

THE HOLLER

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Editor- Chick Cavallero

"Johnny B. Goode" Soaring High!

**Information compiled by Chick
Cavallero**

Johnny B. Goode" is without a doubt, one of the most recognizable songs in the history of popular music, maybe even THE most recognizable. Some have said it's "the first rock & roll hit about rock & roll stardom" (from Rolling Stone, April 7, 2011) and made it to seventh on Rolling Stone's list of the "500 Greatest Songs of All Time".



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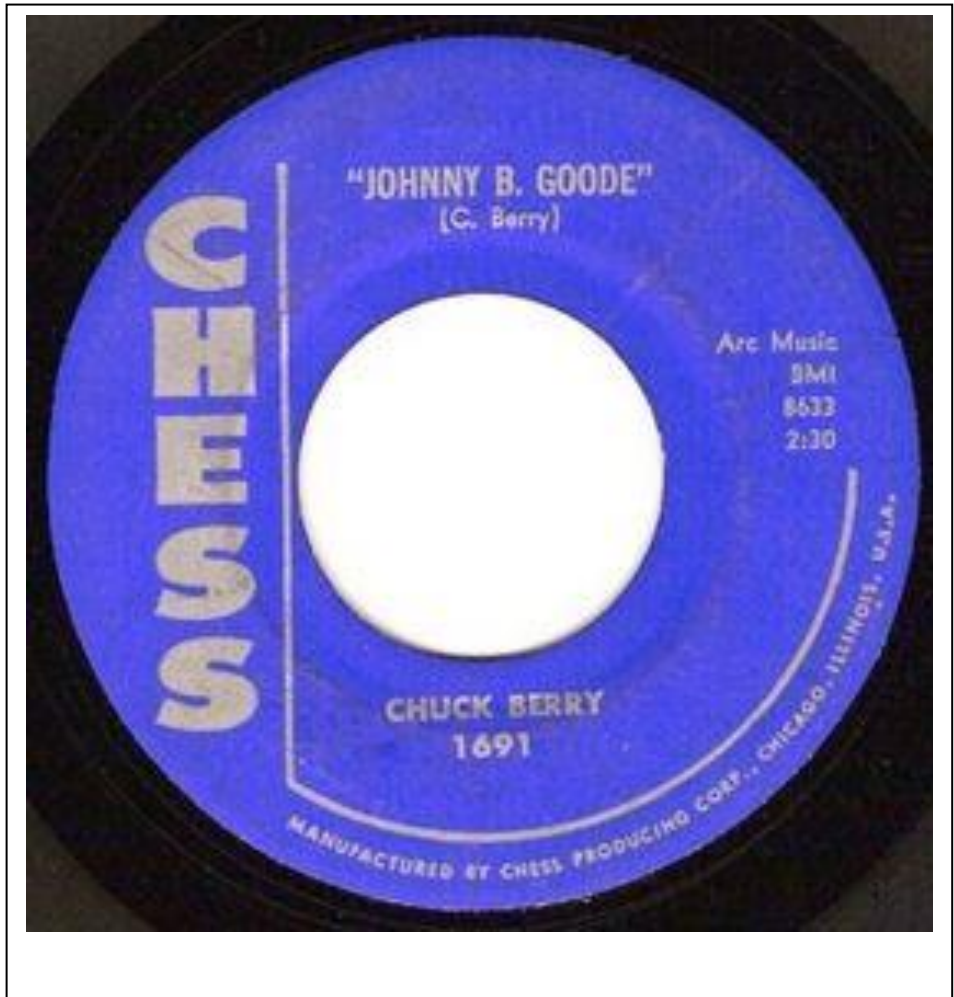
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<https://www.allaboutbluesmusic.com>

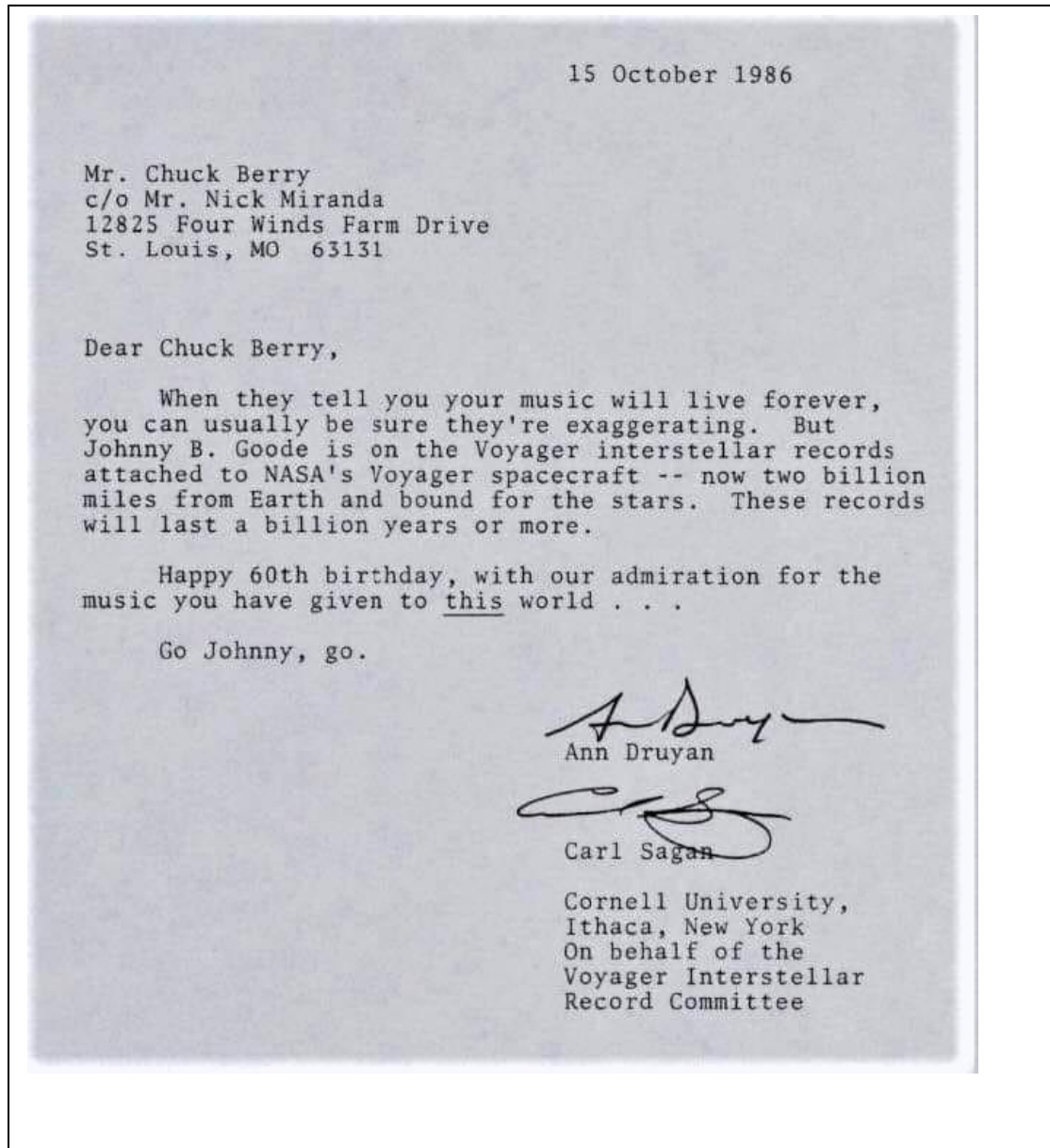
Chuck Berry wrote the song in 1955 and it comes across as an autobiography of Chuck's career. "Johnny B. Goode tells the story of an illiterate "country boy" from the New Orleans area, who plays a guitar "just like ringing a bell", and who might one day have his "name in lights". Berry acknowledged that the original lyrics referred to Johnny as a "colored boy", but he changed it to "country boy" to ensure getting it played on the white radio stations. Even the title comes from Chuck's early life, he was born at 2520 Goode Avenue in St. Louis.

It was said Johnny Johnson (Chuck's regular piano player) 'inspired' the song due to his rumbunctious antics when he was drinking. But more and more it was a song about Berry himself. When the song was recorded at Chess records, the lineup for that recording session was Lafayette Leake on piano, Willie Dixon on bass (Willie was on about EVERYTHING at Chess in those days) and Fred Below on drums. Leonard and Phil Chess are listed as the producers for that session.



Many songs come and go in their greatness, but Johnny B. Goode shares a very unique spot with Blind Willie Johnson's "Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground", these 2 songs are on the Voyager Golden Record, a 12-inch gold-plated copper disk that contains a variety of sounds and images selected to portray the diversity of life and culture on Earth. The Voyager spacecraft was launched September 5, 1977. As Voyager whirls thru the universe it contains this special phonograph record intended to communicate a story of our world to extraterrestrials and explain to out-worldly aliens what Earth was all about.

For Chuck's 60th Birthday (October 18, 1986) Carl Sagan sent him this letter:



**"Deep down in Louisiana, close to New Orleans
Way back up in the woods among the evergreens
There stood a log cabin made of earth and wood
Where lived a country boy named Johnny B. Goode
Who never ever learned to read or write so well
But he could play the guitar just a-ringin' a bell"
Go, go Go, Johnny, go, go Go, Johnny,
go, go Go, Johnny, go, go Go, Johnny, go, go...Johnny B. Goode"**

"Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground" should get a little more mention too, since it is also one of the 27 samples of music on that Golden Record. It's a gospel blues song comprised and recorded in 1927 by Blind Willie Johnson. It is pretty much an instrumental (should make it easier for the aliens to follow) and is highlighted by Willie's self-taught slide bottleneck guitar and plenty of moaning and humming mixed in with his vocals. The lyrics are as follows:

*Dark was the night, and cold the ground
On which the Lord was laid;
His sweat like drops of blood ran down;
In agony he prayed.*

*"Father, remove this bitter cup,
If such Thy sacred will;
If not, content to drink it up
Thy pleasure I fulfill."*

*Go to the garden, sinner, see
Those precious drops that flow;
The heavy load He bore for thee;
For thee he lies so low.*

*Then learn of Him the cross to bear;
Thy Father's will obey;
And when temptations press thee near,
Awake to watch and pray.*

In Sagan's book on Voyager he mentions that "Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground" was chosen by a NASA consultant Timothy Ferris, who produced the Golden Record, and stated, "Johnson's song concerns a situation he faced many times: nightfall with no place to sleep. Since humans appeared on Earth, the shroud of night has yet to fall without touching a man or woman in the same plight."

As for the selection of Johnny B. Goode, Ferris mentions "One member of the music selection committee sniffed that Chuck Berry's music was adolescent, but Carl Sagan reminded him that there are a lot of adolescents on Earth,



too” and continued “Not that we would expect the lyrics to make a great deal of difference to an alien civilization a billion years from now, but it's just a wonderful piece of narrative songwriting about how talent and hard work can change your life.”

That's a pretty good summary of the song. But I'd love to be around when the aliens get a listen to Johnny B. Goode. I gotta wonder if they can sit still, or will there be tentacles and legs flailing as they all start duck-walking like Chuck before the songs over.





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The Colorado Blues Society Q Blues 2021 Raffle fundraiser is live. Now through Labor Day you can link to the website, see the exciting themed prizes and purchase tickets.

This is a great opportunity for you to win some extraordinary items and support the CBS. It's easy and all online! Use one of these links to the raffle website,

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- QR code



Good luck, we hope you win a prize!!! And, with your raffle tickets purchase you'll get a free barbeque sandwich from GCue Championship Barbecue.

Thanks to everyone who have already purchased tickets.

From the collection of seventeen raffle prizes, here are two that somebody will win.

- The Louisiana Grills wood pellet smoker donated by Lulu's Farm. This handsome devil will light your heart on fire.

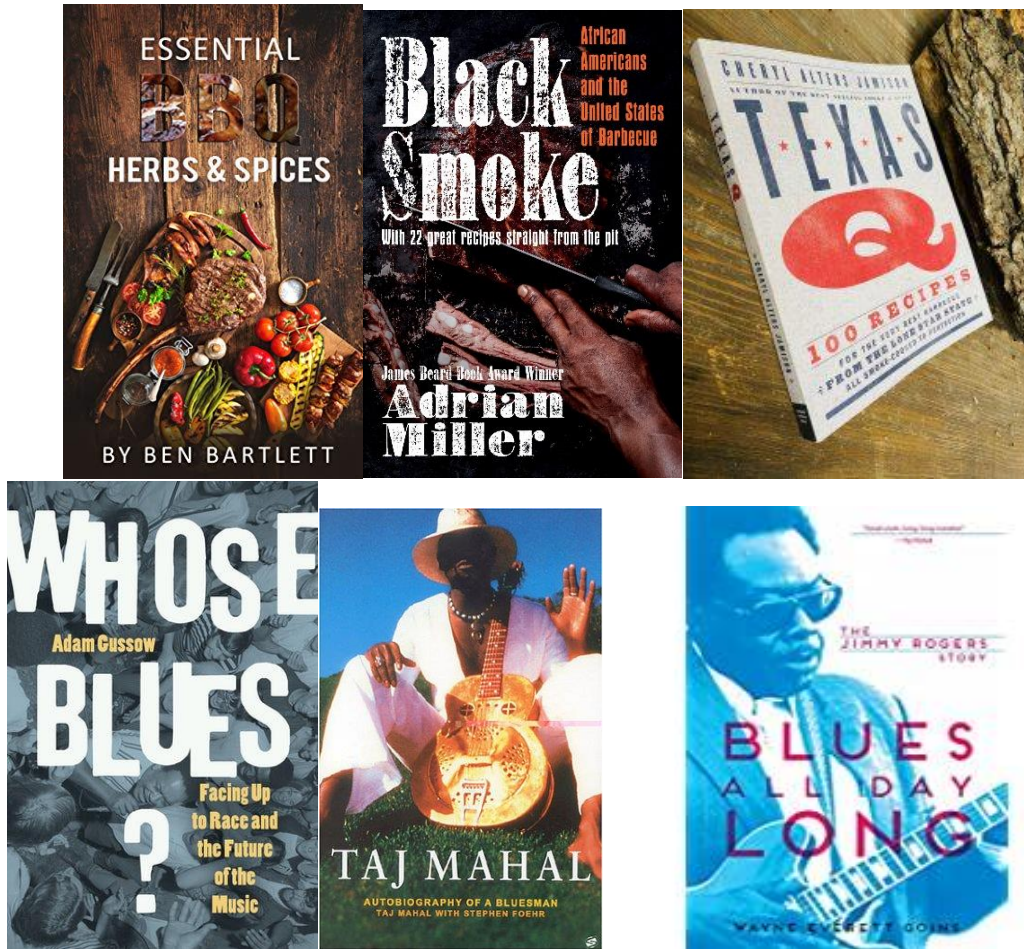


- Ceramic guitar art by Scott Fitzke. An original piece for show and know; from the Fitzke line of art and music depictions.



The Q Blues 2021 raffle prize pool has specially selected books each one signed by its acclaimed author on the history, lives and cooking cultures of blues music and barbeque cuisine.

- **Wayne Goins** – *Blues All Day Long*. Growing up in Chicago, nearly every day Wayne saw his father and renowned harmonica player Little Walter meet for coffee.
- **Stephen Foehr** – *Taj Mahal Autobiography*. Stephen says, "...friendship, blues and bbq make for a fine life."
- **Benjamin Bartlett** – *Essential BBQ Herbs & Spices*. From the United Kingdom, this royal pitmaster lays on barbeque worth a king's ransom.
- **Adrian Miller** – *Black Smoke*. Every once in a while, you come across a book so original, it makes you rethink a subject you've studied for years.
- **Cheryl Alters Jamison** – *Texas Q and Smoke & Spice*. Gnaw on these words and feast like an expert barbeque editor.
- **Adam Gussow** – *Whose Blues*. With academic credentials and street smarts, Adam is profiled on Netflix's, *The Devil and Satan*.



Thank you for supporting the outstanding benefits CBS offers!



Kai Turner -The Colorado Blues Vassal

story by Kyle Borthick

all photos by Ryan Borthick

Kai Turner, The Blues Vassal!

What on earth is a vassal you might ask? According to Webster, a vassal is “a person regarded as having obligation or allegiance to a lord or monarch”. In Mr. Turner’s case that lord or monarch would be the Blues, of course. For over thirty years our friend Kai has been busy promoting, giving air play, and generally paying allegiance to the Blues. To call him simply a DJ just doesn’t begin to cover all the various ways he has been paving the way for blues artists and the genre in general, but let’s not get ahead of ourselves.



Kai Turner was born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1971. His father worked in the upper stratospheres of the insurance underwriting business. This type of work not only landed Kai in such exotic locales as Jamaica, but also Lebanon, Europe, and particularly his mother’s home country of Germany. Mark Twain once famously stated that “Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.”. When you have a conversation with Kai it becomes evident that Twain was right on. Kai Turner is a man who is very much shaped by a childhood that exposed him to a wide assortment of cultures. Therefor he is not encumbered with typical cultural constraints of conversation. A discussion of the current state of the blues may range far and wide from the Greek philosophers to Hip Hop artists and more.

Ultimately his travels lead to the great blues town of Chicago, Illinois. It was there that Kai was able to get an up close and personal exposure to the music which he would ultimately dedicate himself to promoting on the airwaves. Sneaking into and hanging out around the legendary Southside clubs, the young man got his ears singed by James Cotton, Koko Taylor, Bobby Rush, and other greats whom he would ultimately end up booking into festivals and playing on the radio.

It wasn’t only that exposure to live music in the clubs that was to shape the future for Kai, he was also tuning into the radio. Specifically, the legendary blues radio program “Blues Before Sunrise” hosted by Steve Cushing. The all-blues format that still

broadcasts on public radio, WDCB Chicago, sowed the seeds in his mind for the very idea of an all-blues radio show and how to do it right.

Of all the places for a young man with this background and these interests to pick to attend college, how fortunate for us blues lovers in Colorado that he selected CSU in Fort Collins. And, in a surprising twist, fortunate for him too!

In order to understand the scenario Kai found himself in, as a college student in Fort Collins, a person needs to do a little imaginative time travel. In the mid-eighties in Fort Collins there is no internet, and therefore no iTunes, Spotify, or Pandora. A transplant from Chicago who loved the blues would be lucky to hear a blues artist on the radio.



Even then, the DJ might have incorrect information about the artist, sidemen, or any number of things. Kai had this experience a few times and it was starting to get to him. One fine day he is walking through the student union and spots the call letters KCSU on an office door. If you know Kai

Turner, you know that this is not a man who is shy about sharing his opinion. Into the office he goes and proceeds to let the folks there know that their presentation of the blues genre was sorely lacking, and specifically why it was lacking. A few days later his phone rings and it's the head of the department who had gotten wind of his visit. He was not calling to reprimand Kai, however. He was calling to ask him to come down to the station to learn how to run the board and try his hand at doing it himself.

Such is the nature of the winds of fate and so began the DJ career of Kai Turner. There is another part of the story in which I actually come into play. It was during this time that the legendary blues club in Fort Collins, called Lindens, was really going strong. I was playing there regularly with a couple of popular bands, and this is when Kai and I first met. It was a great place where artists like Lonnie Brooks, Gatemouth Brown, Charlie Musslewhite, James Cotton and more would play as part of the western side of the Midwest circuit. This place was magic! I still recall the sign as you walked in stating "Occupancy 89 People". Haha! That was one of the many rules and regs that were broken at Lindens most of the time. The story of Lindens may have to be told in another

article. Suffice to say that it was here that Kai, like many of us blues lovers, found a home away from home.

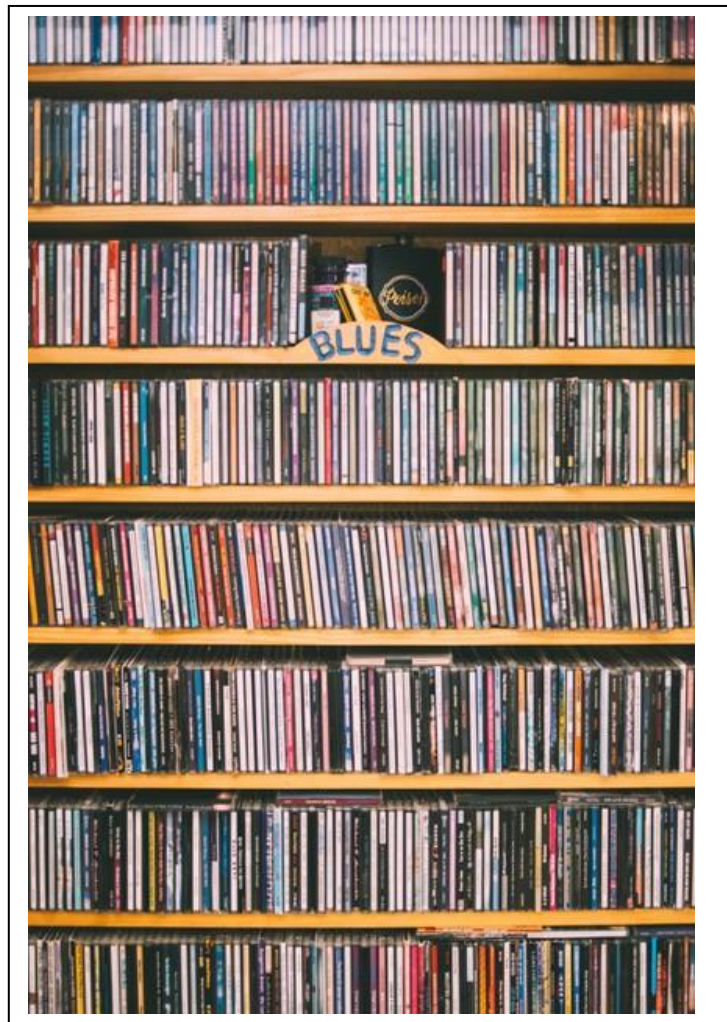
Another aspect of Kai's time in Ft Collins, that bears mentioning, is the access he had to the station's huge record library. From the late '40s right on through the '90s, small labels that made blues, folk, and jazz records would mail college radio stations new releases for the obvious reason of hoping to get airplay. Kai's eyes still light up when he talks about the treasure trove of blues and R&B records he found there.

As Kai says, this entire period of his life was very special. Learning the DJ business, seeing and hanging out with great blues artists, meeting his future wife Natasha, and just being young. I can testify myself that Fort Collins in those days was just really a special place and Kai was soaking it all in and growing in his knowledge of blues and his knowledge of how the various facets of the music business work together to make great things happen. Great radio shows, great, night clubs, great festivals, and great performances.

In 1996 Kai was invited to stop into the Denver studios of 103.5 The Fox to meet with the program director. His reputation had been growing as a talented

DJ with a passion and dedication to the blues. It was then that his Strictly Blues program was born. This was a huge break in an extremely competitive business. The Fox was, and is, Colorado's top rated Classic Rock radio station. This was a huge opportunity to accomplish a lot of different things, and Kai has certainly proved to be up to the task over the years.

Among his goals were to create a consistent format whereby the beloved blues genre can benefit overall. A regular listener to Strictly Blues will soon notice that the show will cover certain bases fairly regularly. The old classic recordings will always get some space but so will the up-and-coming artists, as well as artists that are regulars on the



contemporary blues circuit. Typically there are twenty to thirty songs per show, so in a given segment you might hear a classic BB King tune, followed by Eric Gales, followed by Christone “Kingfish” Ingram. None of this is either random nor planned to the last detail. It was interesting to note during a visit to Kai’s home production studio that, though he has thousands of blues CDs, they are not organized alphabetically or in any other way other than “Blues”. He told me he does this on purpose in order to help him keep things fresh. The man knows his business very well.

Apart from radio, through his association with 103.5 The Fox he has been able to throw some weight behind many blues festivals over the years. Whether acting in a capacity to assist with booking, organizing, or just promoting on the radio, Kai has been associated with the biggest blues festivals in our state and a few outside of Colorado as well. Going way back the Denver’s Blues and Bones Festival, Mile High Blues Fest, Telluride Blues and Brews, The Greeley Blues Jam, Blues From the Top, and others, Kai stays involved professionally and personally. He told me “Strictly Blues has been as much a curator and advocate as well as a battering ram!”. I asked what he meant by “battering ram” and he evenly replied, “there’s power in what’s being done.” In other words, a career spent on advocating blues, building relationships with artists,



promoters, and sponsors, etc., has enabled Kai to help make positive things happen in a business that is a minefield of challenges.

Writing this piece gave me the opportunity to spend some quality time talking about all kinds of things with Kai. The current state, history, and future of the Blues. He has a philosopher's heart and takes a broad view that is informed by the up-close-and-personal experience. Quote-able comments come at a pretty good clip. Decades spent live on the air will do that. Observations such as, "Lunacy loves company as much as misery" or, "It just takes one person to do something good" reveal a soul of a man who is not only a fan of a style of music called Blues, but also a man who has lived through sometimes that have been very dark, as well as times that have been very fulfilling. He reflects on the tragic loss of his wife and two young sons. I won't go into details of those painful losses here, but it is revealed that Kai has had to dig deep and find ways to navigate difficult and heartbreaking experiences.

His commitment to "presenting blues in a positive way" is as strong today as it ever was. He speaks about the spiritual power of the music and how it's enabled him to carry on. He calls it "a great defiance in Blues" that is as much about the experience of getting back up after getting knocked down as it is getting knocked down in the first place. He quotes Aristotle and talks of "the good at which all things aim."

Driving home from his home in Genesee Park in the foothills west of Denver, I was turning over this deep conversation in my mind. I think about how hard he has worked to create a peaceful healing space for himself and lovely daughter Nina to have a good life. If Kai were to hang it up today, he'd have a great legacy to be proud of. My thought is that there is a whole lot more to this story that has yet to be written. I hope for the very best for Kai and all his efforts. It's not only good for him but good for those of us who love and care about the Blues in Colorado.

Strictly Blues can be heard Sunday mornings from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on 92.9 The Bear and around the clock on iHeartRadio's Strictly Blues Channel.

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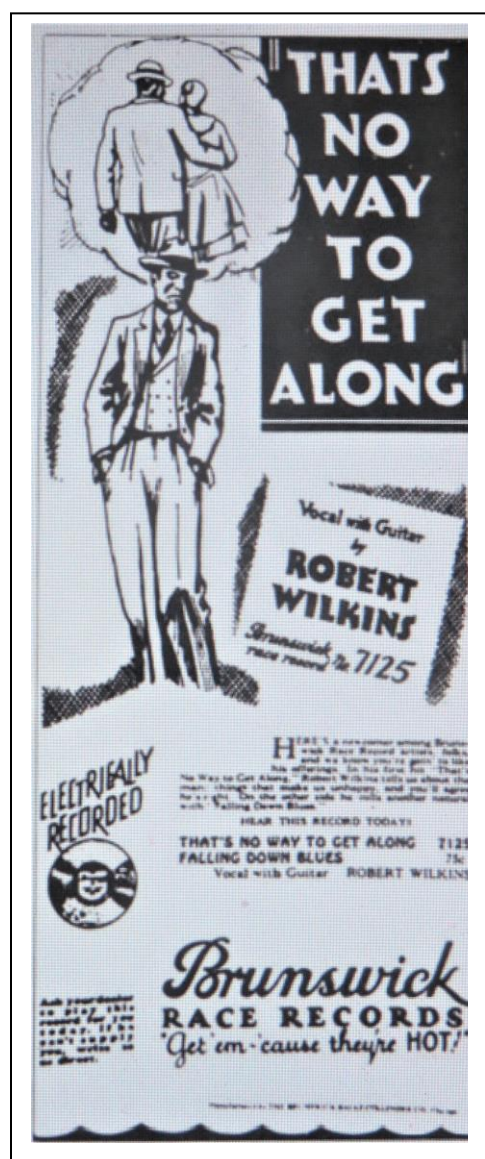
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Pressing Out Diamonds

by Michael "Hawkeye" Herman www.HawkeyeHerman.com

"One of America's finest acoustic guitarists and blues educators."

I love the music of the Rev. Robert Wilkins, (b. 1/16/96, Hernando, MS - d. 5/26/87, Memphis, TN). I especially enjoy his songs "Prodigal Son" and "No Way To Get Along." I have performed those two tunes for well over 30 years. (The song Prodigal Son is based on a parable Jesus tells in the New Testament book of Luke, chapter 15, v.11-32, The Lost Son or Prodigal Son. Check it out in your New Testament Bible. It won't take but a few minutes to read.)



I became a friend of Rev. Wilkins granddaughter, Lane Wilkins, who lives in Memphis, a number of years ago. She heard me perform the song Prodigal Son at a club in Memphis. After my performance she introduced herself and we became good friends. We talked a great deal about her grandfather ... and you will be happy to know that the Wilkins family received a "righteous settlement" (\$\$\$) from the Rolling Stones for their having placed the song, Prodigal Son, on the Stone's album Beggar's Banquet ... and for having wrongfully taken credit (Jagger/Richards) for writing the song.

Rev. Wilkins played blues music in his early recording days ... but later became a "sanctified singer/preacher" and would only perform gospel/sacred music.

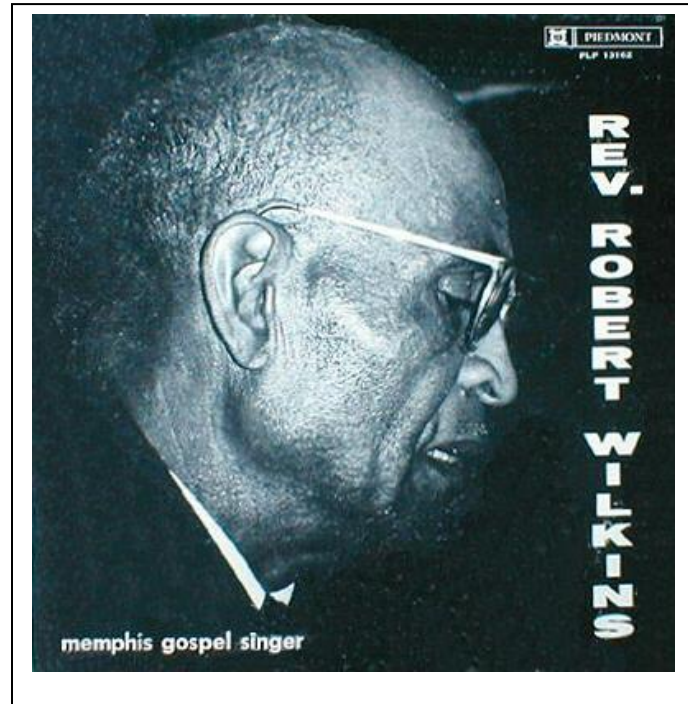
Lane told me about how, years ago (in the early 1950s) her Reverend grandpa would load up the car with family members on Saturdays, put .50 cents worth of gas in the car, and drive out to the small towns outside of Memphis in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee, to perform gospel music and "witness" on the streets for passersby, hoping to get donations enough to get enough gas to make it back to Memphis that night. They would usually bring only hard-boiled eggs and lemonade to eat on such all day musical gospel missions. Lane told me that other members of her family played music with her granddaddy in these street gospel sessions, and

that she was given a tambourine at the age of three, in order to join in on the music

making. She also stated to me that that was the best way and most common way (in Black culture) to get a child involved in music in the church, and otherwise ... by starting them out on the tambourine, so that from the beginning they know where the beat is ... and after that, maybe they can apply that sense of tempo to learning another instrument.

About a year after meeting Lane Wilkins in Memphis, I had an assignment to write about the 'meaning of the blues' for a blues music magazine ... I wrote to Lane and asked her if she could share any thoughts she might have on the subject ... or any thoughts her grandpa may have shared with her about blues music and its origins and 'meaning.'

Below you will find the message she sent back to me ... it is beautiful, and I have quoted it a number of times in articles I have written on blues history and origins ... I have titled her letter, "Pressing Out Diamonds."



I hope you enjoy the letter as much as the music of her grandpa. Truly, Hawkeye -----

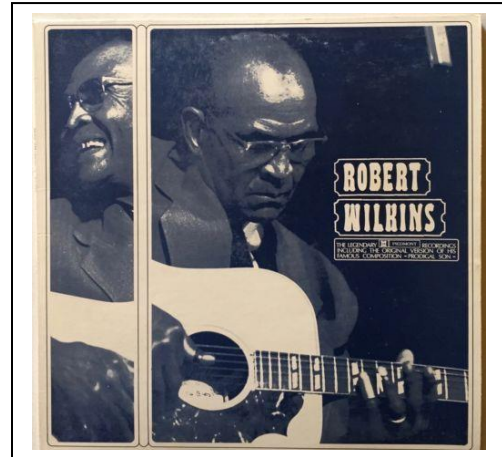
----- Dear Hawkeye, My grandfather, Robert Timothy Wilkins, Sr., was not a Delta bluesman, so his music had a hill sound to that is so popular around Oxford, Mississippi.

Towards the end of his life, my grandfather talked about his music and what it meant to him. Once he said, "Baby - God gave each Negro a compensation, something like a payment for slavery. This gift from God is a soulful thing and deals with what the Negro got inside himself. You see, after so many years of pressing down hard on the colored man, a person (the one being pressed upon) gets something like a diamond. Now that diamond is hard, but it is still the most highly dollared paid for stone in the world. Every Negro got one of them diamonds on the inside. The only problem is that they just don't know that much about mining.

The blues is what happened when Negroes starting 'mining' for their special gift from God. And the blues takes on different shapes for different Negro's. Some of them sing the blues, others play the blues, some paints the blues, and still others dance the blues right off of their feet like ol' Bojangles. You know you I'm talking bout. Find your diamond and you will find your blues." I then asked him about white people and the blues. He

laughed and said, "See that's another thing folks don't understand. Sometimes them white boys who done been to my house, the blues just leaps right out of their eyes. I can see the mean daddies with their drinking and woman chasing. I can see the fat back, biscuits, and sorghum syrup. I see their hard times. They got the blues cause somebody, usually their kin folks done pressed down on them and made a diamond. But some of them, I listen to their music and guitar playing, and I know they ain't been pressed on a day in their lives. Ain't got nothing but some grit inside. Don't know nothing about no suffering."

Yours Truly, Lane Wilkins



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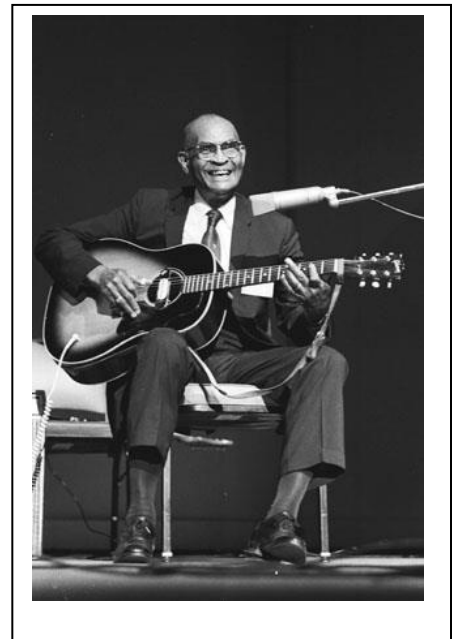


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p.s. I hope this helps. I am a worker of the words and not the magician with the steel six strings that you are and my grandfather was. Tell me, just between you and I, have you ever been pressed on so hard until a diamond popped right out of your heart?



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The Colorado Blues Society Heritage Award to Pam and Al Bricker

The Colorado Blues Society announces Al Bricker and Pam Bricker as the recipients of the Colorado Blues Society Heritage Award. The Heritage Award honors individuals whose legacy reflects profound credit upon themselves and the blues community.

Through Al and Pam Bricker, The Greeley Blues Jam became recognized among the country's outstanding blues festivals. Together they arranged musical lineups to always include something for everyone, not just that year's hot performer. The musical talent was a congruity of the traditional acts such as John Primer, Pinetop Perkins, Willie "Big Eyes" Smith; the blues rockers like Walter Trout, Mike Zito, and Tommy Castro, and the emerging performers Trampled Under Foot, Samantha Fish, and Larkin Poe. Famed blues legends alike John Mayall, Buddy Guy, Doug Kershaw, and Elvin Bishop; plus genre headliners Tab Benoit, Marcia Ball and Bob Margolin can show the GBJ on their list of notable venues. It is hard to name a top blues act that has not played The Greeley Blues Jam. To the Bricker's credit, the GBJ covered every dimension of the blues.

Their untiring energies have been the backbone of GBJ's success. As the event's organizer and driving force, each year they recruited hundreds of volunteers to make GBJ a reality. Partnering with the Town of Greeley and commercial sponsors, Al and Pam were able to keep ticket prices at a minimum while generating significant funds for charity. Their planning and coordination enabled annual aid to area nonprofits like the Guadalupe Homeless Shelter, Boys & Girls Club, Habitat for Humanity, United Way for Flood Victims, Weld Food Bank, A Woman's Place Shelter, Aven's Village, and the Blue Star Connection.

The Friday pre-festival activities came from a Bricker innovation that introduced new blues fans to the genre. Many non-blues folks got their first taste of world-class blues at the free pre-festival happenings. Additionally, Al and Pam created the instructive "Blues 101 Stage" where kids of all ages came to engage the blues. These routines favored many attendees and not just the kids. The workshops at the 101 Stage turned out to be special, where enthusiasts learned the history of the blues, or received a free harmonica and learned how to play a "Mississippi saxophone".

While some festivals can be rained out, the Bricker's once used their ingenuity to dodge a torrential downpour threatening to washout the GBJ event. Overnight, a volunteer operation moved 3 stages and an array of vendors indoors and the festival went on.

The GBJ goal and motto: ***"It ain't nothin' but a party!"*** stands as the Al and Pam Bricker legacy to the blues.

June 16, 2021



Chick Cavallero with Pam & Al Bricker photo by Tarry Underwood



Gary Guesnier with Pam and Al Bricker photo by Tarry Underwood

Native American Influence in the Delta Blues

By Jack Grace – *Jack is a long time blues fan and member of the Colorado Blues Society*

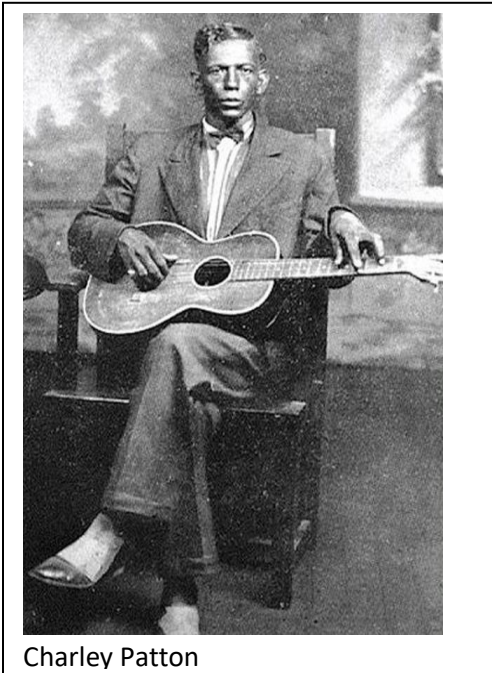
Most of us think of the West African influence on the blues that came with the despicable importation of slaves. But trans-Atlantic importation of slaves was banned in 1808. Blues, as we know it, was not developed until sometime in the very late 19th century or early 20th century. There was time for lots of intermixing of races and cultures. It is very possible that Native Americans in the South had some influence in the creation of the blues. Specifically, we are going to take a look at how the Choctaw Nation possibly influenced the Delta blues.

The Choctaw Nation was the predominant Native American tribe in Mississippi 1817 when Mississippi became a state. Also, the Choctaws dominated the wilderness we call the Delta region at that time. White settlers did not arrive in the Delta until between 1825 and 1827. Beginning in the 1830s, some 25,000 Choctaws were expelled to the Indian Territory (the state of Oklahoma).

But, the Mississippi WPA guide notes that some 3,000 Choctaws refused to leave Mississippi. Some historians estimate that 7,000 Choctaws refused to leave and evaded expulsion by living in the remote swampy areas of the Delta.

Let's take a look at one very important Delta blues artist with Native American heritage.

Charley Patton



Charley Patton

Charley Patton was known as “The Founder of the Delta Blues” and sometimes “The Grandfather of the Delta Blues.” Other major blues artists such as Son House, Robert Johnson, Bukka White, Tommy McClennan, Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf, David “Honeyboy” Edwards, and Roebuck “Pops” Staples were influenced or inspired by Patton. He taught both Howlin’ Wolf and “Pops” Staples how to play the guitar.

Patton was born in Bolton, Mississippi, most likely in 1885 or 1886. Bolton lies slightly outside the Delta in the hill country of Mississippi. His grandfather was a White man from Vicksburg and his grandmother, Rose, was described as a “black Indian.” Historians note that she was probably Choctaw. His father was listed as

“black” in the census but described by his grandchildren as having a “bright” or “red” complexion. Charley’s mother was described as a short brown-skinned woman of partial Indian ancestry. From that description of his background, we surmise that Charley was one quarter Caucasian, one quarter to one half Native American (most likely Choctaw) and the rest can be characterized as African American. His grandmother remained a strong influence in his life.



In his song, “Down the Dirt Road Blues,” Patton sings, “I’ve been to the Nation ... but I couldn’t stay there.” Some speculate that Patton might have made a pilgrimage to the Indian Nation or perhaps that his grandmother, Rose, took him there for a visit. Patton spent his career almost exclusively in the Delta. His recording sessions in Indiana (1929) and Wisconsin (1930) were an exception. He was immensely popular with both Black and White audiences - an amazing feat in those days. His performances were intense while superbly entertaining. He played and sang with total absorption. Patton was an entertainer. He played the guitar behind his back or over his head. He would twirl and tap his guitar and would dance as he sang.

Son House thought he looked like a clown but the audiences loved being entertained that way.

Charley's singing style included singing falsetto and growling. He essentially played different characters in some songs - sometimes imitating women, sometimes imitating members of characters he envisioned. Perhaps music is music but Pura Fe, a modern Native American songwriter and musician, in the movie, "Rumble - The Indians Who Rocked the World," listened to a Charley Patton recording and recognized Native American melodies immediately. She then eerily demonstrates the similarities in that movie.

The Britannica Online Encyclopedia describes Native American singers from the Eastern Woodlands group, which includes the Choctaw, as using "... special vocal techniques, including rapid vibrato and yodeling which enhance the expressive quality of the music. Most scales involve four, five, or six tones, usually with notes at roughly equidistant intervals. Melodies tend to undulate and often feature a descending inflection; rhythmic characteristics include frequent changes of metre and the use of syncopation."

It further notes, "The most distinctive style element of Eastern Woodlands music is the call and response in many dance songs; the leader sings a short melody as a solo and is answered by the dancers in unison."



An article by Joe Gioia states, "... falsetto singing is also a feature of Native American music, where it represents the voices of spirits.

Could that describe the Delta blues being sung and played using pentatonic scales?

Charley Patton died in 1934. The Mt. Zion Memorial Fund placed a stone monument at Patton's gravesite. "Pop" Staples (Staples Singers) was a special guest as was John Fogerty (Creedence Clearwater Revival) who paid for the stone. Fogerty said that when he first heard Patton's voice on a tape, "... it sounded like Moses."

Here is the link to Patton singing his song, "Spoonful Blues":
<https://youtu.be/EylquE0izAg>

Notice how he uses different voices within the song and how he uses his guitar played with a knife to voice "spoonful."

The famous blues historian, Samuel Charters, traveled to West Africa in search of the origin of the blues. He noted that he understood, "finally, that in the blues I hadn't found a music that was part of the old African life and culture ... The blues represented something else. It was essentially a new kind of song begun with the new life in the American South." Perhaps Native American culture was part of that new kind of song.

A Couple Smiles...

A blues guitarist is fishing. Suddenly he catches a Fish! But the fish says to the guitar player: "If you let me go, I will tell you two important things about your future, I have good news and I have bad news for you."

"That's a deal", the guitarist says.

"Well, the good news is, when you die, you will play guitar in heaven, next to BB King!"

"Wooooow!!" the bluesman screams, "that's great!"

"Yeah," the fish says, "but the bad news is that you start tomorrow!"

~~~~~  
A blues musician dies and goes to heaven. He is told "Hey man, welcome! You have been elected to the Blues All-Stars of Heaven--right up there with Muddy, Wolf, BB, all the greats. We have a gig tonight. Only one problem--God's girlfriend gets to sing."



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# David Booker's Manchester Memories Continued – Part 7

By David Booker

We left off in part 6 of our story where myself and guitarist/songwriter Ric Adams, had spent some time on a dream gig in the Seychelles Islands. We didn't have space for pictures last time, so here are a couple of snapshots from our gig over there in August 1973.

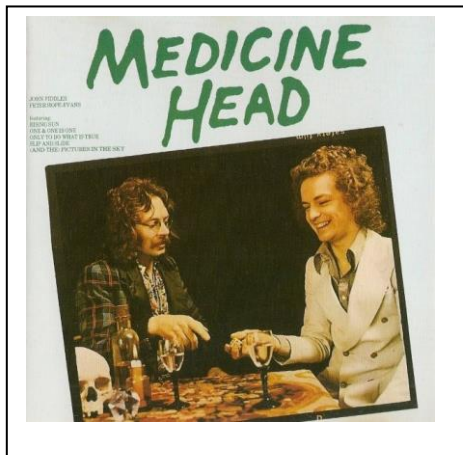


Seychelles Islands

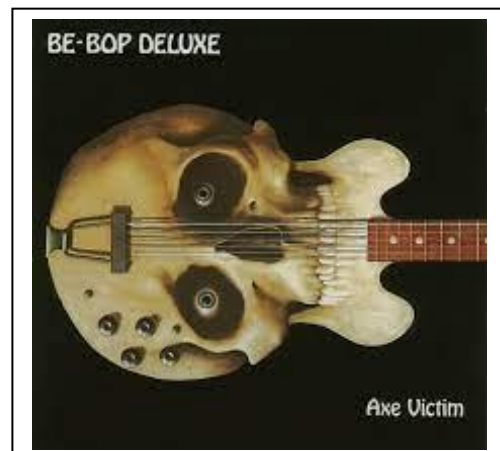


Seychelles Islands

Having worked pub gigs as a crappy country trio (Western Union) we decided to get serious and form our own band, we needed a drummer but decided to try it as a duo as a 2 piece outfit called 'Medicine Head' were getting huge attention at that time. So it was Ric on guitar/vocals, me on bass/vocals and my right leg/foot banging on a miked-up area of the stage (there were no stompboxes in those days) We opened a show for Be Bop Deluxe (Bill Nelson) and I remember how curious he was at what we were doing!



Shortly afterwards we decided we needed a drummer to relieve my poor right leg from pounding on the stage

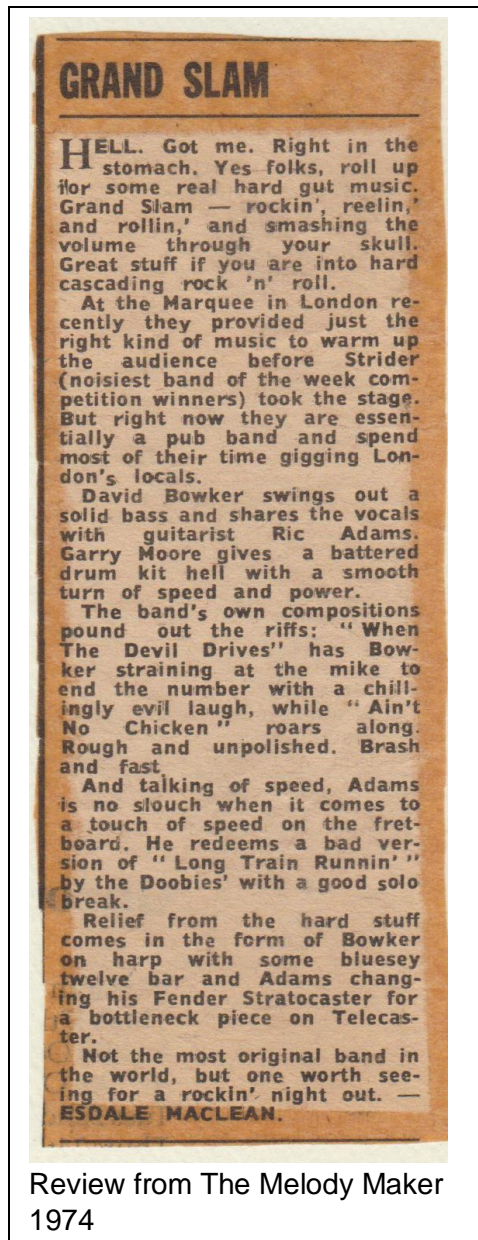


floor!

A Melody Maker ad (London's equivalent to Westword) produced fellow Mancunian Tony Owens, who had been in the Watson Browne Band round about the same time I was in



The Gin House Band in Manchester. He turned up to audition with a thick book of "originals" and said he also "sang". We let him sing a couple and his "originals" went away!



**GRAND SLAM**

**H**ELL. Got me. Right in the stomach. Yes folks, roll up for some real hard gut music. Grand Slam — rockin', reelin', and rollin', and smashing the volume through your skull. Great stuff if you are into hard cascading rock 'n' roll.

At the Marquee in London recently they provided just the right kind of music to warm up the audience before Strider (noisiest band of the week competition winners) took the stage. But right now they are essentially a pub band and spend most of their time gigging London's locals.

David Bowker swings out a solid bass and shares the vocals with guitarist Ric Adams. Garry Moore gives a battered drum kit hell with a smooth turn of speed and power.

The band's own compositions pound out the riffs: "When The Devil Drives" has Bowker straining at the mike to end the number with a chillingly evil laugh, while "Ain't No Chicken" roars along. Rough and unpolished. Brash and fast.

And talking of speed, Adams is no slouch when it comes to a touch of speed on the fretboard. He redeems a bad version of "Long Train Runnin'" by the Doobies' with a good solo break.

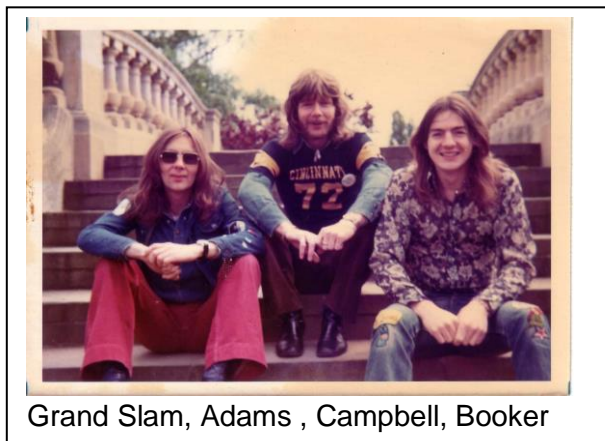
Relief from the hard stuff comes in the form of Bowker on harp with some bluesy twelve bar and Adams changing his Fender Stratocaster for a bottleneck piece on Telecaster.

Not the most original band in the world, but one worth seeing for a rockin' night out. — ESDALE MACLEAN.

Review from The Melody Maker  
1974

We hooked up with a college booking agency called The Rag Agency and started getting some college dates, combining them with the many pub rock gigs like the famous Lord Nelson Pub, home of the Dr Feelgood Band who were making waves at that time. One night an American guy asked to sit in, he had a Gibson SG guitar and an amp and a cowboy hat, he was really good so we had him on board with us on a regular basis- Rick Stevens from Medford Oregon.

It wasn't working out with Tony on drums, so we got hold of Gary Schomberg a friend of Ric's who kinda fit the bill, he was a used car dealer- spiv- type -sell - you-anything kinda guy, but he was right for us at the time. We were attracting folks who helped us load /unload gear, one was a guy called Bruce Genden , who became Bruce Bananas, Bruce was a lovable, walking disaster accident- prone fella, he and his friend from New Zealand who had a van, John Keirle ("Kiwi") became our roadie team, we rehearsed at a small church hall just across Tower Bridge and we finally secured some dates at the



Marquee, as an opening act, and eventually got to headline a few times.

The scene was beginning to change, "Pub Rock" was the thing, bands playing no frills Roots Rock and Country, in London pubs. Dr Feelgood, Brinsley Schwartz, Bees Make Honey, Ducks Deluxe, there were so many, and of course our band which we had named Grand Slam. Fashion too was going back to the 'Mod' look, short hair, slim ties and narrow lapel jackets were replacing the hairy hippy kaftan look of the late 60's. The music was a blend of country (Eggs Over Easy, Starry Eyed And Laughing ) or hard

punky blues like the aforementioned 'Feelgoods'. We also befriended the guys in Rory Gallaghers band, Lou Martin, Gerry McAvoy and drummer Wilgar Campbell.



Grand Slam Mk 1, 1974 Tony Owens (feet up) L-R Booker, Rick Stevens, Ric Adams

Schomberg was not working out in the band, we fired him and he did not go quietly, there was an incident where he broke into the van, took all the gear, and tried to hold us to ransom for "unpaid monies" of course he had been paid, and eventually we got our gear back after calling the cops and some heavy confrontation!

Wilgar Campbell had been fired by Rory Gallagher, so we got him in the band



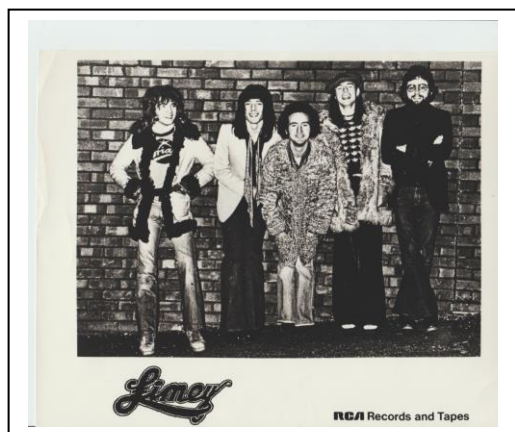
Manfred Mann

immediately. He was good for one set, but later on when he'd 'had a few' he was worthless! Frank Lee was next, his brother Jimmy was the bass player for Slade who were huge at the time. While all this was going on Scottish guitarist Dave Flett got me an audition with Manfred Mann, Dave was Manfred's guitarist at the time, I was asked back three times to play with Manfred in his studio, but it was not to be! Even Dave was shocked!

Grand Slam were getting encores everywhere, but constant personnel changes became our downfall, I was the guy holding it all together (sound familiar?) I was booking from a telephone booth across the street from my flat, as my stingy landlord refused to get a phone line in the building! I'd also go down to Ric's pad as he had a phone in his place, drag him out of bed, and start booking.



It all became overwhelming, more often than not the phone in the telephone booth was smashed by vandals every time I needed to make calls.



Out of the blue, Ian Kewley from the now defunct Strider band contacted me with an offer of an RCA recording deal and a management deal YES! I was interested! The situation hinged around one Brian Engel, songwriter-but-not-very-good singer. The guitarist was Robin LeMesurier son of famous British actors John LeMesurier and Hattie Jacques (Robin went on to be Rod Stewarts guitarist and was last heard of playing for Johnny Hallyday in France. Hallyday is now deceased.) We rehearsed Brian's songs which were quite cleverly written - Pedal Steel player BJ Cole was added on some tracks to give it a

somewhat country feel. A standout tune was called The Man Who Killed Grant Tracy,

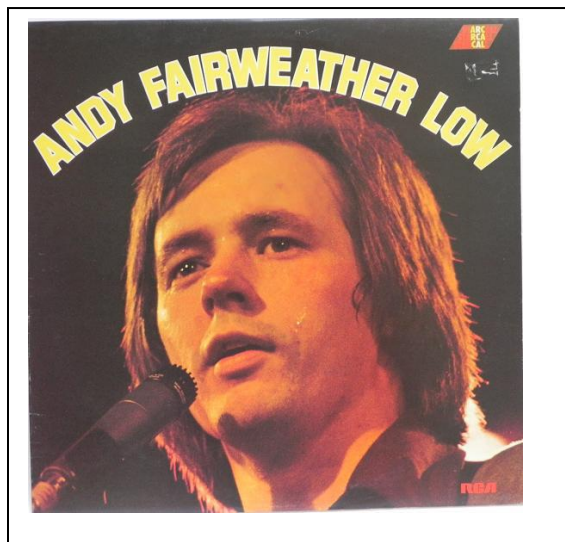


Top left Ian Kewley Top Right Robin LeMesurier,  
Bottom Left Booker Bottom right Pat Mckinerney  
Center Brian Engel

sounds like a 'western' yes? Well it's about a cartoonist who draws a daily cartoon called Grant Tracy and the character of Grant Tracy takes over his life and is about to ruin his marriage, so Grant Tracy the cartoon, has to be killed off, and the man to do it is the man who gave him life -the cartoonist himself.

The album was completed at Roundhouse studios, Camden Town in 1975, we made the mistake of not hiring a producer and as a result listening to it today

especially, it sounds very dull and flat. I was more interested in dating the studio receptionist, everyone had an opinion as how it should sound, and it's a disappointing effort, even the album art is confusing, the band was called 'Limey' which is slang for a British sailor but instead of a naval artwork theme, the artwork (by Brian) depicts a British Hussar on horseback which we all found to be very confusing. Nevertheless the British music press loved it and gave it rave reviews and a national tour with headliner Andy Fairweather Low, who had several hit records and albums out was booked with us as the opening act.





We rehearsed for three weeks at an off -season Rugby club house in South London and came out for the tour as tight as hell, the tour went very well, it was so nice to have your bass tuned, on a stand and plugged in when you hit the stage every night.

After the tour we were on retainer wages and went into Island Studios to record the next album, we laid down 6 tracks which spawned a single, Silver Eagle. At that point we were informed we were no longer needed or being funded anymore by the management company, Brian was retained, and the album was completed by session guys Rod Argent (Zombies) and members of the Kinks, Tommy Eyre and a cast of many. When your management company fails to match record company funding this is what happens in this business.

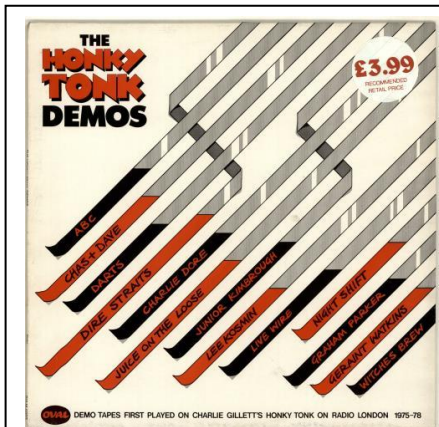


During this period Ric had joined The Groundhogs led by Tony T.S McPhee, they had put out 2 new albums and were touring, but McPhee had halted

everything when he couldn't get the money, he needed from the record company to continue.

Both Ric and I were at a loose end and so it was a no brainer that we get together again. We grabbed Mick 'Cookie' Cook on drums from the band 'Home' (who had split up due to members joining AC/DC, and Wishbone Ash) We started gigging under the name Adams Bowker & Cook (ABC) but had to agree to change it when another band who had hits under the same name threatened legal action. (I don't think we ever did change it )

I was an avid listener to the BBC Radio London "Honky Tonk" Sunday morning show hosted by



Honky Tonk



Dire Straits



ABC in 1986 David visits UK and hangs with the lads

Charlie Gillett you'd hear Country, some Tex Mex, Blues, Cajun all kinds of roots stuff every week. One morning Charlie announced he

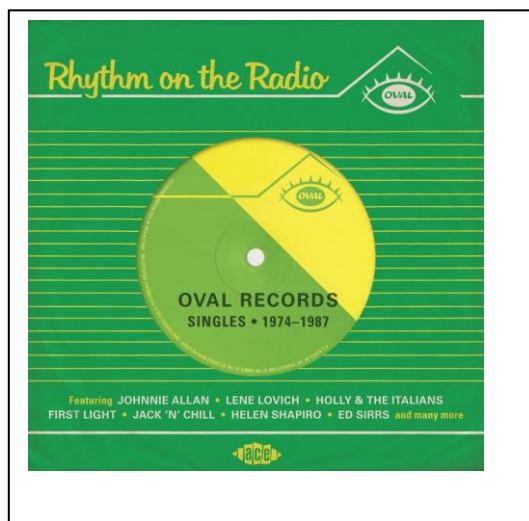
wanted to hear unsigned bands' demos, this was a platform for Dire Straits, Nick Lowe, Elvis Costello, Graham Parker, Chas n' Dave and ABC to be heard.

Ric had a cool song called Rhythm On The Radio (about a potential suicide averted, by the subject listening to the radio which snaps her out of it).

We acquired a room above a massage parlor in Camden Town (You couldn't help glancing into the cubicles as we loaded the equipment in!) we set up a 2 Track machine and recorded the song live to tape. Charlie loved it and released it as a single on his new label Oval Records, there was an album called the 'Honky Tonk Demos' released simultaneously with our track on there, and we joined Dire Straits, Graham Parker, Bluesman Jr Kimbrough, Chas n' Dave, Charlie Dore and a few more hopefuls on the LP.

Charlie Gillett is now deceased but recently a new CD compilation called, you guessed it, 'Rhythm on The Radio' has been released on the British Ace label (2016) and yes, it's on there!

ABC settled into a Sunday night house gig at the Spurs pub in Tottenham (now demolished) we'd usually have Mick Stubbs, the brilliant guitarist from 'Home' with us and various guests, Paul Young, Ian Kewley, even my brother Tom, played with us one



night while he was visiting London. I got a job selling Jeans on Oxford Street, the Van delivery driver



was Dick Taylor, an original member of the Rolling Stones and founder of the Pretty Things, we all had to survive! One day ol' Kirk St James (Beirut) walked into the store he was quite well known through his big success on the BBC TV nationally broadcast talent show NEW FACES, he was third place runner up in the 1978 season. We briefly discussed about getting together musically again but I never saw him ever again after that (he appeared in the movie King Ralph as a street musician the last I heard).

I found I could make more money being unemployed and playing 3-4 gigs a week, to qualify for the 'Dole' you had to be fired from your job, so my boss said OK, you're fired! Before I left, one of the girls who used to work in the store came in one day to say hi to everyone and mentioned she'd got a job in advertising, I casually mentioned id been in the biz years ago, she got very enthusiastic and mentioned they were looking for people! I said "Nah it's been 12 years since I did that kind of work" besides I was planning a trip to the USA for a holiday. Next thing I know I'm in an interview with her

boss, creative Director Bill Hamer, and he asks me if I play soccer (football) I said yes, left foot positions, he said "were looking for left footed people to play for the agency team your hired"! I said, "Wait up, I'm off to the States for a holiday" He said call me when you get back ...so I did

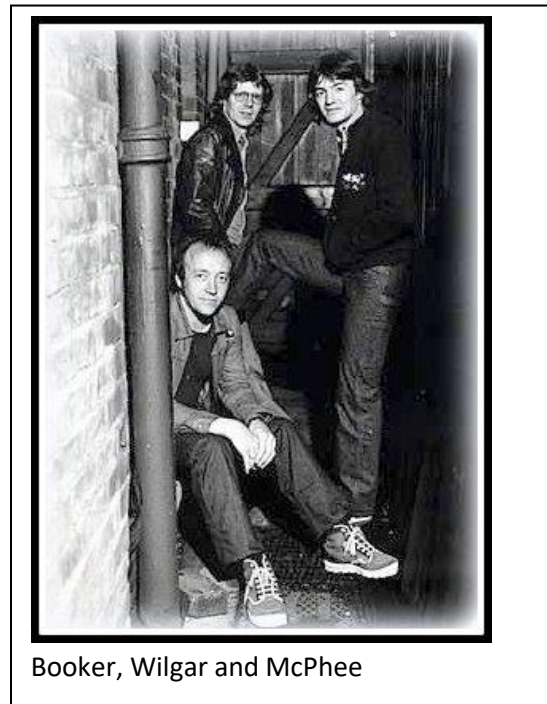
### **Next Time.**

- I join aging teenyboppers Kenny for a quick German trip.
- Get asked to join a new band who are recording at John Lennon's house in Ascot.
- Explore Lennon's house from top to bottom
- My old mate from Beirut /Bahamas Tony Coe and I re unite and form a cool pub band The Regulars.
- Holiday in USA spend 8 weeks in Denver/New Mexico/travelling, see Kenny Burrell live at Clyde's Pub
- I get a job at Doyle Dane Bernbach Ad Agency on Baker Street, get promoted to the Volkswagen account!
- Keep gigging with the Regulars, and make a life changing move to USA permanently
- Before I go, some friends and I go to see Jimmy Witherspoon at "The Venue" in London
- with Rocket 88, and Sax legend Hal Singer

**End of series.** I will start my USA adventures after a break! Country music, Blues with Solomon Burke, Rufus Thomas, Bo Diddley, AC Reed, Albert Collins and Koko Taylor much more to come!

### **Extra Extra...**

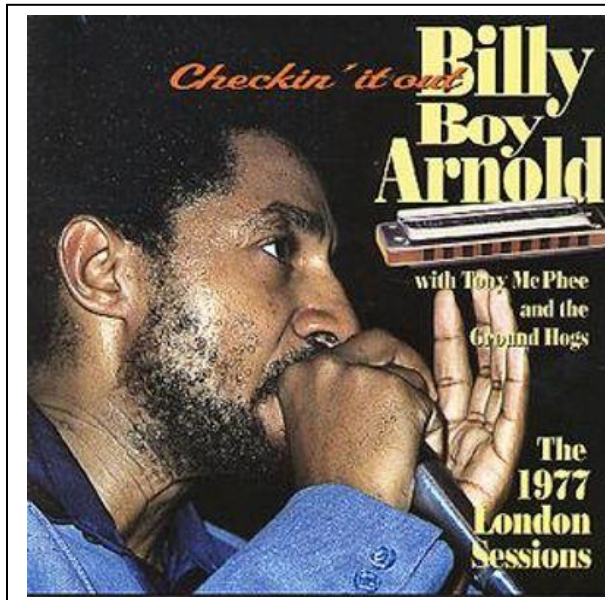
**GLEN MATLOCK.** I mentioned before that there was so much going on simultaneously, I have to mention that round 1975 Glen Matlock was fired from the Sex Pistols for being "too nice" I spent an afternoon with him after I heard he was looking for players in his new band. I recall I went over to his place, and we discussed possibilities, he was a lovely guy and we were both bass players so unless he was going to play guitar and have me, a guy 7 years older than him in his band it was agreed that I might not be quite the right fit for what he was looking for. To date he's still out there playing.



Booker, Wilgar and McPhee

**TONY T.S McPHEE.** I already mentioned the Groundhogs, Tony T.S McPhee came up with the Clapton's Beck's and Peter Green's but never got his due acclaim. While on sabbatical from the 'Hogs' he offered me some gigs in his new outfit Terraplane, so I went out to his place in the country to rehearse, the drummer? our old friend Wilgar Campbell who was now behaving himself in the drinking department. We played a few nice gigs, notably the 100 Club on Oxford St. Suddenly, when I thought it





was going well, I was fired. I found out much later that another bass player had gotten a record deal to record an album with U.S Bluesman Billy Boy Arnold and the terms were to drop me and use this guy Alan Fish on bass, with Wilgar, and Tony. I was pretty upset but that's how the business works and what does T.S stand for? why tough shit of course!

**POST' LIMEY'.** Just before being fired by RCA and our management company, we hustled some money together from RCA to record without Brian. Ronnie Wood of the Faces had a house in Richmond and an 8 track studio in his

house ( the basic track of the Stones. Its Only Rock and Roll was recorded there)

We got hold of Garth Watt-Roy to play and sing and we did some amazing stuff



in that studio, a whole album. I loaned my reel-to-reel copy of the mixes to a roadie

and never saw it again. I remember my bass amp was a little piggyback Ampeg which fit nicely in the fireplace chimney and got a great sound when we miked the chimney up! A guy called Don was the engineer on the sessions, he also was the house 'minder' for Ronnie. Don told us some stories about how Keith (Richards) and Ronnie would jam all night and Keith would crash in the Cottage out back. The gardener used to come in with Keith's used hypodermic needles he'd found while he was raking leaves/doing maintenance. Keith had thrown them out the window in one of his stupors!



At Ron Woods house- L-R Ian Kewley keys, David Booker bass , Garth Watt -Roy vocals, guitar, writer, Robin LeMesurier guitar, Pat McInerney drums, and Don in front

## THE DEATH OF BESSIE SMITH

*The following article was reprinted from All About Blues Music, an excellent site for the best in Blues writing, whether history, artists, the industry, or the records themselves. Check it out at <https://www.allaboutbluesmusic.com>*

It is 3a.m. in the middle of a sultry, moonless Saturday night in late September 1937. A Packard car is cruising south down Highway 61 in Coahoma County, Mississippi.

At the wheel is Richard Morgan, a well-known Chicago club owner and ex-bootlegger: the passenger is his girlfriend Bessie Smith. She is still a star of the Blues scene and, although she has not recorded in a couple of years, her public appearances and fearsome reputation for hard living have ensured her lasting fame. Drowsy from the long journey, she dangles her arm out of the window of the car to take advantage of the cool night air. Up ahead a truck driver has pulled off the road to check a tire and, as he starts out again on the two lane concrete road, the Packard comes up behind him.

The weary Morgan misjudges the distance to the tail-lights and slams on the brakes. The car swerves left to avoid the rear of the truck, but it side-swipes the tailgate, almost severing Bessie's arm at the elbow and causing severe injuries to the right side of her torso.

A few minutes later a car approached from the north containing two men, Henry Broughton and Dr. Hugh Smith. They were setting off on a dawn fishing trip when they came upon the scene. Morgan was sober but distressed and seemed physically unhurt, but Bessie was unconscious on the roadside and bleeding from her arm. There was no sign of the truck. The Doctor gave first-aid to Bessie but she was obviously going to need hospital treatment. Broughton went to a nearby house to summon

help.  
When  
he



returned, there was some talk of transferring Bessie to Dr. Smith's car, but she weighed 200lb and was suffering internal injuries. She was drifting in and out of consciousness, suffering from shock and having breathing difficulties. Soon another car approached from the north, this time containing a drunk white couple. Their car slammed hard into the back of Dr. Smith's car which then shunted into the back of the Packard. Dr. Smith found that the driver had rib injuries but was not

badly hurt, and his passenger was unhurt but hysterical.

As Dr. Smith examined the couple, an ambulance arrived along with several local officers of The Law. They put Bessie in the ambulance and Morgan accompanied her to hospital in Clarksdale. As this was happening, a second ambulance arrived: apparently

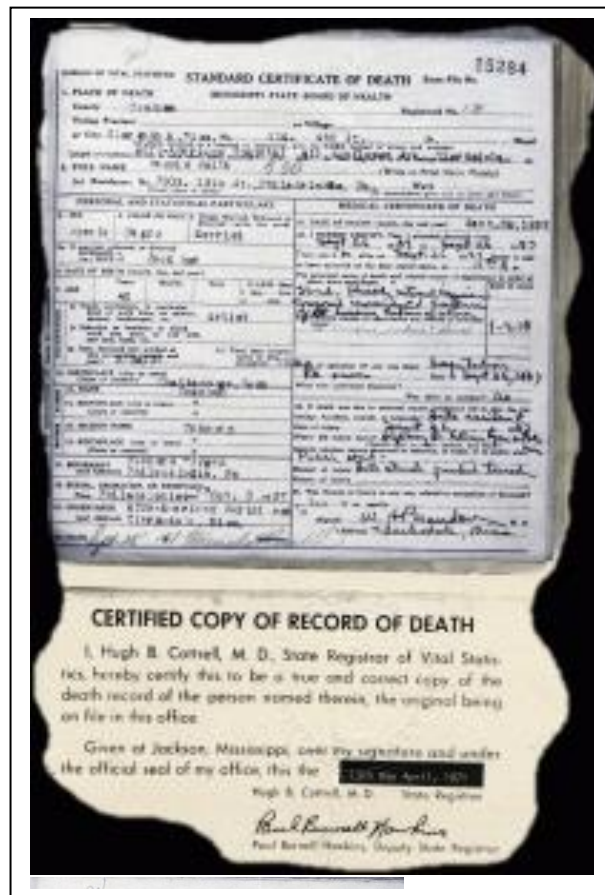


the first one had been sent by the truck driver when he stopped in Clarksdale and the second one, called by Henry Broughton, took care of the white couple.

At this point, the story becomes controversial. Bessie's family claim that Richard Morgan told them that they went to a white hospital and were turned away because Bessie was black. This was the basis of a story by John Hammond Sr. published in the October 1937 issue of Downbeat Magazine. After noting that Bessie's arm was almost severed in a serious crash, and that a second collision delayed her arrival at the hospital, which he said was in Memphis, Hammond goes on; "When finally she did arrive at the hospital, she was refused treatment because of her color and bled to

death". This caused an understandably heated debate, and the incident became a 'cause celebre' for the forces advocating social change in the South at that time. Dr. Smith gave a detailed interview to Bessie's adopted son Jack Gee Jr. in 1938, and his later conversation with Chris Albertson is available at <http://stomp-off.blogspot.com/2010/10/death-of-bessie-smith.html>

During that interview the Doctor recalled, "Down in the deep South cotton country, no colored ambulance driver, or white driver, would even have thought of putting a colored person off at a hospital for white folks. In Clarksdale in 1937, there were two hospitals, one white and one colored, and they weren't half a mile apart. I suspect the driver drove just as straight as he could to the colored hospital." In 1957 a black man, Willie George Miller, claimed he was that ambulance driver. He remembered taking Bessie directly to the



colored hospital, the G.T. Thomas Hospital on Sunflower Avenue, Clarksdale, but thought she may have been dead on arrival. This could not be true as surgeons later amputated her arm, but were unable to save her.

Bessie's Death Certificate shows she died in Ward 1 of the G.T. Thomas Hospital at 11.30 am. on 26th September 1937. Cause of death is listed as; Shock, Internal injuries, Multiple fractures of right arm. It notes that her arm had been amputated at the hospital. Downbeat Magazine later ran a lead article correcting Hammond's assertions and noting the role of Dr. Smith, but this seems not to have had the impact of the original

story. Richard Morgan died in 1943, and was never interviewed by Police or reporters. In the 1970s, following Chris Albertson's excellent biography of Bessie, John Hammond admitted that his article was based on hearsay and rumors that circulated in Memphis in the days following Bessie's death, and that he had made no attempt to contact the witnesses or the hospitals. Yet this fiction has entered the mythology of the Blues. Hammond had a liberal agenda, and the segregated South discriminated viciously against its Black citizens, but his version of the story amounts to reckless journalism, if not deliberate deception.

The myth was amplified in 1959 when Edward Albee wrote a one-act play titled 'The Death of Bessie Smith', which is set in the 'White' hospital where she was supposed to have been taken. The play takes the form of dialogues between two black men and an off-stage presence of 'Bessie' and with the white hospital staff, among others. The piece

was immediately controversial in the era when the Civil Rights movement was gaining support to repeal the 'Jim Crow' laws in the Southern States, and has been performed many times over the decades.

Hammond and Albee's motives were undoubtedly affected by the politics of the day, but in the light of evidence that has emerged, their claim that Bessie was 'turned away on account of her color' seems extremely unlikely. As we look back over three-quarters of a century we can see that Bessie's death was a tragedy and a huge loss to African-American culture, but it had very little to do with racism.

Bessie Smith was The Empress of the Blues and the First Black Superstar.



She should be remembered for that above anything else.

# Brighton Blues Blast 2021

The Armory Performing Arts Center Brighton, CO July 10, 2021

By Dan Willging with All photos by Tarry Underwood

Brighton, CO is known for many things, most notably agriculture and the manufacturing of wind turbines. Now add blues to the list. On July 10, The City of Brighton presented its eighth edition of The Brighton Blues Blast (BBB) at The Armory just across the railroad tracks and a stone's throw away from downtown.

The BBB is unique in that it has two components, a free daytime outdoor show, and an indoor ticketed evening concert. This year's daytime portion featured The Delta Sonics, Eef & The Blues Express, and The Johnny O Band, as well as a classic car show and



transportation art show.

Considering the evening event consisted of only three acts, it offered a solid variety of blues. Cass Clayton



opened with her versatile sextet, which included talented keyboardist Tenia Nelson who always had the right solo for the song at hand. Clayton had a warm, welcoming onstage persona and clearly enjoyed singing to her audience over a backdrop of bluesy-jazzy-funky arrangements. She performed several selections from her new CD Play Nice, plus a few crowd favorites.

Making his second appearance at the BBB and first since the onslaught of the

pandemic, St. Louis bluesman Marquis Knox wasted no time in taking control of his show with a commanding performance. Though he's masterful on electric guitar and



howling hot on harmonica, more importantly, he connected with his audience in a way that was reminiscent of how BB King related to his adoring fans. Knox didn't play either instrument on several selections but sang with such power that it would challenge the stability of the St. Louis Gateway Arch. A few times, he got off the stage and ventured into the audience and sang to them, thereby thrilling them in the process. Once, Knox stepped away from the mic and still was clearly heard from the stage. He was quite charismatic, to say the least, and his talented quartet, which included keys, was there at the drop of a hat. At one point, he performed a medley of Muddy Waters tunes on guitar to show how he's really an old soul in a millennial's body.



Like Knox, the BBB was also Ruthie Foster's first appearance since the pandemic. She performed with a trio consisting of bass and drums with all three lateral to each other. (The drummer was stage left, not in the back.) Like Clayton and Knox, Foster, too, exhibited a warm stage presence and related well to her audience. The evening featured three great vocalists, but Foster was the best with her quick, sudden power that pinned you instantly against the wall.





With its superior, crystal-clear sound and colorful lighting system, The Armory is one of the undiscovered gems along the Front Range, making an evening spent there a most memorable one.

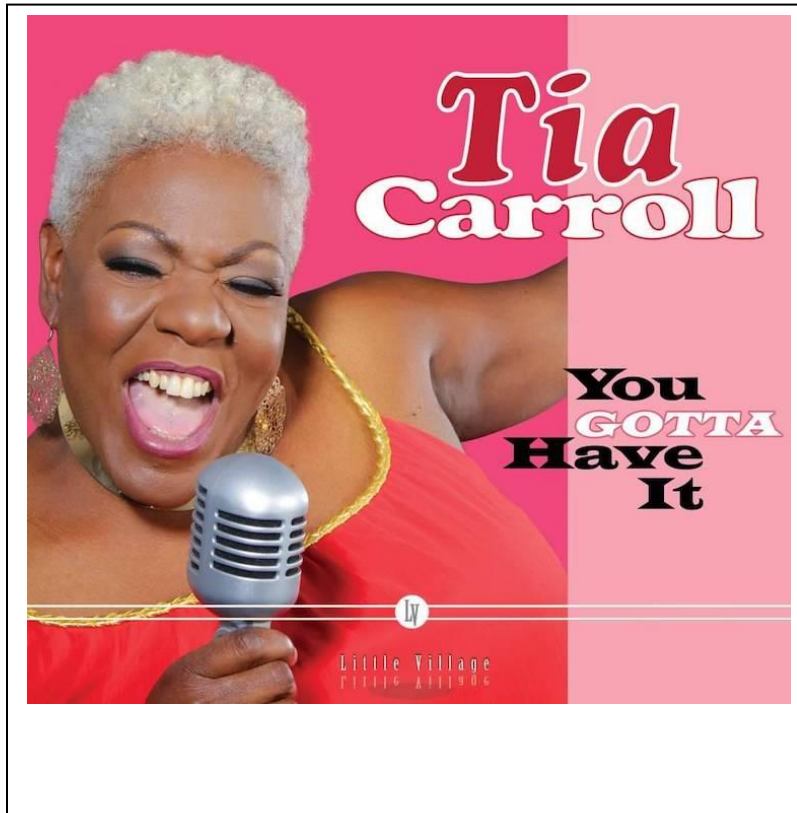
## **CD Reviews**

### **Tia Carroll** ***“You Gotta Have It”***

**Little Village**  
**by Dan Willging**

Tia Carroll is the archetypal American artist who’s better known internationally than she is stateside. With any luck at all, her major league debut on this Little Village (LV) release should change that perception.

The Bay Area vocalist has led her own bands for decades and, at times, was a backup singer for E.C. Scott, Jimmy McCracklin, and Sugar Pie DeSanto. Noel Hayes, an impresario of sorts, brought her to Greaseland Studios' Kid Andersen, who worked with Hayes on last year's smash debut of septuagenarian soulster Sonny Green. Just as he did with Green, Andersen surrounded Carroll with a crack studio band that included himself (guitar), LV's Jim Pugh (piano/organ), a horn section, and guest guitarists Charlie Hunter and Brazil's Igor Prado. Hayes, Pugh, and Andersen contributed to an eclectic song list while Carroll tossed in three previously unrecorded originals of her own.



Since the arrangements are so killer and deep, it'd be easy to fill this review commenting on every torching Andersen ride and Gordon Beadle's double dubbed sax solo on "Never Let Me Go." But such pontification would lose sight of why this record was made in the first place, and that is to showcase Carroll's terrific vocal prowess. Regardless of whether it's blues, funk, soul, or R&B, her performances are consistently stellar, raising the question of whether she should be mentioned in the

same breath as soul queen Sharon Jones?

Even though Carroll doesn't appear to have any stylistic limitations, it's also obvious she's most comfortable with soul and R&B, where she can really pour out her passion. That's especially evident on the first two cuts. Instead of the typical, high-octane opening number, she counters with a slow rendition of Anthony Hamilton's socially-conscious "Ain't Nobody Worryin'." "Even When I'm Not Alone," a Carroll original, gradually draws you into the brutally honest portrait she paints of her protagonist.

Horns dance and strut on another Carroll composition, "Move On," with the underlying message being get up after you've been knocked down. If she hadn't persevered during her long career, there wouldn't be this opportunity to celebrate her success on one of this year's best recordings.



# **Bobby Rush**

## ***“Rawer Than Raw”***

**Deep Rush Records.**

**Marketed and distributed by Thirty Tigers/The Orchard**

**Reviewed by Jack Grace**

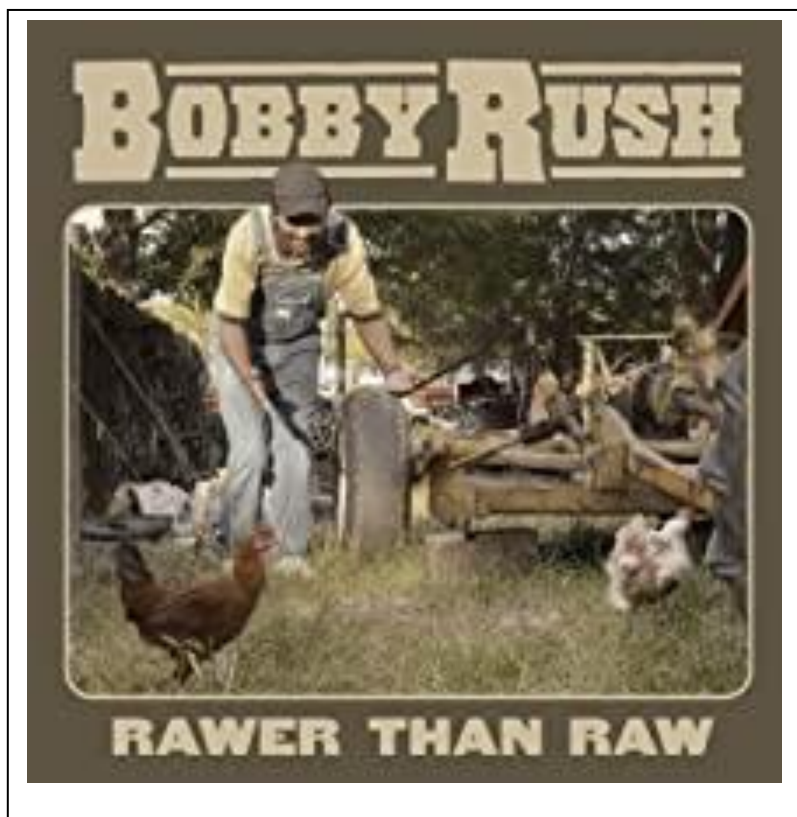
Imagine sitting under a spreading live oak tree somewhere down South on a warm humid afternoon. The humidity is high but the shade of the tree and the gentle breeze make for a pleasant afternoon. A real bluesman, some say elderly, struts up the stage in front of a furniture store, or feed store, or perhaps even a barber shop. The unaccompanied bluesman begins playing his guitar and harmonica. Nothing but riffs and rhythms and stories about the joys and challenges of life. Now, imagine that the bluesman is Bobby Rush. Listen to *Rawer Than Raw* and put yourself in that place.

Rush is somewhere between 81 and 87 years young. He claims not to know for sure - only that “in 1947, I was plowing in the field with a mule.” He migrated from Arkansas to Chicago in the 1950’s but is

one of the unique residents that, after living in Chicago for 48 years, moved back to the South to be closer to the Chitlin’ Circuit where he performed and made his living.

*Rawer Than Raw* won the 2021 Grammy Award for Best Traditional Blues Album - his second Grammy. His 2017 release, *Porcupine Meat*, also won a Grammy in the same category.

This collection of songs is acoustic - there are no effects. It is just Bobby Rush wrapping your mind around some deep classic blues. There are five originals - listed under the name Emmett Ellis (he changed his name to Bobby Rush so as to not embarrass his



father who was a pastor), as well as songs written by Skip James, Howlin' Wolf, Willie Dixon, Sonny Boy Williamson, and Robert Johnson.

One could consider this album to be a compendium of blues guitar licks and harmonica phrases. Rush plays sparsely and tastefully. Never overwhelming the songs, just providing the perfect underlying accompaniment. He plays masterfully but the story is the song.

The album begins with an original, "Down in Mississippi." It's an appropriate introduction to the trip he carries you on. Jaunty guitar, plucky harmonica, and you will be tapping your foot. Skip James was famous for playing his songs in minor keys. Rush keeps the faith by playing James' "Hard Times" in slow Dm riffs.

Next up is another original, "Let Me in Your House." This might be my favorite. It's a story about offering a palette of inventive alternatives designed to coax a lady into extending an invitation to stay overnight. Here is one of many great lines:

"If I can't be your big dog, let me be your little dog 'till your big dog comes home."

We don't know how the story ends but we give the guy kudos for his efforts. In the liner notes to the album, Rush says he really wanted to be like Howlin' Wolf. Rush does a killer version of "Smokestack Lightning" but he makes it his own. No one can howl or moan like the Wolf. Rush doesn't make an inauthentic attempt - he moans subtly. But, his voice conveys the power of the song.

"Don't Start Me Talkin'" is a Sonny Boy Williamson song done with captivating guitar and harmonica riffs. The message is, don't start me talking ... or I'll tell everything I know.

Another favorite is the original "Let's Make Love Again." This song is driven by simple but powerful riffs in the hands of a master. Whether you like the blues that come out of Mississippi or not is a personal choice but this performance demonstrates why the sound out of that region is so earthy that it really cannot be duplicated elsewhere.

"Garbage Man" is an original slow blues song about a man whose wife left him for a garbage man. Rush sings, "out of all the men my woman could have left me for, she left me for the garbage man." Rush will have to defend his own characterization of the garbage profession but at the end of the song, he intones, "that's the blues for ya" and it is indeed.

I didn't cover all the songs here. The rest are discoveries you will have to make yourself. My overall take is that we are hearing the blues from another time performed with modern instruments and recording technology. The songs are as authentic as any you will hear on scratchy old vinyl but are much more pleasant to listen to.

We can be thankful that Rush chose to build on the foundation of the bluesmen who came before him but not to imitate them. He is Bobby Rush - no one else

# **Gerald McClendon**

## ***"Let's Have A Party"***

Delta Roots Records  
Released June 25, 2021  
by Chick Cavallero

Gerald McClendon is one of the most dynamic entertainers in the soul and R&B music industry. Born and raised in Chicago he has earned the nickname of **"Soulkeeper."** And soul is what his music is soaked in as he is an old school master who borrows his style from the soulful origins in Motown and STAX. His style is the music of Otis Redding and Marvin Gaye, the sounds of Smokey Robinson and The Temptations. Heck the Title of the album "Lets Have a Party" is

straight out of Sam Cooke with lots of Gerald McClendon mixed in. If you are an R & B fan you are going to love this guy and his take on classic soul music.



Gerald has put together an outstanding backing band for the album. While he handles all the vocals, he adds Rico McFarland, Melvin Taylor, Rusty Zinn and Joe Burba on guitars. Tony Llorens on Fender Rhodes and Sumito "Ariyo" Ariyoshi on Fender Rhodes. Brian James on keyboards. Jim Pugh on Hammond B3. Skinny Williams and John "Boom" Brumbach on sax. Johnny B Gaden, Dave Forte, and Art Love on

Bass. And Twist Turner on drums and strings.

The opening track is full of encouragement from Gerald to a troubled word in "Keep On Keepin On". In the background Skinny Williams lays down some sweet sax to accompany Gerald's soulful styling.

The entire playlist was written by Twist Turner and the record was recorded, produced, mixed and mastered by Twist at Delta Roots Studio in Chicago. Twist's



tunes were made for McClendon's sweet voice and there is no doubt it's partytime when he kicks into the title tune, "Let's Have a Party", you find yourself wishing you were there at the Party with him.

The entire album, "Let's Have a Party" blends blues, soul and R&B into a rollickin' good time. This is party music with plenty of dance tunes to keep the hip-shakers happy. There's blues found in "If It Ain't The Blues", an easy shuffle filled with all the heartbreak you need in the blues. "You Got To Be Strong" is a gospel number with a sermon mixed in. "Pack Your Bags and Go" is back into the blues and a no good woman. They even move into some sweet street corner do-wop with "Party Girl". There's a little bit for everybody here- McClendon's strong and powerful voice, with an excellent backing band and four sizzling guitarists scattered throughout the grooves to keep it all interesting. Melvin Taylor's guitar solo on "Funky Stuff" ends the set in dazzling style.

60s and 70s soul has returned and Gerald McClendon is leading the way! Give him a listen and relive that classic MoTown Sound!

## **Tiffany Pollack**

### ***"Bayou Liberty"***

**Nola Blue Records**  
**Release date July 16, 2021**  
**by Chick Cavallero**

Tiffany Pollack has blues in her blood. Her mother, Margaret Ward, a jazz singer and bassist, ended up in Alexandria, La., where her uncle, Charles Ward, an accomplished Americana guitarist, and other musical relatives lived. She even learned that her musical roots ran generations deep where her grandmother had been an opera singer, cellist and pianist and her grandfather a clarinetist. WHILE Tiffany was doing a family reunion gig with her cousin, rising roots performer Eric Johanson, it led to a contract with Nola Blue records and the release of "Blues In My Blood". Tiffany and Eric caught the attention of the Blues world and Tiffany was awarded Best Blues/Rock Album and Best Female Vocalist at the Global Music Awards; Best Blues Song ("Blues In My Blood") at the Independent Music Awards; and Best Story Song ("Michael") at the American Songwriting Competition.

"Bayou Liberty" is Tiffany's second release with Nola Blues and is set to release in July as a testament to her birth family and her late Uncle Charles for finding her and reconnecting her. As Tiffany states, "this album is dedicated to my Uncle Charles Ward, who, when I was so very lost, found me and showed me the way home." All of the words and music are by Tiffany Pollack. Bayou Liberty refers to a childhood neighborhood as well as her own personal liberty and she examines the darkness and

the light of the female experience. Tracy is a prolific songwriter whose efforts chronicle her life.

Tiffany Pollack handles all the vocals and ukulele. Brandon Bruniousis on guitar, Christopher Johnson on sax, Stoo Odom on bass, Ian Petillo on drums and piano, and in addition to producing the album, John Németh, jumps in on harmonica.

“Spit on Your Grave”- grabs you right from the beginning, The girl has a raw and

grinding voice that mesmerizes the listener. This opening cut mixes her voice with John Nemeth’s amazing harp and Chris Johnson’s nasty sax. Nasty is the key, you gotta love the lyrics.



“Colors” paints a sweet picture. Tiffany loves spinning back and forth between the sax and her captivating voice. Her lyrics are catchy, they make sense and blend with the music perfectly. She has the ability to not just sing it, she has a way with words and how to write it and make it flow.

“Crawfish and Beer” is a catchy downhome roots and

gumbo stew, her voice is always out in front and keeps stirring a good feeling, this is an up-tempo tune full of bounce and you just can't sit still to this one. Her music seems to have several main focuses- the blues, rockabilly, honkytonk and even some country. “Devil and the Darkness” and “Hourglass” both have that rockabilly feel to them, with honkytonk undertones and a sultry voice that battles with that hard driving saxophone.

“Gonna Make You Love Me” and “Hourglass” she shows off her ukulele skills. Cute tunes with a vaudeville tinge to them, lots of her very sweet and melodic voice. She has a unique way of blending a variety of styles together mixing up honkytonk, country and a heavy dose of sax. Her voice can hold its own with anyone, and surpass it. The music comes hot and heavy and has something for everyone, 12 originals in all. Tracy's voice is powerful, gritty, and sweet and soft, she can convey whatever emotion she needs at the

moment, her versatility is amazing and it will be a voice that keeps developing and evolving and getting bigger and better each time they step in the studio.

## **Misty Blues**

### ***"None More Blue"***

#### **Self Released**

**By Peter "Blewzzman" Lauro © April 2021**

Blues Editor @ [www.Mary4Music.com](http://www.Mary4Music.com)

2011 Keeping the Blues Alive Recipient

Lead Singer Gina Coleman and Misty Blues are in the midst of celebrating two milestones that are not all that common for a blues band - or for that matter, a band in other genres, as well. On top of Misty Blues being together for over twenty years, *"None More Blues"* is the bands tenth release. Impressive numbers indeed.

The nucleus of Misty Blues consists of: Gina Coleman on lead vocals and cigar box guitar; Seth Fleischman on guitar; Bill Patriquin on bass, trumpet and vocals; Benny Kohn on keys and vocals; Rob Tatten on drums, trombone and vocals; and Aaron Dean on saxophone. Guest musicians for this project include: Ed Moran on vocals and harp; Dan Esko on bass; Richard Boulger on trumpet; Wendy Lipp on vocals; and Gina's seventeen year old son - who is a two time recipient of the Blues Foundation's Generation



Blues Scholarship and a two time participant in the International Blues Challenge Youth Showcase with his band Born IV Blues - Diego Mongue on drums, bass, and percussion; The albums eleven tracks of blues with hints of jazz, funk soul and gospel are all original material.

The opening track, *"My One And Only"*, starts off with an attention calling drum solo by Rob, followed by Gina scatting her way in vocally, and then the horn section leading the



rest of the band in behind her - and in less than a minute, the bands repertoire of that jazz, soul and funk just presented itself to you all at once. With it's powerful vocal performance, forceful rhythm, and guitar, piano and horn highlights, it was the perfect introduction to the band.

On "*I Can't Wait*", the band settles into more of a blues groove. Emotionally belting out some soulful blues lyrics, the list of things Gina can't wait for are many, but waiting for her baby to take her hand seems to be tops on the list. Musically, the mid-song instrumental interlude features Seth, Benny and Aaron following each other on fabulous guitar, organ and saxophone leads.

Where else can you get a loose cigarette and a single can of Black Label; a strand of rosary beads and bags of pork rinds in twenty-three different flavors; a finely home made guava paste and a low blood sugar life saver? These, and many other things you just can't live without are all available at your local convenience store, where Senor Morales is always happy to be helpful. In addition to "*Bodega Blues*" being filled with seriously hilarious lyrics, it's also filled with some serious percussion and organ highlights from Diego and Benny.

As I'm listening to "*Down In Lenox Town*", the disc's sixth track, what I'm seeing as a common denominator on Misty Blues' songs is that although the band is led by such a powerful and commanding vocalist, the tracks all tend to have a very large portion of instrumental runs. That said, kudos to Gina for spreading the love and showcasing the skills of this talented band she's assembled. This one features Bill and Rob in smokin' rhythm grooves as they first back up Benny, followed by Seth, then Aaron, on extensive and impressive organ, guitar and sax leads. It's also one of just a few tracks where we get to enjoy Ed's outstanding harp playing.

Although the guys are doing their usual fabulous job, this one is all about the vocals. With somewhat of a fear inducing, attention demanding, matter of fact growl, there is absolutely no mistaking that Gina is "*Ready To Play*".

This track is titled "*Listen*", and if it were up to me - as a way of making it a command - I'd have added an exclamation point at the end. You see, while this masterpiece is spinning, you really need to "Listen!" The first two-and-a-half minutes features the whole band in an ultra cool jazz instrumental vibe; then, for the middle thirty seconds, Gina lays down some very cool range roaming scat; and on the last two-and-a-half instrumental minutes the guys take turns playing "follow the leader" with Bill and Aaron mimicking Seth's guitar leads on their horns, then Benny mimicking the leads of the horns on his piano. Giving this five-and-a-half minute long song several replays was indeed the best half-hour of my day so far.

With it's toe tappin', knee slappin' country blues vibe, and some great story tellin' and pickin' on a cigar box geetar by Gina, "*Days Gone By*" is Misty Blues' most impressive rendition of front porch acoustic blues.

Other tracks on "*None More Blues*" include: "*These Two Veils*"; "*Change My Luck*"; "*Step Right Up*"; and "*Nothing To Lose*".

To purchase and/or get your hands on a copy of "*None More Blue*" for airplay, just go to the bands website - [www.mistybluesband.com](http://www.mistybluesband.com). When you do, please tell Gina and the guys that the Blewzzman sent you.

## **Mark Cameron**

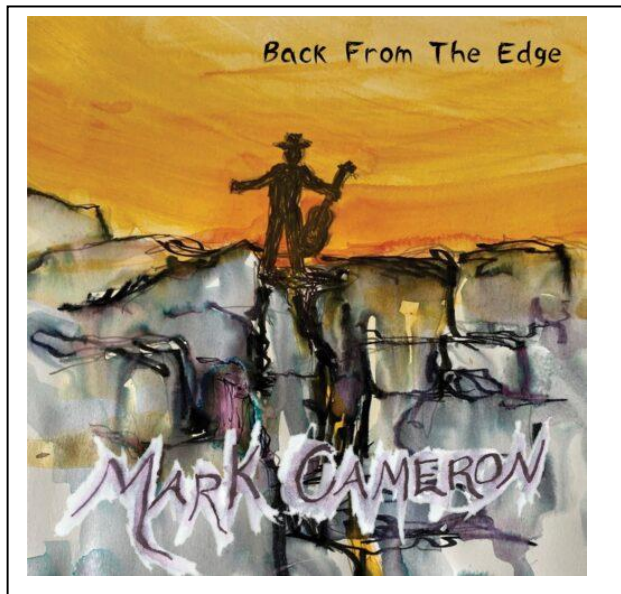
### ***"Back From The Edge"***

**Blind Raccoon Records**  
**by Chick Cavallero**

Minnesota based singer, songwriter and guitarist Mark Cameron kept himself busy during the COVIF crisis putting together this new album. Known as a tasty guitarist and charismatic frontman throughout the Midwest, Mark has a knack for introducing a humorous element to his tunes and always manages to keep it entertaining to the listener. He has been heavily involved in live music over the last 30 years and represented the Minnesota Blues Society in the most recent IBC in Memphis. "*Back From The Edge*" is number twelve in his list of albums and is a solid effort all around.

The band is tight- Mark Cameron on guitars, Rick Miller on blues harp, Dan Schroeder on drums and Mark's wife, Sheri Cameron on sax, flute, washboard, bongos, shaker, guiro, tambourine, wind chimes and whatever else a song might call for.

The album is a 10 song tour de force through the blues full of soulful memories and foot pounding rhythms with a 'whole lotta shakin going on'. The album kicks off with "It's Alright" a tasty battle between sizzling guitar and blues harp that makes you smile over authority figures and the endless battle for control over the almighty dollar.



In "*This Is The Blues*" the band brings on a powerful full horn section to show how liberating the blues can be. Mark shows his wide range of talents when he plugs in his dobro for some slick slide work on "*2<sup>nd</sup> Job*". The fretwork takes off like a runaway freight train, it's smoking. On "*Never See It Comin*" a frustrated lover is trying to control

his woman and gets scorched by Sheri Cameron's nastiest yakkety sax. Mark's guitar may always be front and center but the harp and sax are never far away and it's a holy trio that defines their music.

The Mark Cameron Band delivers their original tunes with a powerful mix of pulsating rhythmic blues and catchy lyrics that are both amusing and heartfelt slices of life. Every song grabs your attention-it's 'in your face' blues, nothing subtle about it. It grabs you and shakes you and you have no doubt this is some bad-ass blues. Mark's vocal range is wide open covering from a soulful baritone to the meanest growls and grunts, and everything in between. His lyrics paint the images his voice and guitar are offering to the listener.

"All There Is To It" is another excellent shuffle between 2 excellent musicians-Mark and his harp player. Mark and Rick trade jabs back and forth in the ways of the old Chicago bluesmen. The interplay between the guitar, harp and sax is highly entertaining and super inventive. This is Chicago blues taking a side trip to Minnesota. "All dressed Up" is a gut wrenching slow blues grind. The rhythm section, drummer Dan Schroeder and bassist Scott Lundberg, get to showcase a captivating groove that holds you in a trance and makes you a captive to the blues. "Dollar For Liquor" is a slick showcase of Cameron's smooth and often sizzling slide guitar that bounces around the ramblings of a smiling street drunk in quest of his next drink. It puts a smile on your face for sure.

The title cut, "Back From The Edge" makes a powerful statement for the band. It's the crown jewel of the album. Cameron's voice and sweet melodic guitar are on fire. There's a deep groove that pulls you in and never lets go, it builds and builds on you and adds in guest performances from Tommy Barbarella on organ and soul singers Tonia Hughes and Sara Renner. It's a mixed up crazy world the song describes and the catchy song breaks really over power the listener. The band is hitting on all cylinders on this one! This is good time music that puts you the mood to move and groove. They have found the secret to having a top flight guitar player- let him have his due, but surround him with a talented band and let the band breathe. Cameron's guitar work and vocals are outstanding, but so are the supporting players- the rhythm section is rock solid, the sax is spot on, and the harp is outstanding. This is a solid blues band that knows what the heck they are doing and they do it extremely well.

## **EG Kight**

### ***"The Trio Sessions"***

**Blue South Records**

**By Peter "Blewzzman" Lauro © April 2021**

Blues Editor @ [www.Mary4Music.com](http://www.Mary4Music.com)

2011 Keeping the Blues Alive Recipient



## **Prelude**

It's pretty hard to forget the first time I met EG Kight because it was the night of my first time going to the W.C. Handy Awards - May 25, 2000. Yep, it was way back before the event ever became known as the Blues Music Awards. On that night a great friendship blossomed into twenty-one years of fond memories - just a few of which include: booking her and her band at many events; cooking for her and her band on a few occasions; and this very special night, which is worthy of sharing - [EG Kight Blue Bayou Club - Blues Show Review](#). So now that I've told you about how crazy I am over this lady and her band, let me now tell you about how crazy I am over this new album.

## **Review**

Since 1997, when EG came to us from country music with a blues debut that was appropriately titled "*Come Into The Blues*", "*The Trio Sessions*" is her ninth release in the genre. For the project - guitarist, singer, songwriter and Blues Music Award nominee - EG Kight is joined by two of her long time band mates: Ken Wynn on lead guitar, dobro and background vocals; and Gary Porter on drums, percussion, harmonica and background vocals. Additionally, special guest Sean Williams plays bass on several tracks.



"*The Trio Sessions*" contains ten tracks and of the seven originals: three are penned by EG; one is a collaboration with Johnny Neel; and three are collaborations with her long time friend and writing partner, Blues Music Award nominee, Tom Horner.

The disc opens with a thunderous drum solo by one of the most underrated drummers in the genre - the great, Gary Porter. Along with the use of some percussive devices, and some excellent help from Sean on

bass, Gary keeps the rhythm on "*You Just Don't Get It*" (Kight/Neel) at a powerful level throughout the track. Vocally, with a perfect combination of that country sound she never lost, mixed in with some of that growl she was introduced to by her friend and inspiration the late Koko Taylor, EG makes the reasons for her longevity in the genre

and her several BMA nominations for the "Koko Taylor Award" (a.k.a Traditional Female Artist Award) quite clear.

As she generally does on most of her releases, EG likes to cover a traditional blues song by one of the genre's legends. This one features EG showcasing her fabulous range and note holding skills on an absolutely gut wrenching rendition of Willie Dixon's "*Evil*". Musical highlights include EG and Ken pickin' and strummin' some awesome notes and chords on acoustic guitars, and Gary - who I don't remember being such a killer harp player - killing on the blues harp. Great track.

Along with hearing her belt out the blues as she just did on the above track, my other favorite type of song to hear EG sing is a ballad. This one is titled "*Burned*" (Kight/Horner) and with a heartfelt and emotional presentation EG tells the melancholic tale of a woman scorned. With lines like, "I've been burned before, ain't gonna touch that stove again" and "When it comes to true love, I'm accident prone", EG brings her pain to life. The sullen rhythm and stinging guitar leads are right there with her.

With a title like "*You're Driving Me Crazy*" betting the house that it's about a man would be a very good wager. As a matter of fact, this guy didn't just drive EG crazy - with the emphasis on word, he drives her "cra...yay...ya...zy". With Gary and Sean in a shuffle groove, right here Ken lays down some of the disc's best guitar work.

Apparently, "*Alone Too Long*" was originally done as a country song. Here's EG's take on it: "*This was one of the first songs I wrote, many years ago. I wrote it after a breakup but didn't realize at the time it was a blues song.*" Although she says "*It still fits me*", EG updated it a bit for this album. With lyrics like...

*"Is it my hair, is it my clothes, is it my age, do you suppose?  
I wanna know what I'm doing wrong.*

*Is it my walk, is it my talk, is it my size, is it my eyes?  
I wanna know what I'm doing wrong.*

*Is it my house, is it my car, is because I play guitar?  
I wanna know what I'm doing wrong.*

*Is it my songs, is it my style, is it the way that I smile?*

*I'm not wrong, and I've been alone too long."*...

it's quite clear that in addition to her frustration being undeniable, the situation clearly left EG with a feeling of insecurity. Indeed, this is a blues song! Because of the maestro Ken Wynn once again being absolutely masterful at his skills, this was my favorite guitar track.

John Prine's "*Angel From Montgomery*" is a song that, like everyone else, I have heard more times than I can count, by more artists than I can count. That said, the song never had much clout until I head EG sing it on her "*Southern Comfort*" CD back in 2003. Now the only reason I brought that up is because the way I felt hearing EG sing that song back then, is exactly how I now feel about hearing her sing "Hallelujah"

(Cohen). With such emotion and intensity, the way she belted out this hymn she could have done it from the balcony and her majestic voice would have filled the church. WOW!

Other songs on this magnificent release include: *"Come On In My Kitchen"* (Johnson); *"Feelin' A Healin'"* (Kight); *"Tell Me"* (Kight/Horner); and *"Falling"* (Kight/Horner).

To purchase and/or get your hands on a copy of *"The Trio Sessions"* for airplay, and to find out more about EG Kight, just go to the her website

- [www.egkightmusic.com](http://www.egkightmusic.com). When you do, please tell her that her buddy the Blewzzman sent you.

## **Eric Johanson**

### ***"Covered Tracks Vol. 1"***

**Ericjohanson.com**  
**by Dan Willging**

Like musicians everywhere faced with survival after the pandemic devastated their gig schedules, Eric Johanson responded with a series of weekly live-stream concerts. Fans requested various songs, not necessarily blues, while the New Orleans blues-rocker tossed in a few choices of his own, thus making this a collaborative experience between him and his fans.



Since Johanson wasn't ready for another album of originals following his 2019 blockbuster *Below Sea Level*, he recorded many of the songs from the live stream sessions, plus additional fan suggestions, solo in his home studio.

Vol. 1 doesn't waste any time launching its surprises, especially by opening with Chicago's '70 pop-rock hit "25 or 6 to 4" that has probably never been covered like this before. From there, Johanson continues his eclectic setlist with classic staples "House of the Rising Sun" and Greg Allman's "Midnight Rider" as well as modern rock selections like Nine Inch Nails' "Head Like a Hole," and



Swedish pop band The Cardigans' "Feathers and Down."

While his singing is on point and guitar work precise, Johanson also captures the essence of many of these songs, such as the chill groove of Free's "Oh I Wept" and the light shuffle of Taj Mahal's "Lovin' in My Baby's Eyes."

At the same time, he didn't forsake his blues roots with selections from Skip James and 'Gatemouth' Brown. Willie Dixon's "My Babe" is another startling choice since it's universally associated with the legendary Little Walter and his buzzsaw-cutting harmonica playing, not a stripped-down acoustic alternative. With this dandy sleeper in hand, Johanson's legion of listeners shouldn't have any regrets with Vol. 1.

## **Jimmie Bratcher**

### ***"I'm Hungry"***

**Ain't Skeert Tunes**

**Publicity: Blind Raccoon**

**By Peter "Blewzzman" Lauro © April 2021**

Blues Editor @ [www.Mary4Music.com](http://www.Mary4Music.com)

2011 Keeping the Blues Alive Recipient

### **Prelude**

A conversation at the House of Blewzz while "*I'm Hungry*" was playing.

Blewzzlady (calling out from the other room): That's a really good CD you have on, what's it called?

Me: I'm Hungry.

Blewzzlady: What's that got to do with it? Just tell me the name of the CD you have on.

Me: I'm Hungry.

Blewzzlady: You're always hungry. Just tell me the name of that CD already?

Me: I said I'm Hungry

Blewzzlady: Alright, I'll make you a sandwich, but not until you tell me the name of the CD you're playing.

Me: It's the new CD by Jimmie Bratcher and it's called "*I'm Hungry*". It's red hot smokin' blues to inspire your appetite.

Blewzzlady: Then maybe you should stop listening. Your appetite doesn't need any more inspiring.

Talking about appetites and eating, "*I'm Hungry*" can be purchased as a cookbook and EP, as well. It was created by Jimmie and his wife Sherri and it includes 196 pages of recipes from some of the finest professional chefs, friends, and family. You can find out a whole lot more about that at Jimmie's website, and as usual, a link will be at the

bottom of my review. Now - or as soon as I finish the sandwich that the Blewzzlady just made me - I'm gonna talk about some of those appetite inspiring songs.

## Review

"*I'm Hungry*" is Jimmie Bratcher's twelfth release. With its ten originals and two covers mixing in many different styles of blues, it'd be safe to refer to it as a gumbo of songs. For the project, the sous chefs joining Executive Chef Jimmie Bratcher, on guitars and vocals, are: Craig Kew on bass; Terry Hancock on drums; Aaron Mayfield on B3 and keys; Joe Selle and Brandon Draper on drums; John Selle and Eric Stark on keys; and the late, great Larry Van Loon on B3 and keys.

Thus far, what I've had to say has been somewhat comical but now it's time to get serious - NOT! On the opening track, "*I Love Her Name*", when you hear Jimmie say.....

*"When I hear her  
name my whole world  
starts to quake.  
My knees get weary  
and my hands began  
to shake.  
My heart starts  
pounding and I know  
just what to say.*

*Well I can't live  
without her I got to  
have her in my life,  
No I can't do without  
her I need her all the  
time.  
She's on my mind  
morning, noon and  
night.".....*

you'll probably start  
thinking that this is  
someone you'd love

to meet. Then once he says her name you'll realize you already have. You see, the next line goes like this....."*Her name is food, food, food*"....and when she gets near Jimmie with that aroma, man she knocks him right into a coma. Inasmuch as the lyrics may sound fattening, there won't be any weight gaining here. Reason being is that the punishing rhythm, led by absolutely wild piano playing by John Selle, has the whole band playing like they're on a runaway treadmill. Fun, fast and furious track, to say the least.



Finding out that Jimmie's doctor told him to "cut out the cheese and fried foods", Sherri is going to do her best to make all that happen. Simply said, there ain't gonna be no finger pickin because "*Mama Won't Fry No Chicken*". That said, although it's not on any chicken, Jimmie's doin' some serious pickin' on those guitar strings.

With food and eating being the primary topics here, there probably won't be any love songs or ballads, right? Wrong! The next two tracks will attest to that. The first one is titled "*Bacon On My Mind*" and with the heartfelt deliverance of the very descriptive lyrics, there will be no doubt that there is indeed a love affair going on here. Musical highlights include powerful rhythm from the hands of Craig Kew, and Joe Selle on the bass and drums, and monster piano and guitar leads from John Selle and Jimmie.

On this very tender...or perhaps, very tenderized...ballad, Jimmie's wonderfully emotional and passionate vocal presentation leaves no doubt about his sincerity as he tells Sherri, "*Baby, I Like What Your (sic) Cooking*". Although it happens throughout most of the album, Jimmie's masterful ability to take downright funny lyrics and meld them with absolutely beautiful music has never been more evident than right here. I guess the contrast of the soothing sound of the brushes on the drums, the finessed tickling of the ivories and the subtle guitar leads on this soft jazzy tune had a lot to do with that.

As he runs down a list of some of his favorite "Q" joints - although it doesn't seem to matter - Jimmie's wondering "*Where You Gonna Stop?*". It stands to reason that if you're going to do a song about some of the best barbecue spots in Kansas City, you might as well make it a "smoker" and the guys are totally all over that.

By now, since he's closing out the disc with the first song that has nothing at all to do with food, Jimmie might be full instead of hungry. It's titled "*Happy*" and it's the second of two instrumentals (and yes, the first had a title that related to food). With the focus totally on the music, Jimmie, Craig, Terry, and Aaron showcase their mastery on the guitar, bass, drums, and B3 organ. Making absolutely no reference to food, this one was very well done.

Other tracks on "*I'm Hungry*" include: "*Government Cheese*" (K. R. Moore); that other "*Greasy*" instrumental; "*Chicken Tastes The Same*"; "*Green Bananas*" - Remix; "*Grits Ain't Groceries*" (T. Turner); and "*Bologna Sandwich Man*".

To find out more about Jimmie Bratcher just go to his website - [www.jimmiebratcher.com](http://www.jimmiebratcher.com) - Wherever you go and whomever you talk to, please tell them the Blewzzman sent you.



## DEADLINE FOR THE **NEXT** HOLLER?

Deadline for the next issue (**October/November 2021 issue**) is **September 1, 2021**. Here is your chance to write about the music you love...and your chance to see your name in print! Write about anything involving the Blues- a show you saw, favorite performer, festival, favorite club, why you like the blues and when you started liking the blues, your Blues 'Bucket list', take a stab at reviewing a new CD you might have. **Anything**. I want it your words, and hopefully we can have someone each issue with a different perspective on things. Include pix you took as well. I want THE HOLLER to be a mix of all things 'Blues' and a mix of different ideas and views.





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### Colorado Blues Society Mission Statement

**The Colorado Blues Society is dedicated to preserving Blues heritage and increasing awareness of and appreciation of the Blues as an indigenous American art form (the wellspring from which all contemporary popular American music originated)**

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# **THE COLORADO BLUES SOCIETY ON RACISM**

The Colorado Blues Society acknowledges that the art form we love and know as 'The Blues' was originally created by and remains an artistic expression of Black artists and musicians as their artistic response to slavery, oppression and injustice. The Colorado Blues Society will not remain silent in the face of the recent and past senseless murders of Black Americans in our communities, whether the cause be overt racism, implicit bias, or systemic racism. We stand with the musicians and members of our communities in expressing our sadness and outrage at prejudice and injustice towards the Black community and the lives that were taken so unjustly. The Colorado Blues Society grieves with the families for their losses.

# BLUES BROADCASTS

## SUNDAY

KSTR 96.1 FM Grand Junction,  
9-10 am & 8-9 pm Blues Deluxe  
KVNF 90.9 FM Paonia & 89.1 FM  
Montrose, 4-5 pm, Beale Street Caravan,  
www.kvnf.org  
KOTO 91.7FM, 89.3FM, 105.5FM Telluride,  
4-6 pm Blues Hang Over (every other  
Sunday) www.koto.org, Island Radio,  
5-7 pm (rebroadcast Thursday, 5-7 pm)  
True Blues with Brian Elliott  
www.island92.com  
KRFx 103.5 FM Denver, 7-10 pm  
Strictly Blues with Kai Turner  
KBCO 97.3 FM Boulder, 9-10 pm  
Blues from the Red Rooster Lounge  
KPLU Seattle, 7 pm-1 am  
http://www.kplu.org

## MONDAY

KSBV 93.7 FM Salida, 9-10 am Blues Deluxe  
KAFM 88.1 FM Grand Junction, 9 am-noon  
Jimmy's Blues Kitchen (alternate weeks)  
KAJX & KCJX 88.9, 89.7, 90.1, 90.9, 91.1,  
91.5 FM Aspen, Carbondale, Rifle and  
other towns, 11-midnight Blue Horizon  
with Blue Bird

## TUESDAY

KVNF 90.9 FM Paonia & 89.1 FM Montrose,  
noon-3 pm, Blues & Other Colors  
www.kvnf.org  
KAFM 88.1 FM Grand Junction, 1-4 pm,  
Bluesday Laboratory  
KLZR 91.7FM Westcliffe.  
2-4pm blues with Sally Barnes

## WEDNESDAY

KCRT 92.5 FM Trinidad, 7-8 pm  
Trinidaddio Blues Hour with  
Ken Saydak and Darnell Miller  
KHEN 106.9 FM Salida, 1-4 pm  
Jazz & Blues with Bill  
KVNF 0.9 FM Paonia & 89.1 FM  
Montrose, 9:30 pm-midnight Crossties,  
www.kvnf.org  
KRFC 88.9 FM Fort Collins, 8-10 pm  
House Rent Party with Jeff

## THURSDAY

KAFM 88.1 FM Grand Junction, 9 am-noon  
Blues Injection with Mickey the K  
KVLE 93.5 FM Crested Butte/Monarch,  
102.3 FM Gunnison, 2-3 pm Blues Deluxe  
www.blueswithrussell.com, 8-10 pm  
Blues with Russell  
KAJX & KCJX 88.9, 89.7, 90.1, 90.9, 91.1,  
91.5 FM Aspen, Carbondale, Rifle  
and other towns, 11-midnight,  
Beale Street Caravan  
KLZR 91.7FM Westcliffe.  
2-4pm blues with AJ Biggerstaff

## FRIDAY

KVNF 90.9 FM Paonia & 89.1 FM Montrose,  
1-4 pm, Friday Afternoon Club  
www.kvnf.org  
KGNU 88.5 FM Boulder, 1390 AM Denver,  
93.7 FM Ward/Nederland 6-9 pm  
Blues Legacy

## FRIDAY

www.ckua.com  
9pm -midnight Friday  
Night Blues Party,  
www.wfit.org,  
8-10 pm Rev. Billy's  
Rhythm Revival

## SATURDAY

KAFM 88.1 FM Grand  
Junction, 9am-6pm Jazz,  
Blues, Folk & Rock  
KHEN 106.9 FM Salida,  
noon-4 pm Sonic Gumbo with Doc  
www.kgoat.org,  
noon-1 pm  
Jazz & Blues Crusade  
with Count Rabula  
KDUR 91.9 FM &  
93.9 FM Durango,  
2 Sides of the Blues,  
6-8pm  
KUVU 89.3 FM Denver,  
www.kuvo.org 5-7pm  
Blues Highway  
with Sam Mayfield or  
guest host  
KUVU 89.3 FM Denver,  
www.kuvo.org 7-8pm  
R&B Jukebox  
with Rolando, Pete,  
Easy Bill or Carlos  
KVNF 90.9 FM Paonia &  
89.1 FM Montrose,  
7-9:30pm, Turn It Up  
www.kvnf.org  
KRCC 91.5 FM Colorado  
Springs, Noon-1pm  
The Blue Plate Special  
Vintage Voltage Style  
KUNC 91.5 FM Greeley,  
8-9pm Beale Street Caravan  
KUNC 91.5 FM Greeley, 9-10pm  
9 O'Clock Blues with Marc  
KAFM 88.1 FM Grand Junction,  
9pm-midnight Rockin' Blues  
KAJX & KCJX 88.9, 89.7, 90.1, 90.9,  
91.1, 91.5 FM Aspen, Carbondale, Rifle  
and other towns,  
Midnight - 4am  
Blues Before Sunrise  
KPLU Seattle, 7pm-1 am  
www.kplu.org

www.ckua.com  
3-5pm Natch'l Blues

## MONDAY - FRIDAY

KRCC 91.5 FM Colo.  
Spgs, Noon-1 pm  
The Blue Plate Special

## FRIDAY - SUNDAY

KVCU 1190 AM  
Boulder -  
www.radio1190.org  
1-7am Blues Til Dawn

## CABLE & SATELLITE, HD RADIO 24-7

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## More 2021 COLORADO FESTIVALS

*The following is a list of the remaining 2021 Festivals*

**BLUES & BBQ FOR BETTER HOUSING July 17, 2021** Edgewater Lineup- Nick of Time, Teledonna, MojoMama, Eef and The Blues Express, The Cass Clayton Band, Zepp11, The Erica Brown Band, Wild Love Tigress, The Duke Street Kings

**BOULDER CREEK FESTIVAL July 16-18, 2021** Boulder

**NEW WEST FEST/BOHEMIAN NIGHTS Aug 13-15 2021** Old Town, Fort Collins

**BLUES FROM THE TOP August 14, 2021**, Hideaway Park, Winter Park Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Sugaray Rafford, Eric Gales, Ruthie Foster, AJ Fullerton

**THE TRINIDAD DIO August 27-28, 2021** downtown Trinidad. Friday night prefest, and Saturday blues fest. Bernard Allison, Vanessa Collier, Bob Margolin, The Claudettes, Johnny Iguana, Los Albuquerque Blues Connection, Ken Saydek, Zakk Debono and the Broken Circle

**ONE SWEET SUMMER -FALL into BLUES FEST September 11** The Foundry Plaza, Loveland – The Dave Beegle Blues Experience, Lionel Young Band, Blues Dogs, Johnny and the Mongrels

**TELLURIDE BLUES & BREWS September 17-19 2021**, Telluride

**FoCoMx Fall, 2021** Fort Collins Various venues

**BLUES ON THE MESA, October 2, 2021** Colorado Spring, Lineup-Janiva Magness, Alvin Youngblood Hart, Buddy Whittington, Cass Clayton and Ladies Sing the Blues