

AMERICAN MUSIC

Issue #4 Aug. '94

THE BLASTERS FIRST RECORDING SINCE 1986 IS RELEASED

Aug. 21 Silver Lake Ca. at Sunset Junction
Aug. 22-Sep. 7 To Be Announced
Sep. 8 L.A. Ca. at Jack's Sugar Shack
Sep. 9 Long Beach Ca. at Blue Cafe
Sep. 10 San Diego Ca. at Street Scene
Sep. 11-15 T.B.A.
Sep. 14 Davis Ca. at Palms
Sep. 16 Portland Or. at The Belmont
Sep. 17 Seattle Wa. at Backstage
Sep. 18 Wenatchee Wa. at Goochi's
Sep. 19 T.B.A.
Sep. 20 Salt Lake City Ut. at The Zepher
Sep. 21 T.B.A.
Sep. 22 Denver Co. at Herman's Hideaway
Sep. 23-29 T.B.A.
Sep. 30 Houston Tx. at Sattelite Lounge
Oct. 1 Austin Tx. at La Zona Rosa
Oct. 2 New Orleans at Howlin Wolf
Oct. 5 Milwaukee Wi. at Shank Hall
Oct. 6 Madison Wi. at Chrystal Room
Oct. 7 Chicago Il. at Schuba's
Oct. 8 Berwyn Il. at Fitzgeralds
Oct. 11 L.A. Ca. at Blues Heaven
Oct. 14 Atlanta Ga. at Star Bar
Oct. 19 Alexandria Va. at Birchmere
Oct. 20-21 T.B.A.
Oct. 22 Piedmont N.Y.
Oct. 23 Amherst Ma. at The Front Room



JAMES HARMAN INTERVIEW

James Harman has been singing the blues for 31 years professionally and is well respected in his field. He has released numerous records but most currently has put out three albums in 4 years on the Blacktop label, 1991's "Do not Disturb," 1993's "Two sides to every story," and his recent one "Cards on the table." I caught up with him in early August 3rd 1994 at one of his New York gigs and he was kind enough to share his life story including a 1970's inception of his band that brought together members of what would later be the Blasters and his recent participation in Phil Alvin's HighTone solo album.

Interview by Billy Davis

Photo: Laszlo Hodosy



AM: Start at the beginning of your career and tell me a little about your early influences. I'm sure you saw some of the blues legends in their prime.

Harman: I saw them all! I love them all! Every blues guy, every R&B guy, every soul singer, every jazz cat, every hillbilly, every real genuine country music guy. Everybody that played real stuff is my idol and my hero. I came from Anniston Alabama and I was born in 1946. I sang in a church choir, I started piano when I was four. My father played harmonica and my mother played piano and the organ. I started piano when I was four and on the end of the bench was a Hohner marine, my father's harmonica. I had

to do the piano lessons every day and then I'd get to take the harps out and play on 'em.

AM: We're you into blues then?

Harman: I was into music. My great uncle was Fate Norris, he was in Gid Tanner & the Skillet Lickers. They recorded for Columbia back in the 20's and 30's. He also recorded under his own name Fate Norris, F-A-T-E Fate. He was a big Hillbilly star. When I was growing up every week or two, I went to big fish fry's and barbecue parties. Everybody played a mandolin, or a banjo, a fiddle, or a guitar, or harmonica. Everybody played music, everybody sang, so that's all I had around me.

My father was a police captain and rode a

Harley Davidson, so I grew up riding Harleys, singing, and playin'. So, when I turned on the radio in my house in the fifties and I heard Junior Parker, Howlin Wolf, Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, John Lee Hooker, and Lightnin' Hopkins. I heard them all. All the Gospel records. Like Swans, Silvertones, Mighty Clouds of Jordon, Five Blind Boys, Alex 'Little Axe' Broadnax and all of 'em. I went out and bought the blues records with my lunch money from grammar school. Every week you got a card for \$1.25 and that was for five days of lunch. I took that \$1.25 every Monday and went straight down to Topsy Records store and bought a new 45 or 78. So records were my life. I collected Blues, R&B, Jazz, Gospel, and Soul music. I collected these records and they meant everything to me.

AM: Do you still have these records?

Harman: Sure. I'm a record collector first, I sing for a living to pay for records.

AM: So you keep your rare records in California even with those earthquakes?

Harman: I've never had a record broken from an earthquake, I've had more records broken from moving and ex-wives and stuff then I ever had from earthquakes.

So when I was 16, I moved to Panama City

Florida in 1962. I started singing for a living. I had friends who would take me down to joints and say, "Listen to this kid sing the blues and play harmonica."

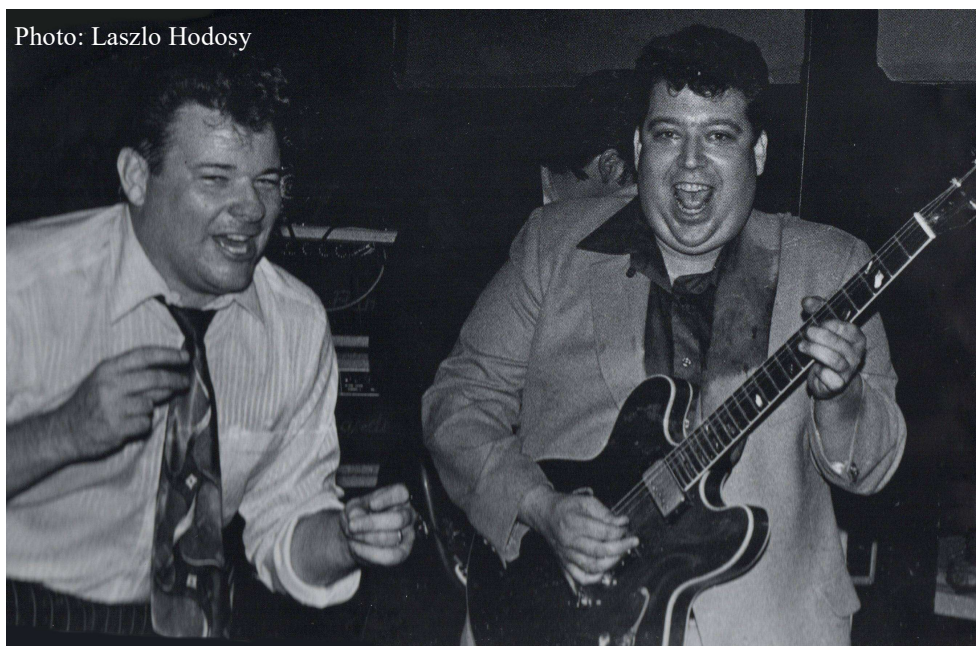
AM: Were you the only white blues singer in your area, I'm sure they weren't common?

Harman: I never saw another white guy do it, there was a handful of white guys around town who were older than me who played. Only two or three of them sang OK, but I was the only one who had a real voice cause I had been in a church choir. And I always was a storyteller, so I would go to these places and they would say, "Isn't that cute a little white boy who sings like a man." So, they all liked me and I got to hang out. By the time I was 16 or 17, I was playing for money. I was painting on a mustache and going in to see B. B. King and Junior Parker. I started recording in '64. I was 18 when I went into Kentel studio on Peachtree street in Atlanta, Ga. and I cut four or five tunes and put out a 45. I put out nine 45's in the 60's on little southern labels. Cut 'em mostly all around Atlanta, Augusta, Panama City, and Pensacola.

Back then it was about radio shows. Radio stations would throw dances, and they would be playing your 45 on the radio, "That's the new one by King James and the Royals." You

would go from town to town playing these dances for the radio stations and that's all I did. I was making so much money on the weekend that it didn't seem reasonable to go on with school. I was making a living playing music. In '65, I went up to Chicago and I tried to make a start there and there were two other white harp players there by the name of Paul Butterfield and Charlie Musselwhite. Charlie and I come from the

Photo: Laszlo Hodosy



same area, he's from Mississippi maybe a hundred miles from me. He moved to Memphis, I moved to Florida and then we both tried Chicago, but it was too cold for me, I couldn't take it. I'm a gulf coast boy, so I went back to the south and kept making 45's.

Charlie got an album deal and put out a couple of albums and then he went to California. Meanwhile, I tried New York, Miami, New Orleans, and finally I ended up on the west coast. The real reason I went was because of Canned Heat. The guys in Canned Heat are big record collectors and they were good friends of mine. I would go see them when they played Florida, and we would talk records all night. I said to Alan Wilson, "I keep bouncing from town to town trying to make a start and I keep putting out these little records and I can't get an album deal. I guess I need to change places again." And he goes, "Man, come to California. There is a lot of work and we'll help you."

So, in the early seventies I went to California with my band and Canned Heat was very good to me. They let me open a lot of shows for them, got me around and pretty soon I was the next guy gonna happen. I became the house band at the Ash Grove (famous blues club). I backed up everybody. There was a good scene going on there still in the seventies. Big Joe Turner, Margie Evans, Cleanhead Vinson, T-Bone Walker, Pee Wee Creighton. They were all my buddies, and we all worked together. I'd have big six-night shows at the Ash Grove and I'd have all those people on my show.

I made an album for ABC/Dunhill in '73 and right then the vinyl shortage hit and the economy thing. ABC said, "I'm sorry we can't put this out, we are dropping 120 artists. If you don't have a real hit record, you're dropped." Ofcourse my record wasn't that commercial, it was more R&B, so I got dropped. In '73 and '74, I kept working with



no new record out and I got really sick. I had a bleeding ulcer and almost died. The doctor said change careers or die. So, in '75 I broke up my band but I got all my guys good gigs. I got Gene Taylor, my piano player, a gig in Canned Heat. I retired and went into the hospital. I went through a big divorce, quit drinking, had a big bout with ulcers for about three years. I couldn't sing. Then the disco period came, and it was horrible. After that, I started putting a new band together. Gene Taylor came back from Canned Heat and we started rehearsing and we got Bill Bateman on drums.

AM: Was this when Phil Alvin was in the band?

Harman: No this was before Phil. Phil was just hanging around Downey. We had three different guitar players. Morgan Davis, is a great guitar player from Toronto. C.J. Hope was with me, Mike Faresta on Bass, Bill Bateman on drums, and Gene Taylor on piano. That was the new James Harman band.

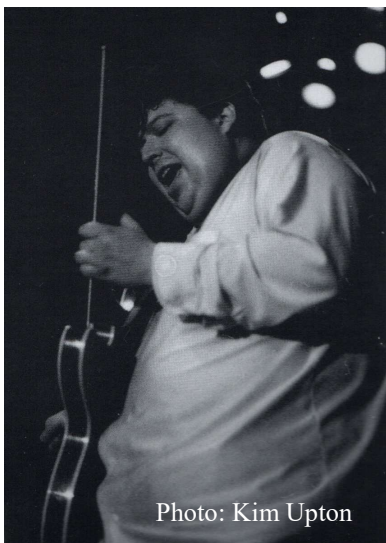


Photo: Kim Upton

We started playing all the shows around southern California and we were happening a little bit.

Then a thing happened. George Thoroughgood put out his first record and people started listening to style again. Then a punk

thing was happening. Every few years this thing happens; people get tired of Bobby Vinton and they go for the Rolling Stones. They get tired of E.L.O. and they go for the Ramones. There is always, "This is too over produced, let's go to something raw. Let's go to four kids in a garage with \$30 guitars." So, when people got tired of the disco thing, they looked for something real and there was this Rockabilly and punk thing going on. Phil Alvin was playing guitar with me, and Bill Bateman was playing drums.

AM: How was Phil as the only guitar player in the band, we tend to think of him as a rhythm guitarist?

Harman: Phil Alvin can play anything he wants to play. Phil Alvin is a great harmonica player, a great guitar player and a great country blues guitar player. Phil and Bill went and started the Blasters and what a surprise to everybody, they got Phil's little brother Dave, who had never been in a band. They got him to play guitar and he couldn't really play at first, but he was a good poet. He was a poet, but he wasn't really a good songwriter. He started writing songs and he got pretty good real quick. And then he got really good real quick. So, I took them in the warehouse where they rehearsing, and recorded them on a big machine. I mixed it down to a cassette of 22 tunes then the best 15. We took that to

Rockin' Ronnie Weiser and they got the first Blasters record deal.

AM: Did you play on that?

Harman: No, I engineered it and produced it.

AM: What were some of the songs?

Harman: I don't remember. Kind of R&B, blues, reggae, Bob Dylan, anything. They didn't even have a band name yet. They had about 19 names. They asked me, "What do you think?" They had the something or other Blasters, and I said, "The Blasters," and I wrote it on the tape box and stuck it on the reel and that became their name.

So we mixed that down and showed it to Rockin' Ronnie and they went in and cut in his garage studio, they cut the first album 'American Music.' They thank me on there, and I've got the bottle cap on there that says "Music." Steve Bartel also did my logo there on Those Dangerous Gentlemen'.



So, they went on and left me and I got new guys. I got Gene Taylor back. He came back from Canada and started playing with me. I got David Zuriecky on guitar and Willie J. Campbell on Bass and Steven Hodges on drums and we went on and started opening for the Blasters a lot. They started playing bigger shows and they would take us with them and then they would hear me and go,

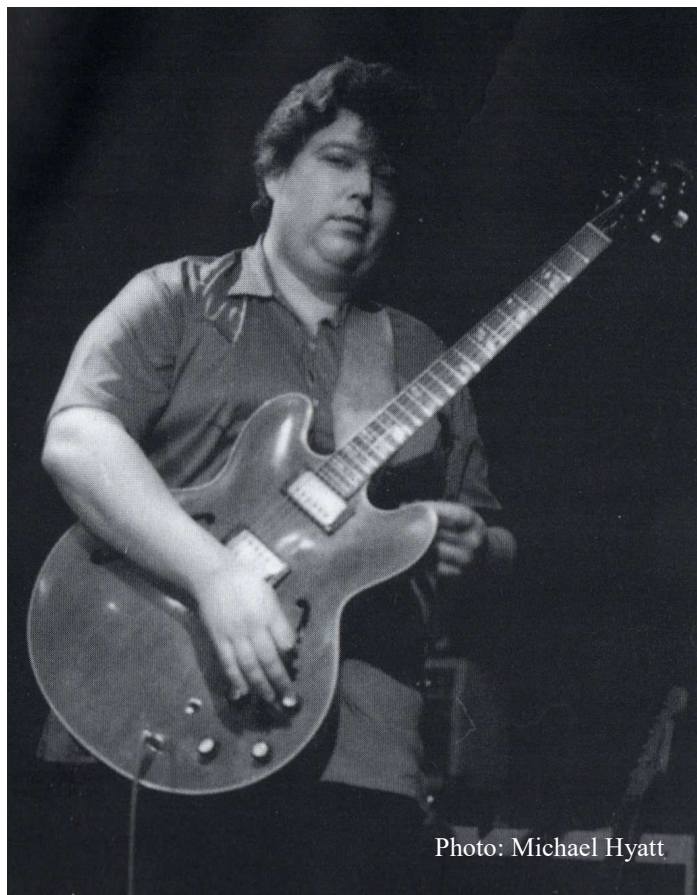
“Oh yeah, this guy’s great, this James, oh everybody’s doing James again.” So, I became the legendary old fart that had always been around. We all kept on playing but the blues will never be as popular as whatever the latest fad is.

The Blasters got a deal with Warner Bros and they stole Gene from me. So, now I was back to four pieces and Hollywood Fats had just left his band because they couldn’t get a gig, and he was tired of it. He called me up and I said, “Come on down. I’d rather have a piano, but I’ll go with two guitarists.” I added Kid Ramos on guitar who was 21 years old and Hollywood Fats on the other guitar. That band was together from about ‘80 all the way up to ‘86. Fats got into a lot of trouble and couldn’t tour anymore. He was going to the shrink every week or to court, so he couldn’t tour. I make my living on the road so he had to go. It took him about 6 or 8 months to get past all his trouble. About that time, Dave Alvin quit the Blasters and they said, “Fats can you go on this tour, we don’t have a guitar player?” So, he went on the tour, but he hated playing that fast stuff, he came home and killed himself. So, some people do it in 15 years, some people do it in 15 minutes, but he chose that way.

AM: He didn’t have any interest in rejoining your band in 86 after straightening out?

Harman: He didn’t have any interest in life and that’s why he is dead. When your 32 years old and eat \$47 worth of Chinese food, then drink 15 scotches and then go to the dope house after the gig. . . I tried to keep him away from dope, I kept him alive for five years and as soon as he was out of my jurisdiction. . . So anyway, that’s my take on it. You asked me and I told you the truth.

All that time I was making records, I put out ‘This Band Just Won’t Behave’ in ‘80 and then I put out ‘Thank You Baby’ in 1982 and another in 1983. Fats is on a lot of them. Then we made about 6 records for Bob Rivera and



two were released: ‘Extra Napkins Vol. 1’, and ‘Strictly live vol. 1.’ There is still two more albums of that ‘Extra Napkins’ stuff in the can and that was not just a band, it was James Harman-Blues singer doing whatever he wants to do. I used everybody on there, my two guitar players Kid Ramos and Hollywood Fats. If a song called for one of them I would use one, if it called for both of ‘em I would use both. If it called for something that they didn’t play like, I’d use a different guy. Some of them have horns, some have Gene on piano, some have Fred Kaplan on piano. It’s just James Harman doing what he wants. We recorded 53 blues songs, I mixed 20, and I picked out 12 and that is ‘Extra Napkins.’ That was nominated for five W.C. Handy Blues awards.

At the same time, I recorded 10 or 15 songs that I didn’t think were blues enough to go in that series, so I sold ‘em to Rhino. That came out first as ‘Those Dangerous Gentlemen.’ That had a hit, ‘My Baby’s Gone,’ that helped a lot. Then my song ‘Kiss of Fire’ was bought

by the movie 'The Accused' with Jodie Foster, so that's a hit that is still being played all around the world. Then 'Jump My Baby' was in three different movies. So, that album did real well for me in the rock world and 'Extra Napkins' came out six months later and did real well in the blues world. So, in '87 and '88, I really came out into the world. A whole lot of people had heard of me that never heard of me before, even though I had been working all those years.

So, when Fats left and died, we went on as a four piece. I tried out a bunch of piano players but none of them could play. Then all of a sudden in '90, I was getting ready to go record some new stuff and Bob Rivera came to me and said, "Man, I really want to get that live thing out, that we cut back in '85." I said, "I'm not interested in live records especially when one of the guitar players is dead." But I owed it to him because he paid the money so I went in and I mixed 'Strictly live Vol. 1.' People liked it. It did OK, but I wasn't interested as much as trying to get my new stuff together. Then Kid and Willie wanted to get married to their gals and quit being on the road. They both dropped out and got married and got jobs and sold their motorcycles and hot rods.

I got a new guitar player and bass player and in '91. Hammond Scott came to me and said, "I always loved your records, they sound great. Would you like to be on Blacktop Records?" I said, "I really respect what you do, I think you do a fine job. However, I gotta produce my records myself. I've got a sound of my own, I've got

a look of my own, and I do my own artwork. If you want to pay for it, I'll be on Blacktop." He said, "Let's do it!" We went in and cut 'Do Not Disturb.' It came out in '91 and did real well. We toured all of '91 and all of '92. I went on a couple of other people's albums that year.

In 1993, I fired the guitar player that I had and got a different drummer and cut 'Two Sides To Every Story.' That did real well and out sold most everything else and did real well for me. We toured all that year and the time came to change again. I had Robby Eason in the wings for quite some time as he was coming along at only 17 years old and I said, OK, it's time for him to come in along with Buster Cherry. We cut 'Cards On The Table,' and that's out selling everything I ever did. It's really doing good.

AM: What's next for the band?

Harman: We're going to take off for the Winter. No new recording but we'll regroup and go do Europe and everything next year and then I'll have a new record to do in '95. I think in '95 I ought to do some kind of special album to kinda say,

"Let's look back at everything." I still have a good time doing it and to me it's all about being a storyteller. Music is all second hand, there are only twelve notes to play. What it's really all about is the story telling. You get guys that are all oriented toward instruments, they grew up really wanting to play instruments, but they don't sing or write songs. It's hard to really be a blues guy if you don't tell stories. You got to be telling the story on an instru-



Photo: Kim Upton

ment, cause that's what the blues is all about. Blues ain't jazz, blues is telling stories about humans, about men and women and things and stuff that happens. It's telling what went wrong so you can get it out of your system. It's telling what you've got to brag about, so you can feel good. Whatever it is about humanity and the human condition, you tell it through your story and that is what the blues is all about. It's a story telling idiom and

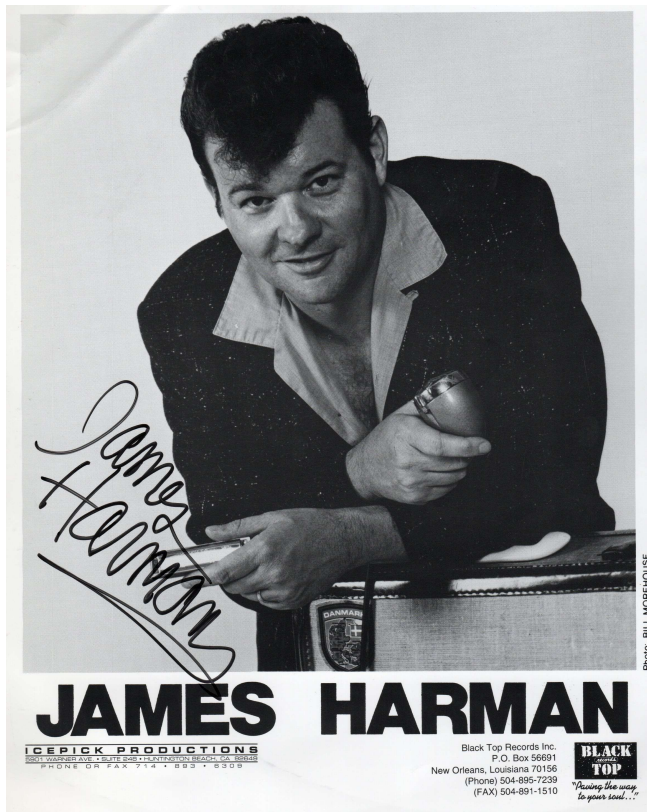
that's what I am, a song writer, a story teller, and a singer. And because of the years of doing it, I am a record producer. I don't even think about being a harmonica player, that is just an instrument that I choose to play live.

AM: Do you write your songs on an instrument?

Harman: I don't write on nothing, I write in my head and the piano if anything, but I write in my head, then I go to whoever I have around me that I trust. It might be my piano player pal, or a guitar player pal, and I sing.. "De Da De" a melody and I tell my story and we figure it out and we bring it to the band and we go and record it.

AM: Did you recently do some work on Phil Alvin's solo album?

Harman: Yeah. We're still working on that. It's not done yet. Phil and I have been record collector buddies since I moved to California. Phil called me up and said he's doing this new CD and he's got this big long concept of what it's gonna be. It's real exciting to me the way he is planning on doing it. We both have our little protest of CDs. My protest is, if you look



on 'Two sides of every story,' I make fun of CDs by putting side one and side two. I hate CD's, records are what it's all about and always will be in my book. Phil's protest to CDs is to say, "O.K. if that's the way it is, it's one groove from beginning to end, then it is gonna be non-stop from beginning to end." CDs have the capability of putting five albums worth of stuff on there and they give you this much for a higher price because it's a marketing deal. It's a way to

raise the price and make everybody buy a new piece of equipment. Until they've got everybody sold, then they'll come out with the next format. I think it's all bull, but that's the way it is and we'll have to deal with it for now.

So anyway, Phil's way of protesting is to have music go all the way from the beginning to end non-stop. It's a real story telling thing about 'Going to the county fair.' It starts off at a Blasters rehearsal and he (Phil) goes on to try and meet his girl at the county fair and meets all these characters and I'm one of 'em. Me and this street singer named Scarecrow, a real crazy guy that Phil digs, and the three of us travel along singing songs and we run into Billy Boy Arnold and the Dirty Dozen Brass band and all these different people through the thing and we all do songs.

AM: So, you will be on a couple of tracks then?

Harman: I think I'm only singing lead on one, and I'm singing back up on a few and playing harmonica. It's not all figured out yet. We went to several sessions up at Caesar Rosas' house. Phil wouldn't show up until

midnight and me and James Intveld had been there since noon. It's all confused, we're all so busy with everything and we never really got anywhere. I know he's got a lot of tracks cut. He went to Chicago and cut some, he went to New Orleans and cut some, and he's got a bunch of different stuff. He's got tons of stuff he has to sort through and put into order. I'm just one little piece of it. It's a big undertaking, but Phil is my buddy and he called me up, so I'll play on it.

AM: How did you first meet Phil Alvin

Harman: When I first got out to California, and I was playing in Venice CA at Rick's blues bar. I would play Friday and Saturday. Phil Alvin and his bunch were like 17 years old, and they were playing like Monday or Tuesday night. The owner of the club told me, "Come down and hear this band 'The Night Shift,' I think you'll dig this guy. He's a great big guy like you, with a big powerful voice, and plays harmonica. You and him ought to get along." He told them they have this killer piano player; a little short fat bald headed guy, he looks like he's forty but he's nineteen." So, I went down there and sure enough they sounded great. Phil was just singing with a big man's voice and playing harmonica. I thought all these guys were great. And Johnny Bazz was the drummer, who is the current bass player in the Blasters.

We became friends and I sat in with them and I talked to Gene Taylor and we became buddies and Gene started coming over to my house, playing the piano and playing the guitar. Gene Taylor is a great guitar player. So, we started hanging out and pretty soon I stole him away from them and they couldn't keep gigs. Gene played with me for the rest of the seventies. When that disco thing hit, it was rough. All throughout those late seventies we were playing biker parties, fraternity parties, and college campuses.

AM: When Phil Alvin was in the band, were

you regularly playing out?

Harman: That was the disco period and it was rough. Being in a blues band was awful because nobody cared. It was a period of time when we played little joints. J. Geils band were the only band with a harp player going. Paul Butterfield was barely working. Charlie Musselwhite was barely working. We all knew each other. It's really a small community.

AM: Gene Taylor I see is on your recent albums.

Harman: Whenever he is in town, he is on my records. This year he is busy out with the Kim Wilson band now so he wasn't around and I had a different idea for 'Cards on the Table.' I didn't want that acoustic bass, acoustic piano thing. I wanted Fender bass, Fender guitar - a little harder sound. I like a lot of variety. If you listen to all my albums, they all go from practically nothing to a lot of extra stuff. 'Cards On the Table' goes everything from just me and a piano all the way up to five horns, four backup singers, two extra guitars, an organ, and a piano. When I make a record, I make a record. I may never play any of the songs on it live, it's just that record right now today and make it sound the best you can make it.

AM: Do you cut any songs just one time, one take in the studio?

Harman: On 'Cards on the table', 'Three way party' and 'Sparks' are live just like in a juke joint. They're just like you walked in and a band was playing. It's real raw. One or two takes and bang you're done. Other songs on here 'Black under black', 'Where's my thing', 'I'll call you,' these are real production numbers. They have horn charts written, organ, piano, backup singers and extra guitar players.

AM: Well, I'd like to thank you for great music, a great show, and just keep doing what your doing.

Harman: Thanks, it's all I know to do. —**Am**

COLLECTING BLASTERS: Trying to figure out how many different pressings of the 'American Music' LP has proved to be confusing. But with the help of some owners of these copies, it will be ironed out. As I said before, my bootleg has a blue label printing on both sides (as opposed to the original which is one side red, one side blue) of the disc and nothing etched in the trail off grooves, while its outer cover is a shiny photo of the original. Its cover edge binding is in a white strip.

Mine came from the Wash. D.C. area and a member of the Blasters claimed to have known of a source of these in that region. Now, there is a second known boot pressing. It's cover is exactly like the original (w/ gray edge), but the disc is exactly like I described my boot. One known copy was bought in Finland in the spring of 1987 (20 copies were in the store). Another copy was bought second hand 2 years later by a Blaster collector in the Pennsylvania/Maryland area. It is possible the discs were all pressed together and maybe covers were printed differently. More on this later... —Am

**BLASTER T-SHIRTS STILL
AVAILABLE!**

A limited edition printing of The Blasters Trouble Bound T-shirt is still available. Act real fast because we won't be able to "Stop the Clock" on this one selling out. The print (seen on the Hard-line poster elsewhere in this issue) is red and white on a black shirt available in sizes- small, med., large, X large. If you order more than 2 shirts at a time, write in advance to reserve sizes. Price is only \$12 each and that includes Air mail shipping all over the world. What a Deal!! Payment can only be made in US currency cash only. Sending cash in a registered letter is the safest way to go. This shirt deal is non-profit and a steal-of-a-deal! To order, don't forget to indicate size, and write to:

Janne Kurunsaari, Ryytimaantie 1 A 18, 00320 Helsinki, Finland



A look back at 1991: the Blasters tour finland

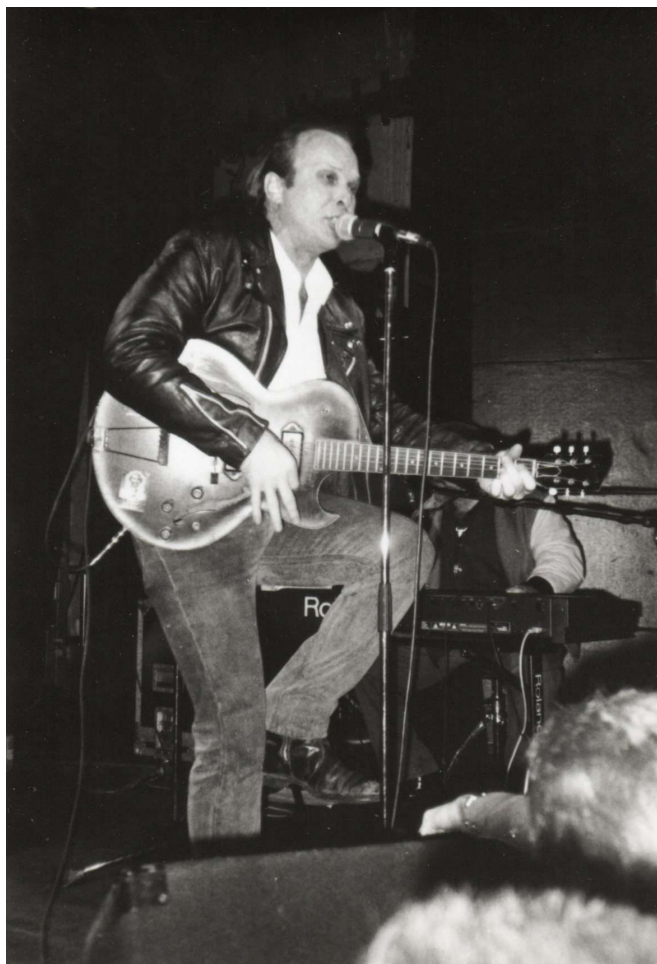
THE BLASTERS EAST OF SWEDEN TOUR

written by JANNE KURUNSAARI

photos color by KEKKA

B&W by Janne

1991 was surely a dream come true for Blasters fans in Finland and the rest of Europe because our favorite band hit the trail again and had the fine CD - The Blasters Collection under their belt.



This wasn't the first time the Blasters toured here, they were here on the Fourth of July of 1987 at Saapasjalkarock (an outdoor show) with Los Lobos on the same bill. This gig was in the short period of time in which Billy Zoom was the lead guitarist. The complete Blasters set was broadcast live on nationwide TV in Finland, which is quite a rare treatment to any band here.

In January of 1991, I heard the Blasters had toured Norway with their new guitar picker Greg 'Smokey' Hormel, but by the time I heard of their visit, they were long gone. By this time the Blaster Collection CD was released in the U.S., but Europe would have to wait nearly a year to see its release. When it finally came out, very few radio stations chose it as a recommended reissue.

Later that year I had written a story on the Blasters for a Finnish record collectors magazine called 'RARE' and at the time of its publishing, I heard the news that the Blasters were booked to play the Tavastia club in Helsinki on the 26th and 27th of November 1991.

Autumn came and the Blasters arrived here from Sweden on a slow boat cruise by way of Turku and on to Helsinki, bound for the Tavastia club. On the 26th I was fortunate to be at their sound check and there was something strange happening. Bill Bateman (drummer) was on guitar ripping through Link Wray's "Ace of Spades." He was playing Phil Alvin's Gibson guitar. Meanwhile, John Bazz (bass) was filling in on the drummers seat, and Greg Hormel (guitarist) was playing the bass. Phil Alvin, I was told, couldn't make the sound check because he had gotten drunk on last night's boat cruise from Sweden and was exhausted from the trip.



Greg Smokey Hormel on lead guitar



Phil got there just in time for their first Gig that night and what a night it was! For nearly a two hour set, we heard all the Blasters classics plus a few new ones like "Precious Memories, Hoodoo Man, Got Love if You Want It, Ookie Dokie Stomp, Your Kind of Love, and Sick and Tired." They even featured Gene Taylor on vocals on "Drinkin Wine Spo-deeo-dee," marking the first time the pianist toured with the band since his original departure from the Blasters in November of 1985.



Speaking of Drinking, backstage that evening Lee Allen was making an acquaintance of a bottle of Johnny Walker Black and at the end of the set the bottle was nearly empty. No wonder Greg had earlier said to me, "He still can drink all of us under the table."

Phil's dedications were wild as usual, for example for 'Trouble Bound,' "This one's for Evander Holyfield and all the trouble makers, I'm on your side." And for 'Dark Night,' "This is for the fuckin' neo-nazi's in Germany."

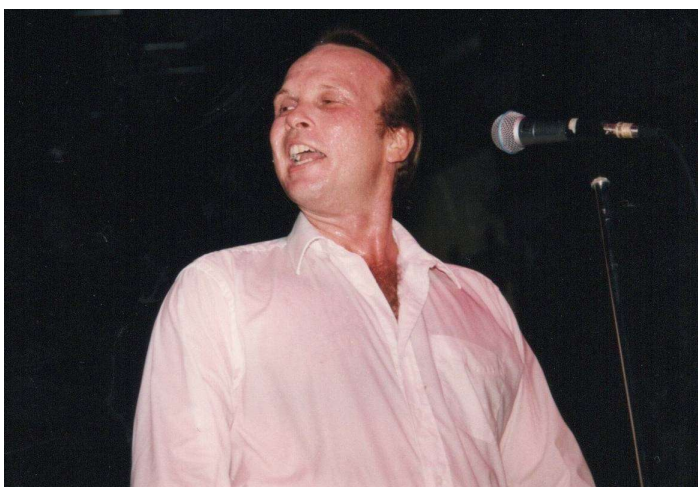


Both nights at Tavastia were sold out and lots of fans waited backstage asking for autographs. Greg Hormel proved to be a great guitar player, though not the talkative personality that Dave Alvin was with the band. Bill Bateman excitedly talked about his new blues band, 'The Red Devils' who had just signed a deal with 'Def American records.'

The Blasters showed us they were still in 100% proof condition and left the audience satisfied after a couple of encores of course. Some people even praised, "This is the best live show I've ever seen." I can't add anything to that.



After four nights in Finland at Helsinki, Tampere, and Turku, the Blasters tour took them back to Sweden and on to Spain, Italy, England, and back home for Christmas. The band tentatively planed to return to Europe in the summer of 1992 but never did. Hopefully now with James Intveld behind the guitar helmet. . . end.



FROM THE EDITOR: If you would like to have your name listed in the newsletter for tape trading with other Blaster collectors, please write me with your address. If you would like to write an interesting story on the Blasters or have a good idea on something you would like to see in the newsletter, let me know because your input is very important.



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BACK ISSUE COPIES: \$1 per issue

- #1. Blastory part 1, Intveld profile.
- #2. Phil Alvin interview Part 1, Dave Alvin's "Museum" tour review, Faultline Syncopaters profile
- #3. Phil Alvin interview Part 2, complete Blasters Discography.

THE BLASTERS WITH NEW DRUMMER JERRY ANGEL
OSLO NORWAY AT CRUISE CAFE JULY 16-17, 1994
PHOTOS BY HARALD ELVSVEEN

