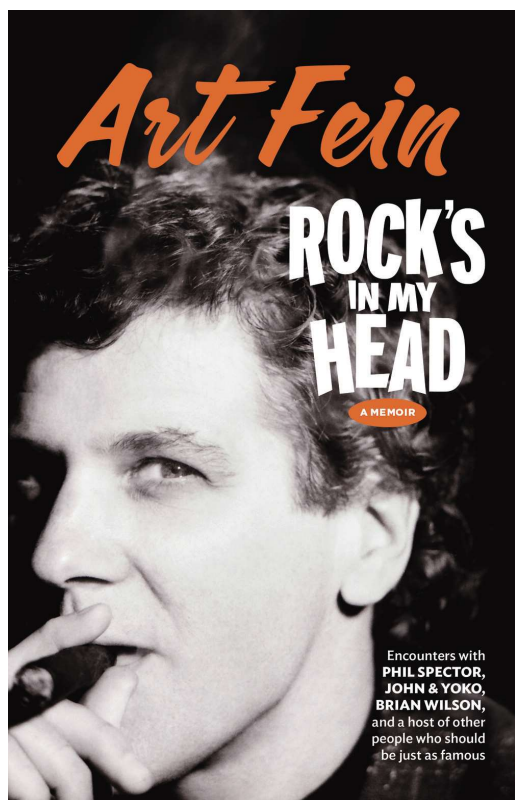


***In This Issue: Dave Alvin's New Highway Book, The Blasters Lobero Theater Riot and a Dave Alvin Bibliography.***

**Latest News Continued from page 1** — “At the second show Steve and David Hidalgo played on EARL’S RHUMBA and MARIE MARIE.” Dave participated in a Country Dick Montana tribute that was billed as a Pleasure Barons reunion with members of the Beat Farmers. Dave said it was a very loose jam but a lot of fun. **II III** Dave Alvin will be stopping at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville this summer to record an acoustic session and interview to be logged in the museum’s archives. **II III** Long-time rockabilly singer Robert Gordon died of leukemia at 75 on Oct. 18 in Manhattan. Dave Alvin played



guitar on THREE ALLEY CATS on his Rockabilly For Life 2020 album. **II III** Former Blast-ers manager Art Fein has written Rock's In My Head: A Memoir (Trouser Press Books). The book discusses his encounters with John Lennon, Yoko Ono, Phil Spector, Brian Wilson and other musicians over the past half century. Fein has hosted Art Fein's Poker Party, a rock 'n' roll talk show on cable TV; written a monthly column online called A Fein Mess, and worked for Capitol Records. For more information on Rock's In My Head, visit Trouser Press Books. **II III** The Third Mind, Dave Alvin’s ‘improvisation collective’ band, went into a Los Angeles studio December 19-21 to record a second album with members Victor Krummenacher, Jesse Sykes, Willie Aron, Michael Jerome Moore, and David Immergluck.



Dave: “There will be a lot more of Jesse singing on this. I want her to be the voice of the band, not me.” They will do another session in January with some additional special guest musicians. **II III** Dave Alvin had to cancel November concert dates after getting COVID. The shows have been rescheduled for February and March. **II III** Dave Alvin and Jimmie Dale Gilmore will go into the studio in February/March in Texas to record a few songs for digital release. **II III** Dave: “Now that I have a new studio to record in at Michael Jerome’s in Los Angeles, I am planning a Dave Alvin album. I’m not sure when. The thing about cancer is that you can never beat it, you have to learn to live with it. It’s that dagger hanging over your head. I refuse to give in to it. I have a lot of things to do, and music to make, so I’m doing it.” —**AM**



# Dave Alvin: An Addendum to New Highway

*Dave Alvin's new book, New Highway, features selected lyrics, poems, prose, essays, eulogies and song lyrics. All of it spanning a musical career from 1979 to 2022. In this interview, Dave Alvin expands upon some of the chapters in the book. So go read the book and then read this interview.*

—— By Billy Davis ——

**American Music:** Congratulations on the book. How is the book selling since being released in October 2022?

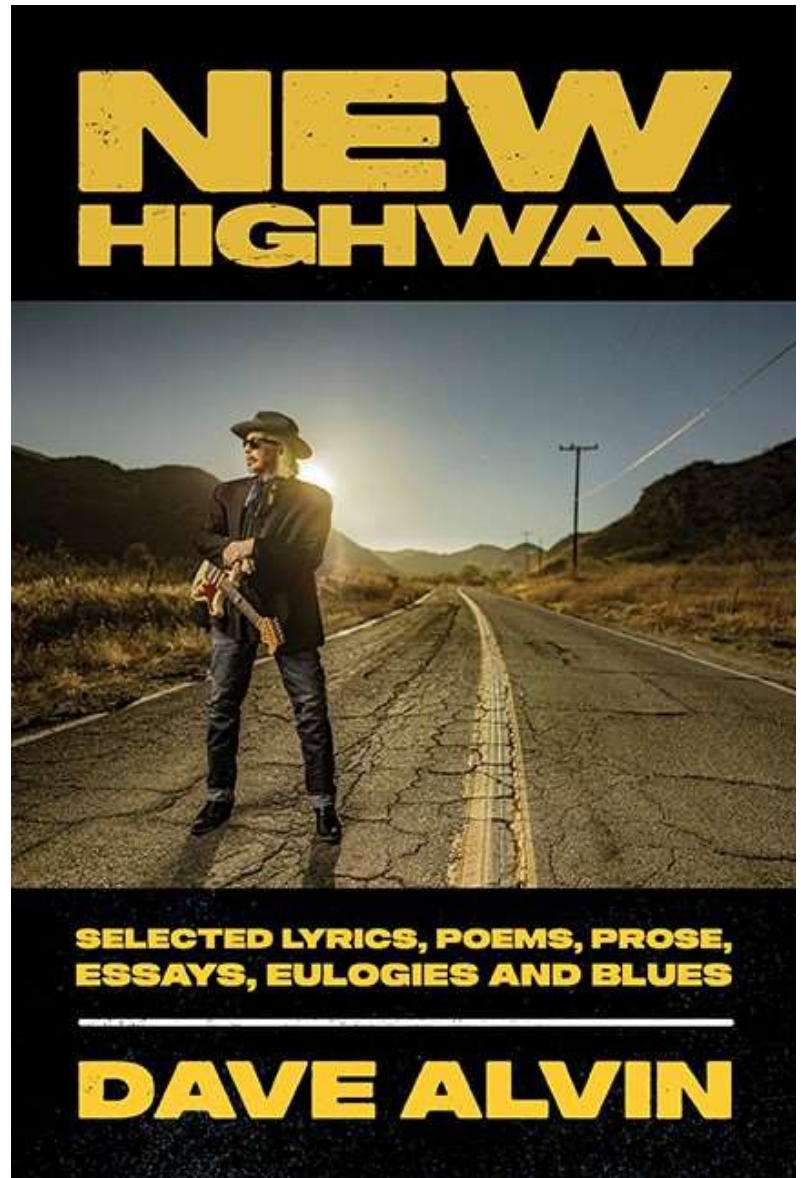
**Dave:** Thanks. They did a pressing of 5,000 that sold out – but we have some set aside for the merch table on tour. The second printing of 2,000 will be in February 2023. I've done some press and promotion for the book on podcasts, Stereophile magazine and a guitar magazine - but I'll be doing a lot of more when the memoir book comes out.

**AM:** Though this book is billed as a compilation of older writings, poems and essays, I noticed many variations from the original sources of the writings.

**Dave:** It's a mixture of old and new. Sometimes the new is in the old. There is a lot of current stuff in there. I mentioned in the introduction that I often change song lyrics. I wouldn't do it for MARIE MARIE or BORDER RADIO or songs like that, but there are songs that

are compositions under construction. Years after recording a song I find I might like something else better. As for poetry, when I went through the things I published in Nana, Big Joe and The Fourth of July and Any Rough Times Are Now Behind You, I thought I could have said things differently or could have added words. So, I did it for this book. Everything in this book in writings or poetry are music related. The publisher wanted a certain number of pages. I have more material, that I'll work into the memoir.

**AM:** Do you ever use the technique of rhyming your poems?



**Dave:** If I write a poem and it rhymes to me, then it's a song not a poem.

**AM:** How did you come up with the subtitles for the song lyric chapters?

**Dave:** Those were often how I would describe a song to other musicians. I might say; imagine a car wreck between the Fats Domino band and the Jerry Lee Lewis band. I included them in the book to describe the song to someone who had never heard it.



Photo By Joe Murray

### **MEETING MR. PHILLIPS**

That was a magic day. I'm playing for Sam Phillips, so I'm gonna turn up the guitar and go for it. That was one of the highlights of my life. Sam Phillips said some nice things about the Blasters in interviews and when I met him he said; "I love the Blasters. We could have made some great records together."

### **DO NOT PLAY THE BEAT**

Bo Diddley had a good time. John Lee Hooker was there and sat in with us in the second set. We played for free because it was a benefit for the Southern California Blues Society. They were raising money for grave stones for Eddie Cleanhead Vinson and some others. Bo got paid, but we did it for free. After the show Bo said he had gigs in Santa Barbara and Ventura and he'd like us to be his backing band. We said: "Sorry we all have other gigs." It was nice to be asked, though.

I wish we had cell phones back then and that somebody would have captured that, It really was a wonderful show and I'd love to hear it again. Another show I like to hear again is the time that Lux Interior of the Cramps played with the Blasters.

### **BLACK SKY**

It's a love song but it came to me at the time of my dad's death and friends Country Dick Montana and Mark Sandman from Morphine. People were starting to drop.

### **NEW HIGHWAY**

'Hope Springs Eternal Blues' - it's a sense of optimism. It's a new highway not the old highway. It has old blues lines and new Dave Alvin lines. I chose it as a title of the book because, like I say about my parents in the introduction, I'm either an pessimistic optimist or an optimistic pessimist [laughs]. It goes back to the survival instinct. It ain't easy doing what musicians do to survive. This is part of what's gonna be in my memoir: When I had my first solo band, the AllNighters, we were a great band. It was the only time I ever got tour support

[\$2,000 a week] from a label. CBS Nashville Records finally saw the band and realized we weren't a country band, so they cut off the tour support. My manager said we should cancel all the gigs. I said: "Fuck them! They can't tell me I can't play." I'll be damned if I was gonna let the accountant tell me I couldn't play. So, I used all my savings to keep the band out on the road. You have to be insane to do what we do.

### **GAFFNEY HATES POETRY**

That was Chris in a dark mood [laughs]. I have thousands of stories of Chris in a great mood. That always cracked me up. I wrote that specifically for a poetry reading years ago. A lot of people like that one even if they didn't know Chris. In the book right before that, I assembled all the songs that Chris and I wrote together.

### **FOURTH OF JULY**

The Blasters went into the studio with Nick Lowe producing what would be the next record. Nick didn't want Phil to sing it. He wanted me to sing it. I had to explain to him that I wasn't in the band at the time. It was 1986 and I had already left the band, but the plan was that I would make a record with them that they could put out and go on tour behind. This was before they got Hollywood Fats. We owed Warner Bros. Records an album and they wanted to put it out. It was really an uncomfortable situation and that song dissolved the idea of an album.

### **A HEART THAT'S TRUE**

I have so many other Doc Pomus stories. Long before we wrote together, he used to come see me at the Bottom Line club in NYC. He was good friends with Big Joe Turner, so Big Joe told him all about the Alvin brothers. Doc started as a blues singer doing jump blues, so that's when he met Otis Blackwell and he transitioned to a rock 'n roll songwriter. When Doc was dying in NYC in his uptown apartment, we wrote together for six nights. It was rough

because my mother had just died of cancer and he was now dying. We wrote those songs for the Cry Baby movie. He had a funny way about him. I asked him what was Ahmet Ertegun like and he said "Well, you know, he wasn't like us Dave - A great guy, but wasn't like us" [laughs]. I'd say: "What do you mean?" And he'd say: "I mean he just wasn't like us" [laughs].



Photo By Joe Murray





He could make me laugh, but then we argued a lot good-naturedly - like the story in my book about whether you can use a nasal rhyme [like the title of the chapter]. I learned a lot writing with him. He was a master songwriter.

### **BLUE BLVD**

Michael Woody co-wrote the song with me. He was a Nashville songwriter who wrote a big hit song for the Desert Rose band. When I was living in Nashville, we were friends and wrote the song. The words I already had. The

part "Oh baby, You drive me crazy," was his idea. He got burned out by the Nashville song-writing job and eventually moved back to Colorado.

### **EVERYBODY LIKES THE VENTURES**

Yes, we did get good gigs at the Starwood after that [laughs]. It was the right thing to do. It was after we had opened for Queen, so we were doing well locally. The weekend is really what we wanted. That's where the money was. Our attitude was that we would play with anyone, but meanwhile our contemporaries like 'X' and The Go-Gos were doing weekends at the Starwood. I wanted that for us. And it was my favorite club and everything a rock 'n roll club should be.

### **ANGEL ON MY SHOULDER**

That was an outtake from the Blackjack David album. I'm not sure why it didn't make it on the record. The engineer Paul duGre sent me the track last year. If there's a reissue of Blackjack David on the Concord label [Concord owns all the HighTone catalog], it'll be on there along with DIXIE HIGHWAY BLUES [which was released on Shout factory's Best of the HighTone Years CD.]

### **THE DAY AFTER I SAW JIMI HENDRIX WHEN I WAS 13 YEARS OLD**

That was something I had written long ago that I spiffed up for the book. I thought I could expand upon it. I saw Jimi Hendrix live twice and it changed my life. I never wanted to imitate the way he plays, but there are certain Hendrix tricks on guitar that I do nowadays - like using different pickups for different sounds or how to make a note scream.

### **THE DEATH OF THE LAST STRIPPER**

That's a song I wrote with Terry Allen and Jo Harvey Allen. There is a town called Marfa in West Texas that is an arts community. It's like Austin was in the 1980s. I've been there with Terry Allen and Jimmie Dale Gilmore. I had a few days there and Terry and I wrote this song. I'm really proud of it. I'll include it on my next Dave Alvin album. It's very stripped down but reminds me a lot of BORDER RADIO.

### **JUST DON'T MENTION DON RICH**

I would have liked them to include this writing before the interview in Mix Magazine but instead they had one of their in-house writers write a brief bio. I wanted to talk about the stacks of money [laughs].

### **BLUES FOR BRUCE BROMBERG**

He was such an unassuming guy. Other than producing, we wrote two songs together. My THIRTY DOLLAR ROOM, THE DEVIL'S WIND and the Robert Cray big hit SMOKING GUN were credited to him with an alias name – D. Amy. The way blues got played in the late 1980s, like Robert Cray - was something Bruce created and he doesn't get credit for it. He loved what he did, but didn't talk or brag about it. When they put him in the Blues Hall of Fame in Memphis, he didn't make a big deal about it.

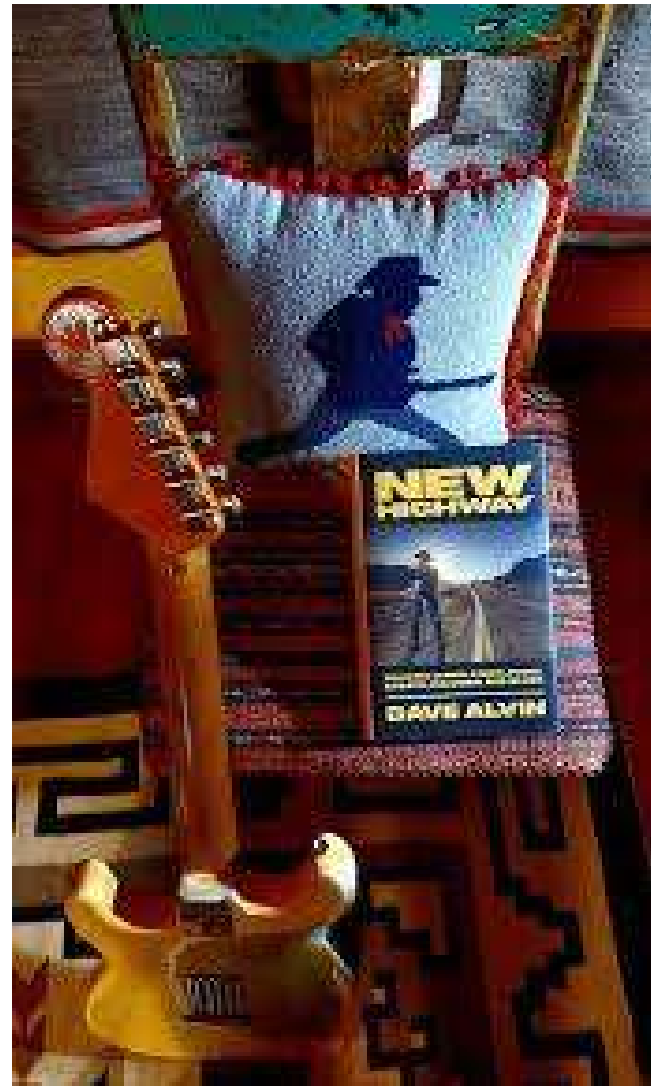
It was hard to leave his and Larry Sloven's label HighTone. It was very tough, because those guys are friends. After dealing with big labels like Epic for my solo career and then Elektra with 'X', I hated it. But HighTone knew exactly what I wanted to do. Then Leaving them was because they, as a label, weren't giving me what I wanted. I felt that a few artists and I were carrying the label and we weren't compensated for it. But I know what an independent label goes through, and they understood why I left. Larry Sloven and I have become better friends since I left.

### **PATERNITY TEST**

Being mistaken for being someone else, like Kid Rock's dad just happened again [laughs]. The other day I posted on Facebook that that these two hippie kids saw me when I was hiking and thought I was Bob Weir from the Grateful Dead. He just bought a house not far from mine. I said: "I'm not him, but it's better than being called Kid Rock's dad" [laughs].

### **FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE**

I was trying to figure out how to end this book. I thought I would end it like it started. It all started with AMERICAN MUSIC and The Ashgrove. Life is all about that Freddie King riff. It'll appear in many places that I play. At a Dave Alvin gig it will be in LONG WHITE CADILLAC. I'll use it in The Knitters or even in a Third Mind song. It's a game I play that keeps the spirit alive. — **AM**



# NEW HIGHWAY BOOK REVIEW

## BY TOM WILK

After publishing poetry collections in 1986 and 1995, Dave Alvin opted for a different direction with his third book. The fittingly titled New Highway: Selected Lyrics, Poems, Prose, Essays, Eulogies And Blues (BMG) finds him venturing into nonfiction writing with rewarding results.

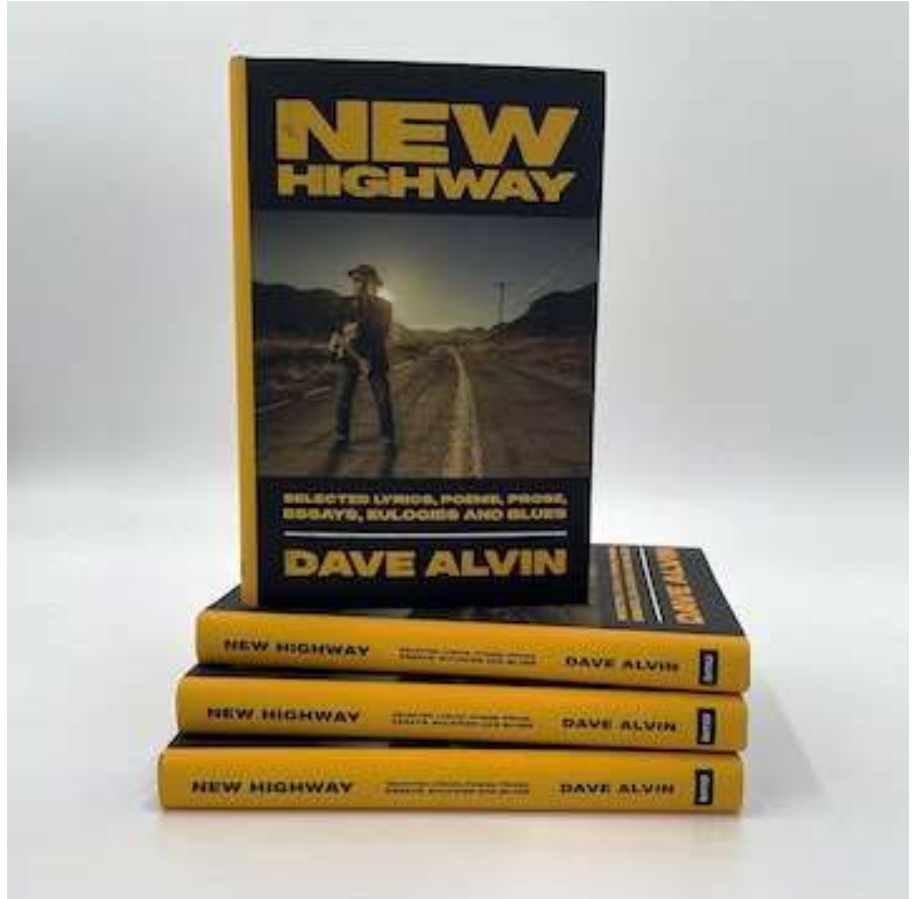
The book's 117 selections, including the words to 83 songs, are arranged thematically. Lyrics to ASHGROVE and AMERICAN MUSIC, two songs dealing with the power and influence of music, are followed by short essays on Sun

Records founder Sam Phillips and Los Angeles-based musician/talent scout Johnny Otis. Dave compares the impact Otis had on West Coast rhythm-and-blues to the roster of talent that Phillips developed on the Sun label, connecting the two legendary figures.

The lyrics to TWO LUCKY BUMS, a song that featured a duet by Dave and Chris Gaffney, are followed by the words to four songs the two men wrote together. A five-page poem, GAFFNEY HATES POETRY, caps off the section in which Dave recounts a tense and occasionally humorous late-night encounter on the road with his friend that is one of the book's highlights.

Other juxtapositions are more subtle. Dave's remembrance of singer/songwriter Nanci Griffith, who died in 2021, is followed by the lyrics to BUS STATION, a song that she and Tom Russell performed as a duet on Modern Art, his 2003 album.

All of Dave's lyrics come with a short description under the title, such as



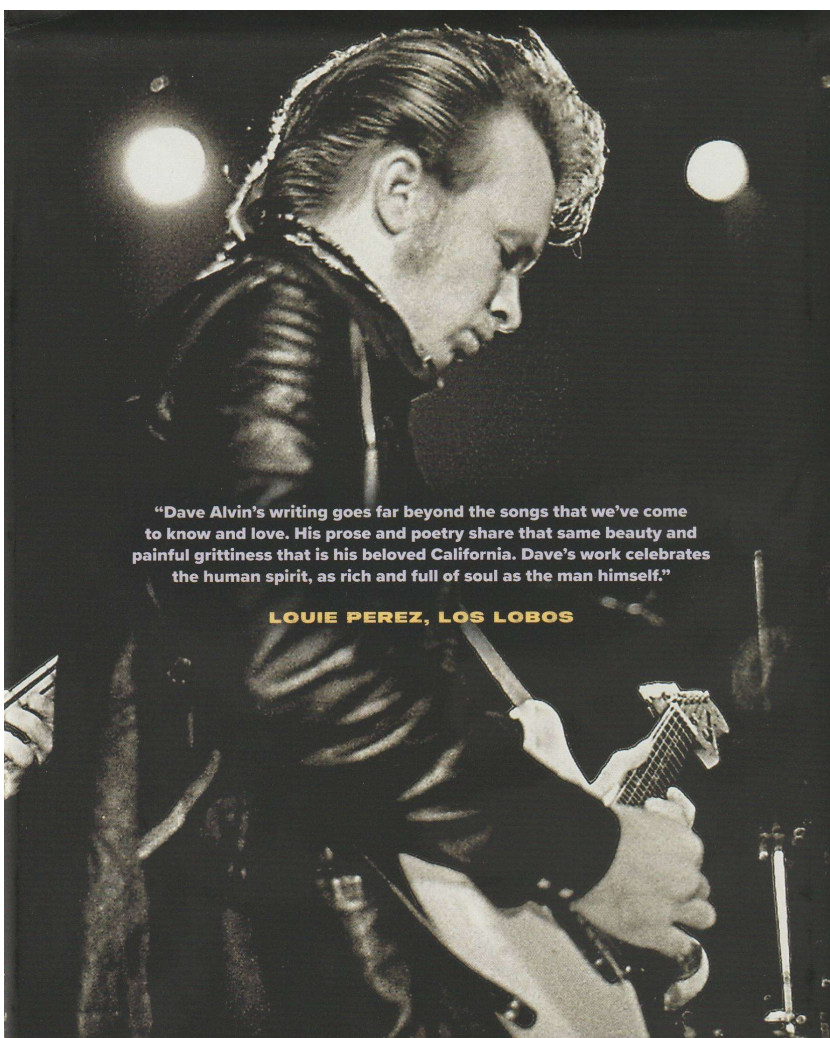


“Finding Hope and Strength in an Unlikely Place” for DRY RIVER.

New Highway can be seen as a musical journey as Dave recalls encounters as both a fan – seeing bluesman Freddie King at the Ash Grove in the early ‘70s – and a fellow musician – sharing an elevator with Ray Charles in the 1980s.

Dave has a sharp eye for detail in recalling Sam Phillips’s enthusiastic reaction after a private show upon hearing him play a selection of licks learned from Sun Records to Bo Diddley laying down the law at a 1983 concert in which Dave served as a member of the backing band.

An 11-page story on Buck Owens, the longest in the book, finds Dave capably serving as an interviewer of the country music legend at his Bakersfield club. He



sets the scene nicely with a four-page prelude that captures the look and feel of the club’s inner sanctum.

New Highway also includes a mix of new and previously published poems. Some of the older work has been slightly revised from earlier editions, such as GENE VINCENT’S LAST SHOW. At least one has a new title, but is otherwise unchanged. A POEM FOR MERLE HAGGARD was called SAN FERNANDO VALLEY NO. 1 in Nana, Big Joe and the Fourth of July, which was published in 1986. The title change could be a result of the singer’s death in 2016.

Other selections, such as EVERYBODY LIKES THE VENTURES,

1981 and BOB BIGGS, 1946-2020, describe encounters with a club owner and record company owner in Los Angeles, respectively. They could serve as a preview for Dave’s forthcoming memoir.

New Highway shows that Dave can tell a story without his guitar. —~~AM~~ **AM**

# THE BLASTERS RETURN to the SCENE of the CRIME

## THE LOBERO Theater Riot Santa Barbara California

### BY Keith Wyatt

Early in 2022, Earl Minnis from Santa Barbara contacted us about doing a show at the Lobero Theater, a classic Spanish-style venue in the middle of town, to be scheduled on the 40th anniversary of a 1982 Blasters show at the same venue. In true punk fashion, the 1982 show had culminated in a full-on riot: Fans rushed the stage, tore up seats, and it was general pandemonium. The fire marshal asked Phil to calm down the audience. Phil replied, "My job is to incite a riot, not stop it." The fire marshal shut the show down and the Blasters were subsequently banned from performing in the city for many years. The Los Angeles Times reported on the incident and said, "Forget nuclear war. Just hire The Blasters."

However, time heals, seats are re-upholstered and this show was approved, no doubt in recognition of the fact that by now neither the band nor the fans would be capable of reaching the same level of aggression. As a bonus, Dave Alvin would appear as a special guest, making the event a rare reunion of the lineup from '82 (sadly minus the late, great Gene Taylor). The show quickly sold out, and

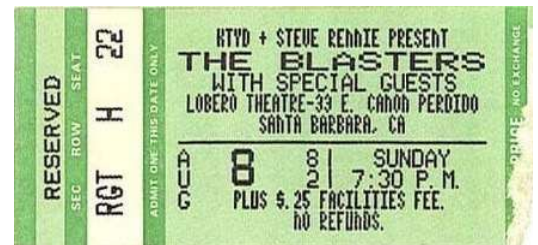
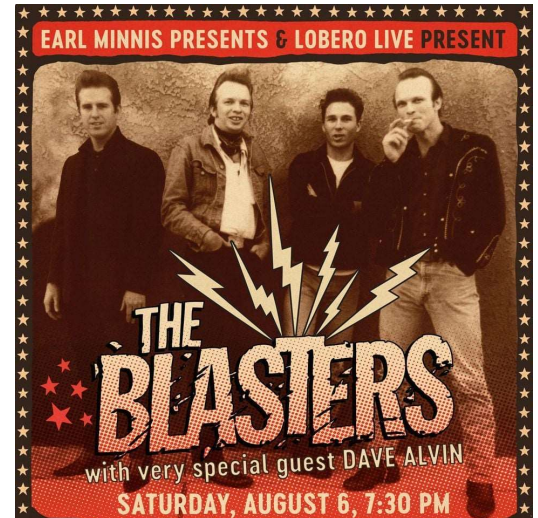


Photo By Kathy Bazz



judging by appearances, many in attendance could well have been at the original event (a testimony to the healthy lifestyle enjoyed in sunny Santa Barbara).

August 6, 2022 -- Opening the show was Rumble King, a solid young SoCal blues band who were given a warm reception. When it was time for our set, Phil, Johnny, Bill and myself kicked off with LONG WHITE





CADILLAC. The crowd responded enthusiastically, and it was clear that a lot of people had been bottling up their energy for a long time. Phil had recently been going through a rough patch health-wise, but while he was in no mood to encourage mayhem, he was in great shape

vocally. Together, we knocked off another half-dozen tunes including DARK NIGHT, PRECIOUS MEMORIES, REBOUND, I'M SHAKIN' and DADDY ROLLING STONE. At that point, I went off and Dave Alvin came on to big applause as the band continued with Dave-composed classics.

Dave Alvin: "It was emotional, but not overwhelmingly. I asked Phil to do HOLLYWOOD BED. I love that song. We invited Aaron Deily from Rumble King to play piano. He's like Gene Taylor's illegitimate son [laughs]. He doesn't play exactly like Gene, but closer than anyone else could get. I pushed Phil to do LOVE 24 HOURS A DAY which we haven't done since the Rollin' Rock Records days and he went for it - That was so much fun for me. We also did FLATTOP JOINT, CRAZY BABY, RED ROSE and AMERICAN MUSIC. It still felt like the Blasters to me. I wish Gene was there. It's very possible that was the last Original Blasters show. If it is, it sure was a good one. There was a lot of love in the air."

Keith: "For the encore, I re-joined the band alongside Dave for MARIE MARIE and ONE BAD STUD with Aaron on piano. If there was ever going



to be a point where the match of 1982 was re-lit and another riot broke out, this was it, but wiser/older heads prevailed and the night ended with everyone happy and the venue intact. It was a memorable evening and a great way to commemorate four decades of American music for band and audience alike." —AM



# Dave Alvin Bibliography

by Tom Wilk

Dave Alvin's discography includes nearly three dozen albums recorded as a Blaster, a solo artist, and a member of such bands as the Flesh Eaters, the Knitters, X, the Pleasure Barons, the Gene Taylor Blues Band, and The Third Mind.

With the publication of New Highway Dave has quietly built up a bibliography that includes three books under his own name and contributions to more than half a dozen other books. Here's a closer look at his literary work in order of publication.

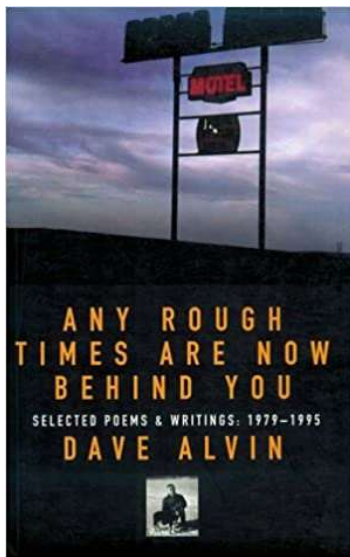
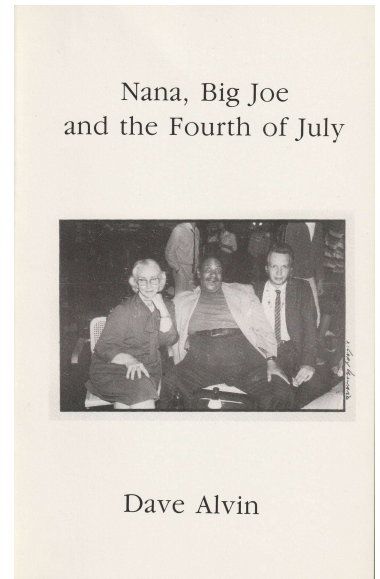
**1986 -- Nana, Big Joe, and the Fourth of July (Illiterati Press)** was his first collection of poetry. It includes 18 poems and at 36 pages is now out of print. Richard Meltzer contributed a one-page

introduction.

**1995 -- Any Rough Times Are Now Behind You: Selected Poems & Writings: 1979-1995 (Incommunicado Press)** is an expanded poetry collection. The book features 51 selections, including all 18 from Nana, Big Joe, and the Fourth of July, and served as an introduction of his work to a national audience, including an appearance and reading on National Public Radio's Fresh Air program. Now out of print, the 161-page book is a rare collectible and has been listed for more than \$100 on Amazon.

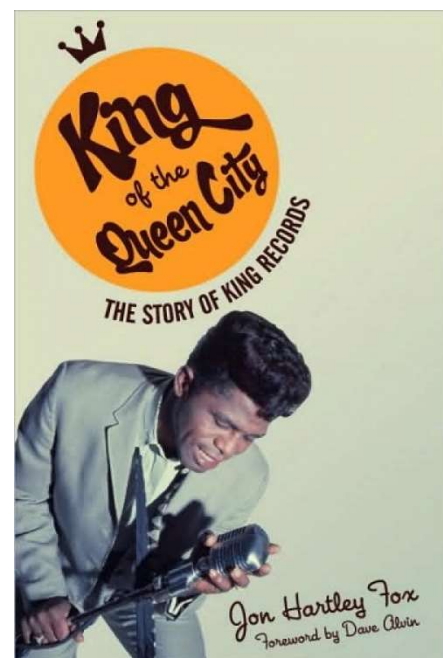
**2005 -- Tough Company by Tom Russell (Mystery Island Press)** is a collection of writings, poems, artwork and song lyrics by one of Dave's songwriting collaborators. The book also features Russell's interviews with Charles Bukowski and reprints of letters sent by Bukowski to Russell. Dave wrote a two-page introduction reflecting on the relationship between the two men. Copies of the book are hard to find.

**2009 -- Waiting For A Train: Jimmie Rodgers's America (Rounder Books)** edited by Mary Davis and Warren Zanes was released in conjunction with The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's American Music Masters Series. It's a compilation of 24 stories and essays on the country music pioneer. Dave contributed a two-page story on traveling in the early 1980s to Meridian, Miss.,



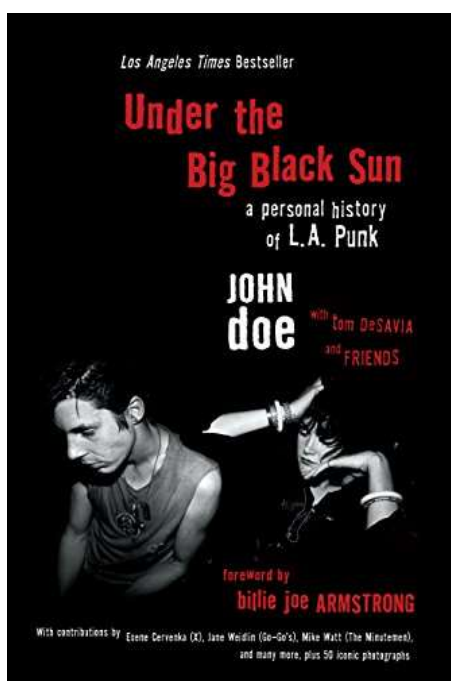
with his brother, Phil, and their girlfriends to find a statue of Rodgers in a park. The piece also serves as a reflection on the influence of Rodgers on American musicians. The Blasters recorded two versions of his NEVER NO MORE BLUES. Other contributors to the book include Bob Dylan, Tom Russell, and Holly George-Warren. Used copies of the book can be found on Amazon.

**2009 -- King of the Queen City: The Story of King Records by Jon Hartley Fox (University of Illinois Press)** examines the history of the Cincinnati-based label, which recorded a diverse range of artists from multiple genres, including Little Willie John, James Brown, Hank Ballard, the Delmore Brothers, and Grandpa Jones. Dave contributed a three-page foreword discussing the label's influence and his adventures in seeking out

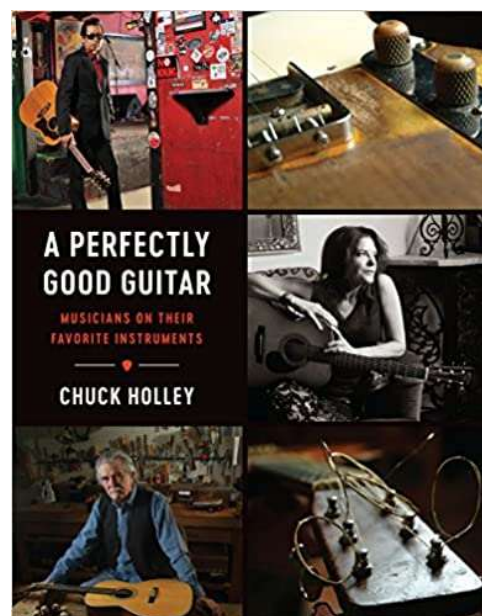


records by King's artists as a teenager. The book can be purchased on Amazon and Dave's introduction can be read in a preview of the book.

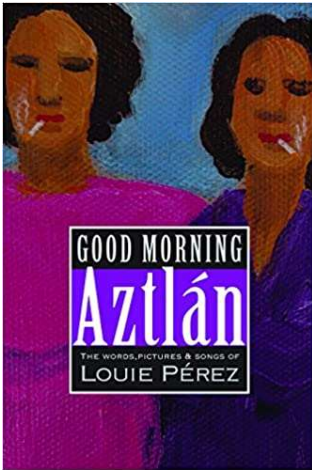
**2016 -- Under the Big Black Sun: A Personal History of L.A. Punk by John Doe and Tom DeSavia with Friends (Da Capo Press)** offers a look at the development of the Los Angeles punk music scene through the eyes of performers, music writers, and fans. Dave wrote a 16-page chapter ("No Slow Songs Tonight: 1979-1982") that is centered on a combative gig in December, 1981 in which the Blasters shared a bill with Fear and Black Flag. He also offers reflections on the development of the scene and the bonds that grew among the bands. The book is available in hardback, paperback and Kindle editions, plus an audio book read by the authors of their individual chapters.



**2017 -- A Perfectly Good Guitar: Musicians on Their Favorite Instruments by Chuck Holley (University of Texas Press)** features 46 performers discussing their go-to instruments. Dave discusses the acquisition of his 1934 National Steel Body Resonator guitar, which he purchased for \$1,500 at a show in 2001 featuring ancient Native American art. Dave also talks about his philosophy of collecting and selling guitars. Other musicians featured in the book with a connection to Dave are Greg Leisz, Cindy Cashdollar, and Louie Perez. Dave's chapter can be read as part of a preview of the book on Amazon.







**2018 -- Good Morning Aztlán: The Words, Pictures and Songs of Louie Perez (Tia Chucha Press)** finds one of the principal songwriters of Los Lobos presenting his lyrics and artwork. Dave wrote a three-page essay titled “Louie Perez: Un Chingon Songwriter.” It provides an analysis of Louie’s approach to songwriting and discusses how they co-wrote SOMEWHERE IN TIME with David Hidalgo. The book is available on Amazon.

**2019 -- More Fun in the New World: The Unmaking and Legacy of L.A. Punk by John Doe with Tom DeSavia and Friends** (Da Capo Press)

serves as a sequel to Under the Big Black Sun with many of the same contributors

returning and some new voices (Louie Perez, Maria McKee).

Dave’s 13-page chapter (“It Sounds Too Much Like the Blasters: 1982-85”) summarizes the struggles that followed in the wake of the band’s early success and Dave’s departure from the band in late 1985.

**2022 -- Western Edge: The Roots and Reverberations of Los Angeles Country-Rock (Country Music Foundation)** is a companion

volume to the ongoing exhibit of the same name at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville. The book includes

photographs of items from the exhibit, including Dave’s 1964

Fender Mustang guitar that he

used in the Blasters and his red bandana and leather jacket that

he wore onstage. Dave is one of several musicians and writers

who contribute essays to the book. Dave’s six-page story

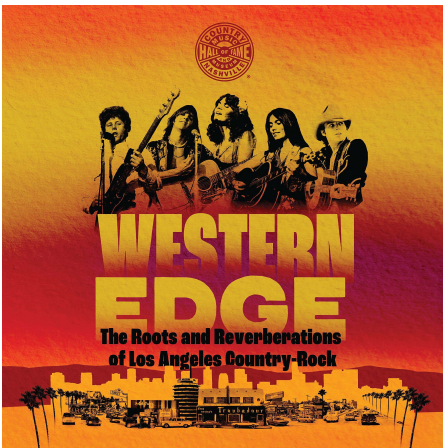
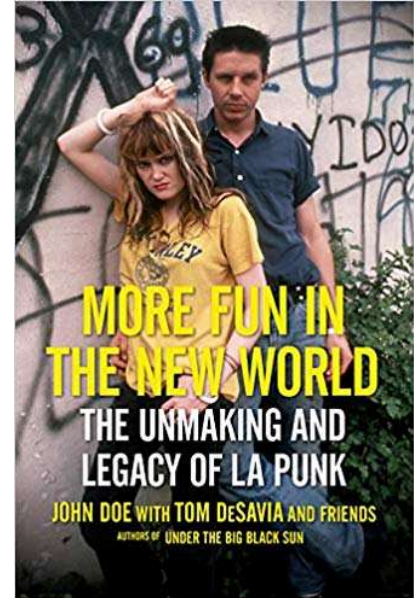
(“1980s Roots Rock: How I Got to the Middle of It All”) recounts

his journey from fry cook to lead guitarist/songwriter for the

Blasters. Also included are several photos of the Blasters on-

stage and offstage. The book is available on Amazon and the

Country Music Hall of Fame / Museum.—*AM*



## **Dave Alvin’s Music on the Internet Archive by Tom Wilk**

The Internet Archive offers a journey through the past, to quote a Neil Young song title. The archive includes audio, video of TV shows and old movies, selected books, and magazines. It is free to use.

In a story published in the American Music newsletter in January 2017, the archive then featured audio of about 290 Dave Alvin shows, recorded primarily at clubs and outdoor festivals. In addition, there are a few interviews and performances recorded for radio programs. As of December 2022, the number has grown to 351 offerings, with concerts recorded between 1987 and 2019, a span covering 33 years. The shows reveal his growth and evolution as a performance artist and can be streamed or downloaded.

To coin a phrase, the recordings serve as an audio biography of Dave’s work as a solo artist. Of



the shows added in the last six years, three are particularly noteworthy. Recorded in 1988, 1989, and 1990, they provide a snapshot of Dave in between the release of his first two solo albums – Romeo's Escape and Blue Blvd.

A June 12, 1988 show at the Music Plaza in Los Angeles represents one of his last shows with the All Nighters, his first backing band. The recording features a rare electric performance of THE PARTY'S OVER, a Chuck Berry-styled rocker written by Dave for his second album with Columbia Records that never materialized. Dave also played an acoustic version of the song for a March 1988 performance on the Folkscene radio show. THE PARTY'S OVER has never had an official release.

On Feb. 6, 1989 at O.T. Price's Music Hall in Soquel, CA, Dave played with a new band that included Tony Gilkyson on guitar, Roly Salley on bass, and D.J. Bonebrake on drums. Dave broke out some rarities for the show, such as GOIN' DOWN THE ROAD FEELIN' BAD, a traditional folk song, and THE CALL OF THE WRECKING BALL. The latter could be the only time he has sung lead on a song recorded by the Knitters.

Dave also performs two songs that would appear on Blue Blvd., still two and a half years away from release as his first album on HighTone Records. GUILTY MAN features an extra verse while the title track features a slightly different chorus that would be adjusted for the studio version. Dave also includes a snippet of HEY BABY, a No. 1 single in 1962 for Bruce Channel, at the end. The show also features Gilkyson singing lead on a few songs, including WANTED MAN.

On Aug. 10, 1990, Dave Alvin and His Bitchin' Electric Band played at Slim's in San Francisco. The new lineup included a Blaster [Bill Bateman on drums], a future Guilty Man [Rick Solem on keyboards and vocals], a member of the All Nighters [John "Juke" Logan on harmonica and vocals] and Don Falzone on bass.

It's a freewheeling show featuring nearly two dozen songs. Dave previews four songs from Blue Blvd. – GUILTY MAN, RICH MAN'S TOWN, PLASTIC ROSE, and GOSPEL NIGHT. There's also a rare Blasters cover of THIS IS IT and an early version of INTERSTATE CITY with a different set of lyrics six years before it became the title track of his 1996 live album.

Alongside covers of Chuck Berry's PROMISED LAND and Johnny "Guitar" Watson's GANGSTER OF LOVE, Dave also dips into the Big Joe Turner songbook for a rare rendition of SHAKE RATTLE AND ROLL that wraps up the show. Solem and Logan also share the spotlight by singing lead on four songs, including LET'S GO and DRINKIN WINE SPO-DEE O'DEE.

Among later shows, Dave played at Fitzgerald's in Berwyn, IL, on May 6, 2017, and he paid tribute to longtime Guilty Men drummer Bobby Lloyd Hicks with a short monologue and a rewritten version of CRAZY COUNTRY HOP, a Johnny Otis song he often sang. Dave's new lyrics mention the Skeletons and the drummer's singing. For the encore, opening act Sarah Borges took the lead on Hank Ballard's OPEN UP YOUR BACK DOOR with Dave on backing vocals.

The Internet Archive features five shows from 2019, the last year Dave toured regularly before the pandemic and his bouts with cancer. Concerts from Berkeley and Philadelphia feature him performing the King of California album in its entirety.

With Dave starting to perform again, there's a likelihood more shows will be added to his online archive. ——— To listen to Dave's concerts, visit <https://archive.org/details/DaveAlvin>

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