

CROSSROADS

BLUES SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS



May-June 2010

Keeping the Blues Alive



Blues In The Schools Gives 1,300 Students the Blues



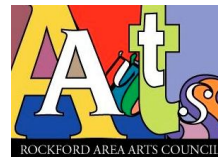
ter Elementary School Students came down with the blues courtesy of our Blues In The Schools (BITS) program! Billy Flynn and Barrelhouse Chuck both did superb jobs entertaining and educating their stu-

It was a blues outbreak. 250 Ralston Elementary School students, 250 King Elementary School students, 370 Byron Middle School students and 450 Monroe Cen-

dents on April 27 and 28. And on the evening of April 27, almost 50 adults got schooled in the blues at the Just Good Listening Room by these two fine artists. This

gets the tally up over 23,000 students who have gotten the blues through the 81 BITS programs Crossroads has run.

Our thanks go out to the Rockford Area Arts Council for their support each year for this important program. This program is partially supported by a grant from the Rockford Area Arts Council which receives support from the City of Rockford, the Illinois Arts Council and its members.



Byron Crossroads Blues Festival Tickets Go On Sale

The inaugural Byron Crossroads Blues Festival (BCBF) was approved by the Byron City Council on Wednesday, April 7, 2010. The festival will be held on August 28, 2010 at the "crossroads" of Second and Union Streets in Byron. Gates open at noon and the festival will run until midnight outdoors. The downtown bars and restaurants will remain open until 2 AM after the fest to accommodate festival attendees and provide a time to wind down post-festival. The Byron restaurant owners are providing support for the festival and they will be the only providers of food for the festival, showcasing the wonderful menus they serve up each day.

The festival features five great bands from Rockford, Madison and Chicago who are noted for their outstanding blues music. The

Resistors, a Rockford band, open the fest at 2 PM and are followed at 4 PM by the acoustic duo from Chicago of Filisko and Noden. The Cashbox Kings are at 6 PM and bring their jumping style of music from Madison and Chicago. At 8 PM they will feature the Westside Andy/ Mel Ford Band also from Madison and Chicago, and at 10 PM they close with Chicago's Dave Weld and the Imperial Flames.

Tickets are available now. Advanced tickets are only \$5 (\$10 at the gate on the day of the festival). The festival will be held rain or shine; there are no refunds. Access to and from the festival will be controlled; bring your own chairs but no outside food, beverages or coolers are allowed. Part of the festival pro-

ceeds support the Crossroads Blues Society "Blues in the Schools" Program. The Byron City Council approved the festival unanimously On April 7th. Byron Mayor Chris Millard complimented festival Chairman Steve Jones, Crossroads, and the Byron restaurant owners for their preparation, hard work and cooperation. He also purchased the first two tickets for the festival!

For more information visit www.byroncrossroadsbluesfestival.blogspot.com.



BITS News and Notes

- Over 23,000 students have attended the 81 BITS programs since inception in 2002.
- Costs to run these programs has been about \$1 per student who attended them, a huge bargain in any year's dollars
- Programs have been held for 53 different schools in the Rockford, Winnebago, Freeport, Belvidere, Harlem, Honenegah, Meridian, Byron, Dakota, Pearl City, Eastland and Durand School Districts.

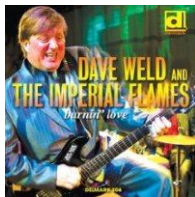
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Music Reviews

Burnin' Love

Dave Weld and the Imperial Flames
Delmark Records
www.delmark.com
www.myspace/
daveweldandtheimperialflames.com/
13 tracks



It has it been almost fourteen years since Dave Weld recorded and released the Earwig album "Keep On Walkin'". Time sure does fly. Dave spent most of those years caring for his ailing mother, Donnie Lee. If you've spent any time at all with Dave, you know how much family means to him; his touring and recording took a distant second place to his family commitments for much of that time. Now he is back on the scene in full swing with a brand new Delmark CD, his first for the label, about eleven years in the making. Dave and his band members wrote most of the songs for the CD, and it is some great original stuff!

In addition to Dave on guitar and vocals, the band consists of Abb Locke on sax, Jeff Taylor on drums and vocals, Dave Kaye on bass and Monica Myhre on vocals and tambourine. Harry Yaseen fills in on piano and Bernard Reed and Herman Applewhite are on bass for two and one track apiece. Weld was schooled by many of the Chicago greats, but certainly Grammy winning Blues Hall of Famer J.B. Hutto had the biggest impact on Dave. Hutto also introduced Weld to his nephews Ed and Pookie which cemented into a long term relationship that continues to this day. Lil' Ed appears on this CD to support his old friend; both he and Dave play a style of guitar that pays homage to the late great Hutto.

"Sweet Shiny Brown Eyes" has been a staple at Weld's live performances for 12 years now, but he says it now fits Monica to a tee. Weld is so adept in his song writing style, telling vivid stories which he sings with great gusto. Myhre harmonizes with Weld nicely here and Weld's guitar just blows you away with the solos. "She's Mine" is similar, a Weld tune they've been playing live for a good while to the delight of their fans. Weld complains about the problems with living in Chicago in "Ramblin'", a Weld/Myhre song where Locke unleashes his tenor sax for a his first sweet long solo on the CD's second track. The title track was inspired from some of Weld's old girlfriends whose "hot lovin'" unfortunately lasted long after the actual act, requiring penicillin to clear things up. It's a jumping tune with lots of great guitar riffs and more from Locke and Weld.

Taylor's vocals on his songs "I Got Mad" and "All of These Things" are a little more restrained in comparison to Weld but showcase his smooth, suave and cool vocal style. Locke, Weld and Lil' Ed also have great solos on these tracks. Myhre fronts the band on her tracks "Talk Dirty" and "Listen to Mama". On the first song she is very much doing so in a "Debbie Harry does the blues" sort of style, which sounds pretty darn cool. Her main man Dave inspired the song while her Mom was

motivation for the latter. "Listen to Mama" also shows off her inspired, sultry voice.

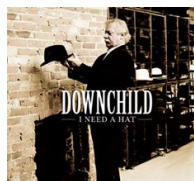
Lil' Ed Williams wrote and sang on "Ed's Boogie", a swinging boogie woogie tune with Abb, Dave and he giving up some fine solos. Weld also covers a Hutto song, "Things Are so Slow", which is quite appropriate for these economic times. More compelling vocals and solos by Locke and Weld. "Donnie Lee" is a tribute to Dave's Mom, giving us a taste of how great a woman and what a role model she was. Weld closes with "She's Lyin'", a jumping song with a boogie woogie beat that was also inspired by Weld's past loves.

This is a fun album that will give the world some exposure to what we in the local area already know- that Dave Weld and the Imperial Flames are a hot and inspired blues band worthy of broader acclaim. This is a fine CD done in the Chicago style with great vocals, guitar and saxophone. I highly recommend it!

Reviewed by Steve Jones

I Need A Hat

Downchild
True North Records
www.downchild.com
11 Tracks/45.7 Minutes



Donnie Walsh has been known as Downchild since he formed The Downchild Blues Band in 1969. The band changed its name to Downchild in the 1980's. Over the years Downchild has released 16 recordings. "I Need A Hat" is the latest and a fine one it is!

Many changes have been made in the band over the years. The great songwriters and performers James Cotton and Jimmie Reed influenced Don Walsh, the bands leader. Walsh is an outstanding guitarist, harmonica player, vocalist as well as a songwriter. He brings some great lyrics to the tunes he does write.

Downchild has surrounded himself with a really outstanding band. Chuck Jackson has been the main vocalist for the past 13 years. On the saxophones is Pat Carey wailing away, Michael Fonfara plunking the keys on the piano and organ, Gary Kendal on bass and Mike Fitzpatrick on drums. This combination produces on fine full band sound for us to enjoy. This is good stuff. You can check them all out at www.downchild.com.

The title song, "I Need A Hat", written by Mr Downchild is a neat little tune with catchy lyrics. "To be a star you need a hat", is a great line, but I do not think that this fits Don Walsh. He is really a fine blues star. This tune with Walsh's guitar licks and Chuck Jackson vocals makes this tune really work for us.

"You Don't Love Me" is a tune for all you harmonica lovers out there. It features Dan Aykroyd on a really good harp solo as a guest player. Downchild also adds his harp playing on the tune. Also featured on this track is Colin Linder with an awesome guitar solo. Here again we have Chuck Jackson's outstanding blues vocals.

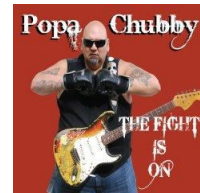
Down Walsh's slide guitar skills are showcased on a couple tunes on the CD. For you slide guitar fans check out "Rendezvous". This is an upbeat blues tune with plenty of slide work by Mr Downchild. There is a whole bunch of good stuff going on in this tune including the piano work by Michael Fonfara.

Of the 11 tracks on Downchild's new CD, "I Need A Hat", I cannot pick a favorite or one that I do not care for. This is a great CD filled with blues tunes done really well. Good job by the Downchild Band. Downchild Band is a very accomplished band with it's own fat bluestone. The saxophone, trumpet and three people on harp really add to this sound. The lyrics of Don Walsh and Chuck Johnson make this a CD that you cannot go wrong with. This is a keeper.

Reviewed by Harmonica Joe

The Fight Is On

Popa Chubby
Blind Pig Records
www.blindpigrecords.com
12 Tracks



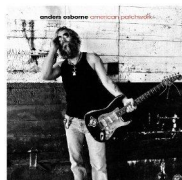
From his early hit "Sweet Goddess of Love and Beer" to his Hendrix influenced "Electric Chubbyland", Popa Chubby's career has spanned over ten years with his latest cd being the first in almost two years. Born Ted Horowitz in the Big Apple, he was influenced by the sixties rock and R&B played on the juke box in his parent's candy store. Poppa Chubby made the statement "When I first heard Freddie King my world was turned upside down".

The Fight Is On is the latest release on Blind Pig Records by the blues rock star. He opens the title track with the roar of his guitar and the sound of his booming vocals as a tribute to many fighters who have entered the ring to take on their opponents. He charges right into "We Got Some Rocking To Do" never slowing a bit from the the opening line to the end with guitar and vocals blazing away. "Another Ten Years" is a rockin' tribute to the fallen rock and blues artists over the past ten years including Hendrix, Lennon, SRV, and Willie Dixon done with an Allman Brothers guitar style. "The Right Time" focuses on Popa Chubby's masterful guitar work using a wah wah pedal through out the number. He keeps rock n' roll alive with "Rock And Roll Is My Religion" and a live recording of Motorheads "Ace of Spades". The cd kicks into overdrive with "The Company of Thieves" followed by a ballad style number "Switchblade Combs And Candy Cigarettes". The energy level increases two fold with his blues guitar explosion "Noisemaking Love Machine" and the instrumental "Steelhorse Serenade". Poppa Chubby completes this collection of high energy numbers with the hard drivin' "It's Over" a Tom Principato guitar style original about "Wicked Wanda".

If you have been a Popa Chubby fan, you need to add this one to your collection. This is raw electric energized rock and blues from start to finish.

American Patchwork

Anders Osborne
Alligator Records
www.alligatorrecords.com
10 tracks/44:11 min.



Because Anders Osborne, the crazy Swedish transplant to New Orleans sometimes puts on a slide to play guitar, he ends up being categorized as a blues musician. But even with Alligator's clout behind him, Osborne is hard to classify or pigeonhole. Like New Orleans itself, Osborne's maiden Alligator release is a molten stew of blues, R&B, rock, and New Orleans soul. To me it's maybe Osborne's most accessible and still quirky release to date. The title aptly point out that this is, indeed an patchwork. The deep roux under most of the songs is a Hammond B3 organ and bass pedal accompaniment. Osborne employs a lot of mushy, fuzz-infused guitar as well. Yet everything is well-employed to convey the angst not-so-well hidden here. American Patchwork contains songs about sin and redemption, regret and joy, the loneliness of the road, the loss of a friend and escape. He does, indeed lay some slide work over top of the occasional song not so much to "solo" as to add a second voice.

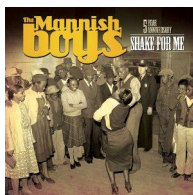
Patchwork kicks off with "On The Road To Charlie Parker," our introduction to the heavy B3 work and fuzzy guitar work. Osborne's high voice is well anchored by instrumentation and production throughout this CD. "Echoes Of My Sins" continues in a similar vein. Guitar freaks don't shy away here. There are lots of examples of Osborne's I-never-would-have-guessed-that playing style. Song three, "Got Your Heart" is reggae type song that conveys the message that it's OK to love, I've got your heart--it's safe. Song four, "Killing Each Other," however, snaps you back into the reality of what strong opinions can do to relationships, both personal, professional, and political. "Acapulco" is the first of Osborne's "escape" songs and begins in a somewhat Beatles-meets-Dylan way. "Darkness At The Bottom" might give a hint as to what Osborne wants to escape. Osborne adds his scariest guitar solo of the disc to this song. "Standing With Angles" is his mostly acoustic guitar tribute to his friend Christopher Carter. Again, so as to not be TOO comfortable, Osborne throw in a weird coda at the end of the song. Ever been too much in love? Try a dose of "Love Is Taking Its Toll," song 8. With lines like "I'm lovesick and sick of love too/I hold on to soon and maybe/I wish I was sick of you" this might not be the best love song to play for your significant other. "Meet Me In New Mexico" is Osborne's other "escape" song, and like "Acapulco" finds Osborne longing to sunnier and simpler climes. The CD ends with "Call On Me," a quieter, mostly acoustic guitar lament about missing those at home while on the road.

Quirky and keen and buyable is American Patchwork. To me, it's the best thing Anders Osborne has done. I might not be blues but it's a great CD from song one to the end. New Orleans has so many musical elements, that it sometimes takes an artist awhile to find his or her voice in the gumbo of influence. I think Anders Osborne has found his. VERY highly recommended.

Reviewed by David Stine

Shake For Me

The Mannish Boys
Delta Groove Music
www.themannishboys.com
16 Tracks

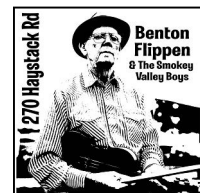


The Mannish Boys are perhaps one of the best blues collaborations by some of the best contemporary blues artists today. Reviving the spirit of such legendary revues of the past as the American Folk Blues Festival, the Johnny Otis Show or The Ike Turner Revue, The Mannish Boys have carried this timeless tradition forward into the 21st century. The core of the band include an all-star cast of changing musicians with the current lineup of Finis Tasby, Bobby Jones, Kirk Fletcher, Frank Goldwasser, and Randy Chortkoff, joined here by an entirely new and incredible rhythm section comprised of Willie J. Campbell on bass (The James Harman Band, The Fabulous Thunderbirds) and Jimi Bott on drums (Rod Piazza & The Mighty Flyers, The Fabulous Thunderbirds, Woodbrain).

Shake For Me is the 5 year anniversary cd star studded with this current cast as well as guests like Nick Curran, Mike Zito, and Kid Ramos on guitar, Lynwood Slim, Mitch Kashmar, and Rod Piazza on harmonica, Rob Rio and Fred Kaplin on piano, Johnny Dyer and Arthur Adams supporting on vocals and an unequaled brass section rounding out this collection of blues. The cd opens with "Too Tired" including Finis Tasby on vocals and Nick Curran on guitar embracing that famous Albert Collins style. That "Bo Diddly beat" can be heard in "Mona/Wille And The Hand Jive" with Bobby Jones and Mike Zito on vocals and Mike on lead guitar. Lowell Fulson's "Reconsider Baby" features Finis Tasby back on vocals and Frank Goldwasser and Kirk Fletcher on guitar. Bobby Jones returns on vocals for "Educated Ways" and the Otis Span tune "Half Ain't Been Told." Frank Goldwasser handles both vocals and guitar on "Number 9 Train." The Walter Jacobs number "Last Night" combines Finis on vocals and Rod Piazza on harp with Frank Goldwasser and Kirk Fletcher sharing the guitars. Bobby Jones is superb on the Ray Charles classic "Hey Now" joining forces with the aggressive guitar style of Kirk Fletcher on this tune and also Chester Burnett's "You Can't Be Beat." Finis returns to the spotlight in "Black Nights" with Kirk and Frank burning on guitar. Kirk Fletcher and Nick Curran tear into an instrumental titled "The Bullet" featuring Fred Kaplin on piano, Willie Campbell on bass and Jim Bott on drums. Bobby Jones once again takes charge as they slow things down on "Those Worries" featuring Lynwood Slim on the chromatic sharing harmonicas with Randy Chortkoff. Arthur Adams launches the down and dirty blues number "Raunchy" with his vocals and guitar. Johnny Dyer follows up with "Champagne & Reefer" featuring Mitch Kashmar on harmonica and Frank Goldwasser and Kirk Fletcher back on guitar. Bobby Jones returns on vocals for the last time singing "You've Got Bad Intentions" with Kirk Fletcher ripping it up on lead guitar. "Way Down South" features "Big" Pete van der Pluijm on harmonica and vocals and Kid Ramos on guitar. I don't think I have ever had the pleasure to review a cd with group of stars this magnificent! This cd is worth twice the price!
Reviewed by Rick Davis

270 Haystack Rd.

Benton Flippen & The
Smokey Valley Boys
Music Maker Recordings
www.musicmaker.org
20 tracks/77:42



There are a number of musicians, most notably the Carolina Chocolate Drops, who are renewing and revitalizing interest in dyed-in-the-wool, old-time string band music. Benton Flippen is an eighty-nine year-old fiddler with over six decades of experience. His music harkens back to time when music was played for dancers, with a strong rhythm the key musical element over instrumental prowess. Flippen's earthy style is soothing one minute, hard-driving and raw the next moment. There is no doubt that his fiddle playing has remained unchanged since the early days of his career.

His backing band, the Smokey Valley Boys, is comprised of Andy Edmonds on guitar, banjo and vocal, Frank Bode on guitar and vocal, Kevin Fore on banjo and Wesley Clifton on mandolin. This combination of instruments is more common in bluegrass than traditional old time music. The band does an outstanding job in support Flippen's fiddle, sometimes providing musical counterpoint as Edmond's does on "Cider" with his three-string banjo. The group never fails to envelope the fiddle with a vibrant rhythmic foundation.

On tracks like "Lost Indian", "Sugar in the Gourd" and "Sugar Hill", the swirling music and Flippen's keening fiddle would fill many a dance floor in short order. The disc opens with Flippen imitating a train sound before breaking into an intense fiddle breakdown on "Lost Train Blues". Bode lays down a solid vocal on "Sittin' On Top of the World" with the banjo and fiddle playing off each other to great effect. His voice rings out on "Ain't Gonna Work Tomorrow" after some fine guitar picking to open the cut.

Flippen more than holds his own with his younger band members. Most of the tracks sport medium to fast tempos but when the pace slows on "Wednesday Night Waltz", the octogenarian fiddler spins a delightful melody. He navigates the faster changes of "Soppin the Gravy" with ease. His duo with Edmonds on banjo on "The Girl I Left Behind Me" is another highlight.

Benton Flippen continues the tradition of old time string music through his playing and the tutoring of younger musicians. This release shows that his efforts have not been wasted. His music doesn't shine with flashy solos and studio production techniques. It is a music that harkens back to a bygone era - music that still resonates today for those willing to take the time to listen - or better yet, get up and dance along !!

Reviewed by Mark Thompson

The Devil Is An Angel**Too**

Janiva Magness
Alligator Records
www.alligatorrecords.com
www.janivamagness.com
12 tracks/42:25



OK, let me get right to it. This CD is my pick for the best album of 2010. It's only May, I know. I played this CD several times before I went to New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. Even with all the music around me and everywhere I went, I kept hearing the songs from this CD in my head. It was also the first CD I put on upon my return. If you don't know Janiva Magness, you need to. If you want to start with a CD to buy, buy this one. Not only is this the best she's done, it's up there with anything I've heard in a long long time. Not musically blues, it is a collection of songs knitted together with an Americana feel and vocals that will leave you wanting more (it is fairly short). Where others may have used more instruments and bigger production, Devil is sparse and eclectic. Guitars, both acoustic and electric play a big roll, as does standup bass, Wurliizer organ and muted drums. Dave Darling, who produced much of the Brian Setzer's catalog, is here on guitar and vision. One would get the feeling he's been paying very close attention to the work of T-bone Burnette. There are LOTS of guitar layers, vibrato and cool licks all over this CD. The juxtaposition of Janiva's raspy, soulful voice against a handful of instruments works well throughout the disc, no matter whether it's blues, show tune or ballad.

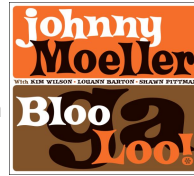
The CD starts off with the title track, "The Devil Is An Angel Too." Lots of spooky guitar and tom tom drums, clanging things and eerie noises help produce the effect that indeed Lucifer is lurking. If you aren't hooked yet, keep listening. The soulful "I'm Gonna Tear Your Playhouse Down" is treated as a minor key blues. Maybe my favorite cut, "Slipped, Tripped and Fell in Love" is a funky romp that introduces the use of background vocals with Janiva accompanying herself. I don't want to give too much away here because I think everyone should buy it, but there's a song from The Roar of The Greasepaint-The Smell of The Crowd, some nice songs from hubby Jeff Turmes, several take-you-to-church near gospel tunes that will remind you of The Staple Singers, and Aretha. Magness has never sounded so good or so confident. The production is tight and clever. There are no filler tunes here. Song 12, the last cut, is augmented with strings and is the plaintive sort of song that might run behind movie credits. Written by Turmes, "Turn Your Heart In My Direction" is a fitting end to an album of well-told stories.

Janiva shows up on blues radio and blues stages but she is much much more. When she played the blues stage at On The Waterfront last year, I thought she spent a little too much time pointing out her "credentials." If I had known this CD was on the way, I would have wanted to just hush and hand out copies--this CD. It says everything there is to know about who she is and where she's coming from. BUY IT!

Reviewed by David Stine

BlooGaLoo

Johnny Moeller
Severn Records
www.severnrecords.com
11 Tracks



Currently leading his own band as well as playing guitar for The Fabulous Thunderbirds along with his half brother Jay Moeller (currently the drummer for The Fabulous Thunderbirds), Johnny Moeller recently released his new cd BlooGaLoo on Severn Records. The band for the recording sessions includes Matt Farrell on piano and organ, Steve Gomes on bass and Rob Stupka on drums. Other guests include Gary Clark Jr. and Mike Barfield, among other experienced musicians. The cd also features special guests Kim Wilson, Lou Ann Barton and Shawn Pittman.

Johnny Moeller demonstrates his mastery on guitar throughout the entire collection of blues. The cd opens with the title track "BlooGaLoo" a riveting instrumental with a great backup horn section. Johnny really displays his lightning guitar style on the tune "I'm Movin' On Up" with Shawn Pittman in charge of vocals. Moeller includes his own funky arrangement on the classic Earl King song, "Trick Bag" as well as the Earl King tune "Everybody's Got to Cry Sometime" featuring Austin's blues queen Lou Ann Barton on vocals. "Got a Feeling" has that Texas shuffle sound featuring Kim Wilson on vocals and Johnny locked in that lead groove on guitar. "I'm Stuck On You" features Lou Ann Barton once again. Moeller's funky rhythm guitar style can be heard on the instrumental "Theme From The One Armed Swordsman." "Raise Your Hands", "Well Goodbye Baby" and "Shufflin' Around" practically comprise an entire rhythm and blues revival with Johnny taking center stage on guitar. Johnny Moeller shows his knowledge of old-school blues with the traditional Texas blues treatment of Earl Hooker's "Tease Me Baby," which closes the album.

Whether you are a fan of traditional or contemporary rhythm and blues music, this cd has it all. Influenced by such other Texas six-stringers such as Albert Collins, Lightnin' Hopkins and the Vaughan brothers, Moeller is still strives to establish his own style. "I've never really tried to emulate anybody else," he explains. "I have my own thing, which is blues based, and I like to mix in everything else I love: soul, jazz, funk and rock 'n' roll."

Rick Davis

Blue Skies & Black Shoes

Jason King Band
Hip-Rox Music, Inc.
www.JasonKingBand.com
11 tracks/45:41



Hailing from northern Nevada, Jason King Roxas is the leader of the group bearing his name on their inaugural release. King wrote all of the songs on this project, handles the lead vocals and uses his Stratocaster to keep things interesting. The rest of the band includes Wilbert Banks on bass, Tommy Stiles on lap steel guitar, Pat Dotson and Michael Moore split time in the drummer's chair. Additional support comes from Rick Metz on tenor & baritone saxophone, James Stanton on keyboards plus Freddie Mills on harmonica.

"Steppin' Out" is a strong opener with its popping rhythm and some mournful tones from Mills. King sings with an expressive voice and deals out several brief, taut guitar solos. Stanton heightens the mood with some well-placed chords from his Hammond organ. The band accelerates the pace on "Driftin'" as King stretches out on guitar a bit more in his clean, fluid style. When they switch to a slower blues number, there is no dip in performance. "Cryin' Shame" sets King's plaintive vocal and lightning quick guitar runs over Stanton's piano to great effect. Metz gets to show off his skills on the tenor sax on the opening to "Mean & Nasty". The interplay between King's guitar and Stanton on organ helps to make this cut one of the highlights of the disc.

Songs like "Learn to Take it Slow" and "SoulShaker" inject an element of funk into the proceedings. Up-tempo rockers "I'm Your Man" and "My Little Baby" find King's fervent singing matching the intensity of his guitar work. Metz's contributes another red-hot tenor sax solo on the first track while Mills and his harp enliven the later cut. The title cut falls into the rock/blues vein that lacks the emotional weight of the rest of the disc.

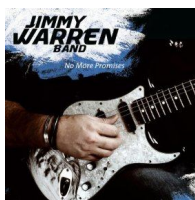
King turns in his best performance on the closing track, "6 Years Gone". This ballad is done in a reverent acoustic southern rock style. The leader's passionate vocal will stick in your memory long after the cut is over. Stiles on lap steel and Stanton on piano create the perfect backing track without the aid of a drummer.

There is plenty to like on this first release for Jason King and associates. They avoid a lot of the clichés and grandstanding that too many groups fall victim to these days. While they don't break any new ground, the band breathes plenty of life into King's solid batch of original material. If King can pen some more songs as strong as the closing cut, this band could really stand out from the crowd.

Reviewed by Mark Thompson

No More Promises

Jimmy Warren
Electro Glide Records
www.jimmywarrenband.com
www.electrogliderecords.com
12 tracks/50:081 min.



My default thinking when I receive a CD to review the displays a Stratocaster prominently on the cover is, urgh, here we go again, another Stevie Ray Vaughanabe. Downstater (IL) Jimmy Warren's CD, No More Promises displays a Stratocaster prominently on the cover. However, rather than the over-the-top, I can blow you away attitude of many Strat players, Warren's tone is closer to Gary Moore and with this collection of slow to mid-tempo songs, his emphasis is on fluidity over being a note factory. Warren wrote and produced all the songs on the CD and his band adds just the right amount of support--no show offs here. Rhythm guitar chores are handled by John Digregorio; bass by Mike Boyle; and drums by Charles Price. Warren sings, plays lead, sometimes Hammond B-3 and bass.

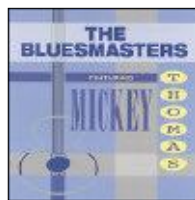
One of Warren's ongoing themes is money troubles. "Watermelon Money," song one, is about trying to support a woman in the manner she's accustomed to on "watermelon money." Warren finds himself a "Mean Mistreater" on song two. Yes, Warren is not the most clever song writer but he does avoid overused blues stories. Song three, "I'm Gonna Love You," borders on an anthem and is reminiscent of Clapton's "Wonderful Tonight." The instrumental "Darker Shade of Grey," contains a lot of "Albatross" era Fleetwood Mac. Warren's use of the humbucker on his Strat most of the time produces a thick tone so favored by British blues guitarists Warren seems to have heard. Back to Warren's playing: on headphones you can hear him play every note, even when doing fast runs. Some players get so cluttered that the notes bleed into each other and it becomes noise. Thank you Jimmy Warren for avowing this pitfall. Bob Margoling guest on slide guitar for Warren's "It Ain't Fair," yet another song about working for the man who makes all the money. At number five this song is the first song that's not slow-to moderate tempo. Warning--Jimmy you may have lost some reviewers by this point--mix it up! "Standing In My Shoes," again, brings in the plight of the worker whose job has been outsourced. It's and SRV-type shuffle but much appreciated at this point in the near-bogged-down disc. Warren slows a bit for the title track, "No More Promises." The final four songs remain in the moderate to mid-tempo ranges. The closing song, "Send me On My Way," will sound most like the blues to most listeners.

Warren doesn't have the strongest voice or the most clever writing skills, but he seems to know his strengths and those are arranging and playing tasty guitar. If you'd like to hear a less-caffeinated Gary Moore, you might want to check out Jimmy Warren. I was surprised in a pleasant way by Warren's approach to modern day blues with emphasis on guitar that won't send you looking for a harmonic CD. Recommended. And he's local folks!

Reviewed by David Stine

The Bluesmasters Featuring Mickey Thomas

The Bluesmasters
Direct Music Distribution
www.directmusic.biz
11 tracks



I'm going to admit up front I am not and never was a big fan of Elvin Bishop's "I Fooled Around and Fell in Love". I thought it was more pop music, not really serious blues nor even serious rock, at least in my dinosaur like mind. Mickey Thomas, the high pitched Jefferson Starship lead singer, can hit higher notes than a lot of female singers I know, provided the vocals for Bishop. The song was a last minute album filler and became a legend.

Well, circle forward 34 years to 2009 and there we are with a 60 year old Thomas and the Bluesmasters, a band consisting of Tim Tucker on guitar, Doug Lynn on harp, Danny Miranda on bass, Aynsly Dunbar on drums and Ric Ulsky on B3 organ and lo and behold we get a remake of the song. It gets a slightly grittier take here, but Thomas' vocals are still as stratospheric as they were in 1975 when Bishop tapped him because his gravelly voice did not do the song justice. If you are a fan of the song, you'll love this.

Now the rest of the album, well, that's another story. The other ten tracks are covers of bluesy songs that get respectful and pretty hot treatment. They open with Pete Johnson and Big Joe Turner's "Cherry Red" and blow through all eleven tracks in high energy fashion. "Cherry Red" is hot. Thomas does a good job on vocals but Lynn's harp work is just sick. Muddy's "Rock Me Baby" gets an all star cover, too. The vocals, harp and guitar wail and wail. They also do Mud's "Can't Get No Grindin'" with a special duet with Magic Slim and Thomas. Slims vocals contrast with Thomas and they pull it off. His guitar work is also spectacular. Slim is also on the Phil Collin's tune "Get Your Business Straight". Straight up blues, another darn good duet with great guitar play.

Chris Kenner's "Sick and Tired" blasts off with more solid harp and vocals. Billy Foster's "I'd Rather Go Blind", which was an Etta James classic, gets a nice soulful cover. Thomas' vocals are great, and the B3 organ sets a churchlike atmosphere. The guys close with "Long Time" by guitarist Tim Tucker. A bit overly dramatic in rock ballad anthem fashion, but if this is your cup of tea you'll eat it up. To me it's the lowest point after the Bishop tune. "Walkin' Blues" (Robert Johnson) gets a nice electric slide cover, "Third Degree" (Willie Dixon and Eddie Boyd) prove these guys can do slow blues very well, and "Over Yonder Wall" (James Clark) gives us a hotter and somewhat greasier than original Elmore James classic with even Thomas getting a bit gritty on the vocals.

I had low expectations but thoroughly enjoyed the 9 real blues tracks. If you like Mickey Thomas, this is a no brainer. The band backing him is superb, so be ready to hold on to your chair because they spin these covers quite well! It's an interesting little project no matter how you slice and dice it!

Reviewed by Steve Jones

He Said She Said

Peter Karp And Sue Foley
Blind Pig Records
14 Tracks - 50 minutes 3 seconds
www.SueFoley.com
www.PeterKarp.com



"He Said She Said" is a very interesting music project. It all start with letters and e-mails between two performing musicians on the road apart. Both Peter Karp and Sue Foley stand alone as touring artist doing thier own acts. Having the two of them together in this CD format is really a unique experiance.

Peter karp is an accomplished guitarist, songwriter and performer.. He also plays some mean piano and organ. His main guitar influences were Elmore James and freddie King. His song writing ability is powerful, sincere, deep with feelings while telling a story as Bob Dylan, John Prine or John Hiatt would. Karp also has released "Shadows & Cracks" on the Blind Pig label.

Sue Foley is a well known blues and roots guitarist, singer, song writer and performer. She has released several recordings including "Love Coming Down" which won her a Juno award. In her travels she has shared the stage with the likes of Buddy Guy, B B King, Tom Petty and numerous other artist.

All of the 14 songs on "He Said She Said" were written by Peter Karp or Sue Foley.They have both let thier emotions and true feelings be reveiled with the lyrics in these songs. Nothing has been left out or hidden.These stories are told as the two of them lived them. We can here

"Treat Me Right" is a straight forward blues tune. Karp and Foley alternate verses while telling the tale of a women not treating a man right. This is what the blues is about. "Honey, even a broke clock is righttwice a day, why don't you treat me right", is Karp line on this subject. Well, this is true, she should treat him right after all. With both of them playing electric guitars parts on this tune this is a great track to listen to.

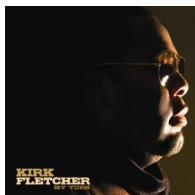
On "Hold On Baby" we have harmonica wizard Jason Ricci with his very tastful blues harmonica style added. This is a real plus! "Hold On Baby" tells the story of whatever happens in your life that you should hold on to what is good. Peter Karp also shows off his slide guitar style here.. Another great tune.

The 14 tracks on "He Said She Said" hit the bases of several genres of music. Included in the mix are real blues, jazz, tango, folk and maybe some country. The lyrics are all about the blues. Peter Karpp and Sue Foley wrote the lyrics for these tunes with deep feelings, great meaning and powerful messages for us to listen to.Both of them also have there own style of guitar playing and singing. The mix of the two of them is a real treat to listen to. To get the true feeling of "He Said She Said" you must listen to the lyrics and get caught up in the music. Nice job on this Peter Karp and Sue Foley.

Harmonica Joe

My Turn

Kirk Fletcher
Eclecto Groove records
www.eclectogroove.com
www.kirkfletcher.com
10 tracks



Kirk Fletcher is one of the most understated and unnoticed guys in the blues world. I've seen and met him a few times, heard him with bands like the Fabulous Thunderbirds and Rod Piazza, and all I can say is that it is about time we get to hear this guy front and center with his own CD! This is a great album of songs, with three penned by Fletcher and a choice of some fine tunes to cover.

Fletcher starts us off with El Medeo Stomp, a slick, up tempo original instrumental that whets the palate for more of his lively and hot riffs. Kirk makes his vocal debut on record with Jimmy Reed's "Found Love". His voice is up to the task; the gravelly vocals are pretty good. The real selling point is the guitar work that is superbly wicked on the solos, especially with an un-credited mandolin filling in nicely the background. "Natural Anthem" is a grooving instrumental and features Fletcher leading the charge with his well paced and steady guitar; when he breaks into the solo it's like a runaway train, but he manages to get under control and into the flow again and wails all the way to the end.

"Ain't No Way" features Paulie Cerra on vocals, as does "Congo Square". The former, a James Earl Thompson track, shines with Cerra and Fletcher trading off vocals and guitar leads. The traditional latter song is all funk'd out. The vocals by Cerra are quite cool and funky, but not as funky as Fletcher's guitar. He is stellar here, too. The title track was written by Cerra and the bass player Travis Carlton, and evokes the thought that with this CD it truly is Fletcher's turn to shine. Cerra plays a slightly restrained but slick sax throughout and the fuzzed out Fletcher guitar solo just rocks.

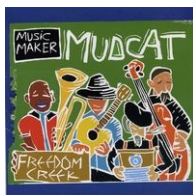
"Way Back Home" is a longer, sultry cut written by Wilton Lewis Felder. Cerra's sax and Fletcher's guitar are again the highlights; one has to really appreciate Kirk's tone here as he winds his way through the slow, funky beat. He finishes the cut with a little acoustic guitar. The original "Blues for Antone" is a huge slow blues guitar anthem, where Fletcher stretches out and leaves nothing on the table. If you want a big, greasy guitar number, this will fit the bill. Then Fletcher redoes Sly Stone's "Let Me Have It All", delivering another good vocal performance; this funky cut shows that he can really sing in addition to play guitar. He finishes with his own song "Continents End", an ethereal rock guitar piece that is really out there and quite cool, yet shows blues elements interspersed between the spatial music. He channels a little Hendrix here.

This album is a gem. Fletcher is one of the best guitar players out there, and this CD showcases his skills. Joined by guitarist Michael Landau, who also produced the CD, and a host of other west Coast bluesmen, this CD is a must if you want to hear what the absolute best of the West Coast Blues scene.

Reviewed by Steve Jones

Freedom Creek

Mudcat
Music Maker Relief Foundation
www.musicmaker.org
12 tracks



I was driving home one day and Mudcat was on Sirius/XM radio's BB King's Bluesville. I was intrigued by his vocals and made a mental note to find out more about him. Our next Crossroads Blues Society meeting was the next day, and one of the newly arrived CDs was this one so destiny, déjà vu or whatever it was forced me to volunteer to review this CD. I'm very glad I did.

Danny "Mudcat" Dudeck is a mainstay on the live Atlanta music scene. His and the band's blend of Piedmont blues, gospel, bawdy humor and just great musicianship make for quite the fun listen. This, his ninth release, features Danny with three buddies recorded (as Tim Duffy notes on the CD) "one fine summer morning in the hills of Carolina." Dave Roth on standup bass, Eskil Wetterqvist on drums and Lil' Joe Burton on trombone along with Dudeck serve up a creative mix of traditional and original acoustic songs. Tim Duffy at MMRF has put together a fine little CD here with Mudcat and his buddies that every fan of acoustic blues needs to hear.

The title track starts off the CD. Mudcat's busking style and slide work get the listener engrossed at the onset and take them for an enjoyable ride. Burto's trombone adds a unique and very cool punctuation to the songs. He opens the next song "San Antone" with a burst and then Dudeck gets into a lilting melody. Dudeck wails in the chorus, "Somehow how tequila proceeded before my eyes open, and my mind blown again", giving us an interesting visual image. He continues on the heavy drinking them even more in the next cut, "Empty Room Blues", where he grunts and groans over an impressive guitar picking solo. In "I Want to Know" an uncredited gospel group with piano backs up Dudeck. He and the singers give a gut wrenching performance; Burton wails on his solo, too.

They go into some old fashioned bawdy humor with double entendres, unfinished lines and then obvious rhyming lines (usually quite dirty). "Big Bamboo" sings about how the plant pleases "one and all" in a variety of double entendres. In "Red Light" they get even more down and dirty with their unfinished thoughts. "Peter Rumpkin" continues in that vein a few tracks later. "Rattlesnake" again uses the double entendre. These cuts are both funny and musically well done.

A cool cover of James Brown's "Try Me" gets respectfully done acoustically with some harmonies by the band members adding to Mudcat's vocals. Another strong trombone solo further sells this one. "I Want to Know" and "Keep On the Sunny Side" are two other covers given a good treatment.

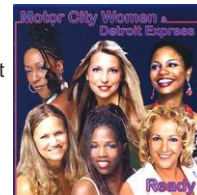
I thoroughly enjoyed this album. Mudcat's vocals are gritty and strong, his slide work and guitar picking is great and his band is equally up to the task of delivering strong performances. Roth and Wetterqvist are solid back-

bones to this effort and Lil's Joe adds so much with his trombone work. These guys would be a blast to see live but until you can do that I recommend listening to this album!

Reviewed by Steve Jones

Ready

Motor City Women & Detroit Express
www.fordcomusic.com -
www.motorcitywomen.com
14 tracks/60:31



Motor City Women & Detroit Express has just released its first recording, "Ready". Are you "Ready" for this? Motor City Women are really six different and fine vocalists, who have all performed with numerous acts in the past. On this recording each singer performs as a solo singer with the other five women as background singers. This combination creates a lot of really outstanding harmonies.

There are 14 original tunes on the recording written by the vocalists of Motor City Women. The tunes cover a wide range of styles from blues to funk and rhythm and blues. All in all, it becomes a good mix of tunes.

The band on "Ready" is Detroit Express It consist of Steve Kohn (drums), Rick Zelde (bass), Dennis Burr (guitar) and Jim David on keyboards. Also joining the band on some tracks is Motor City Josh on guitar and percussion. The CD is also on Motor City Josh's recording label.

"Did He Mention My Name?," with Cheryl Lescon on lead vocals, gets this CD off to a roaring start! This tune, written by Lescon, is upbeat and really gets you in the mode for some rip-roaring music. The piano line by Jim David is really outstanding. This tune is one of my favorites on this CD.

"On The Road", featuring Elena Papillo on vocals, is another standout tune on "Ready". Elena with Josh Ford wrote this tune. This song has a Allman Brothers southern blues rock sound to it. Elena's has that deep sultry quality to it on this song. The guitar licks on this stand-out also. I think that Josh Ford id the guitarist on this one.

To me, "Are You Ready?" is the best blues tune on this recording. The lead singer, Lady T, is one fine blues singer. She can really belt out the lyrics on this tune as if she owns it. Add Jim David's keyboard playing and this is a really great tune for "Ready".

Having six full-fledged vocalists on one CD makes it hard to give them the credit and time they all deserve. They also all seem to be good lyric writers. The six singers on making up Motor City Women are Cheryl Lescon, Valerie Barrymore, Aja Sardis, Stacia Petrie Ford, Lady T and Elena Papillo. All of these ladies bring their own style to the project. They also become an awesome background group for each other on the recording. The Motor City Women & Detroit Express is "READY" to move on into the music world.

Reviewed by Harmonica Joe

Classic Appalachian Blues

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings
www.folkways.si.edu
21 tracks/67:44



This collection serves up a sampling of the various styles of blues music that were influenced by the Appalachian Mountain range, which reaches from New York to Mississippi. Using a variety of sources including recently digitized live tapes from the Smithsonian's Festival of American Folklife, the set mixes well-known musicians with obscure names to educate listeners to the wide range of talent the region nurtured. Barry Lee Pearson contributes a fifteen-page overview that examines the impact that mountainous terrain had on blues musicians and their music. The booklet also includes notes about each track.

Sticks McGhee opens the proceedings with a rousing take of "My Baby's Gone", with McGhee on guitar and vocal, with a duo harmonica backing from Sonny Terry and J.C. Burris on harmonica. The brother of Brownie McGhee, Sticks is a strong singer, proving that point on "Wine Blues (Drinkin' Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee)", a remake of his 1949 hit for Atlantic Records that closes out the disc. With its raw sound, this 1959 recording certainly celebrates of pleasures of alcohol consumption.

In between these bookends listeners will find tracks from the likes of Doc Watson, with his intricate acoustic guitar picking on "Sitting on Top of the World", Rev. Gary Davis working his guitar magic on "Hesitation Blues" and Brownie McGhee's powerful voice resonating on "Pawnshop Blues". John Jackson demonstrates his light touch on guitar on "Railroad Bill" while the string band of Martin, Bogan & Armstrong use a mandolin, guitar and violin on an extended live romp through "Hoodoo Blues". Etta Baker picks her way through the instrumental "One Dime Blues" with sublime skill.

There are also a number of performances that will surprise all but the most knowledgeable blues fans. Big Chief Ellis sings with authority and plays a mean piano on "Louise Blues", backed by the Barrelhouse Rockers, whose members include John Cephas on guitar and Phil Wiggins on harmonica. J.C. Burris impresses on "Blues Around My Bed", switching with ease between his singing and harp playing while Peg Leg Sam Jackson blows some hot licks on his harp on "Walking Cane".

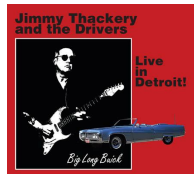
Josh White is often thought of as a folk singer but early in his career he was a traditional bluesman. His version of "Outskirts of Town" shows he was a strong guitar player and an expressive singer. A highly influential but obscure artist, Roscoe Holcomb is featured on "Mississippi Heavy Water Blues", accompanying his eerie, high-pitched vocal on guitar instead of his customary banjo. Brothers Marvin & Turner Foddell transform "I Got a Woman" into an acoustic rockabilly number, with both men on guitar and vocal. Lesley Riddle's guitar style was made famous by his protégé, Maybelle Carter. His run-through of "Red River Blues" provides a brief glimpse of his picking ability.

While a single disc is insufficient to thoroughly cover the vast array of blues music from such a wide swath of the country, the Smithsonian Folkways staff has certainly done an outstanding job of collecting a representative sampling of the variety of sounds that emanated from the region. In serving up a mix of live and studio recordings from their collection and not limiting the selections to well-known artists – plus using budget pricing- they have created a package that should be of interest to any listener who wants to learn more about the roots of blues music or just enjoy a fine disc of acoustic music.

Reviewed by Mark Thompson

Live in Detroit

Jimmy Thackery & the Drivers
White River Records
www.jimmythackery.com
10 tracks/73:10



Ever since his days as a member of the Nighthawks, Jimmy Thackery has been one of my favorite guitar players. His fluid string work, command of musical dynamics and awesome technical skill mark him as one of the most tasteful guitarist working the blues/rock field these days. While his studio recordings provide plenty of highlights, Thackery has always been most commanding when he is cutting loose onstage at some blues joint in front of appreciative fans.

His latest recording came from a obviously special night last November at Callahan's Music Hall in Auburn Hills, MI. Backed by his regular band, Russ Wilson –aka Rollo Giganate – on drums and vocals plus Mark Baumgarner – aka Bumpy Rhodes – on bass, Thackery lights up the crowd with one mesmerizing guitar passage after another. There are few musicians that can

hold listeners interest for almost 27 minutes on three instrumental tracks but Thackery does it right from the start.

His typical set opener, Albert Collin's "Don't Lose Your Cool", gets an inspired run-through as Jimmy displays his control of his array of effects pedals as he unleashes several mind-boggling passages on his guitar. The following track, "Solid Ice", starts out at a slow, melancholy pace, then steadily builds to a majestic series of searing runs as Thackery's guitar cries out in anguish. "Daze in May" is a moody piece with surf guitar influences that eases back on the tension. Wilson takes the lead vocal on "Big Long Buick", a swinging tribute to cool cars.

Thackery slips back into the surf guitar mode on "Landlocked". He deftly single note runs and power chords, proving that there is still plenty of life in this aging genre. The next track is another tribute to the auto industry, "Detroit Iron", featuring more aggressive work from Thackery. Things slow way done on Memphis Slim's "Love My Baby". Thackery takes his time on his solo as he steadily builds the tension simply by changing the dynamics of his playing – not by being faster and louder. The shortest cut, "Bomb the Moon" is a Buddy Holly-meets-the Ventures instrumental track complete with a bright guitar tone, jangling rhythm and more superb picking from Thackery.

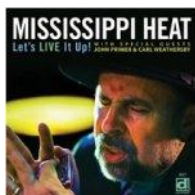
Jimmy turns in a pithy vocal on his original "Eat It All", which preaches that we should grab all of the gusto out of life while we still can. The closing cut is a delicate ballad with Wilson turning in a sensitive lead vocal backed by one marvelous guitar fill after another from Thackery, whose guitar takes over with three minutes to go - erupting with a wall of distortion to mark his arrival and then giving one final display of his prodigious talent.

Some years ago, I asked Jimmy what he liked about playing in the trio format. He responded that he felt it created space for the music to breathe. You can hear that throughout this disc. Thackery never seems to rush or overplay- he simply let's the music flow. He uses his pedals to vary the sonic textures in order to maintain the listener's attention when his guitar is the constant focal point. All of that and more are on full display on this recording that captures Jimmy Thackery at a high-water mark in his illustrious career. Long-time fans will love this one. The rest of you – prepare to be converted !!!

Reviewed by Mark Thompson

Let's Live It Up!

Mississippi Heat
Delmark Records
www.mississippiheat.net
14 tracks



It's been 19 years since Pierre Lacocque founded Mississippi Heat. He assembled a group of Chicago's veteran blues artists to create and play new music in the style of the 1950's Chicago blues heyday. Nine CD's later and with a few personnel changes here and there, they are still going strong.

In addition to Lacocque, we have Inetta Visor on vocals, John Primer on guitar for three tracks and a couple of vocals to boot, Carl Weathersby on guitar for nine tracks, Giles Corey on rhythm guitar and the remaining solos, Christopher "Hambone" Cameron on keys, Stephen Howard on bass and Kenny Smith and Andrew "Blaze" Thomas share the drums. A host of others fill in here and there, including the superb Chicago Horns.

There is only one cover here— Sugar Pie DeSanto's "I Want to Know". Visor turns in some great vocals here (and throughout the disc), Weathersby wails on his guitar and Lacocque's harp work is gritty and focused. The other 13 tracks are all originals that hearken back to the style of Chicago blues of years past.

Primer penned "I Got Some News Today" and does the vocal and lead guitar. Here and on his other tracks he displays the gutsy persona that he's had since playing as Muddy's last guitar player.

Visor and Cameron wrote "She Died from A Broken Heart", a thoughtful down-tempo ballad. Visor's poignant vocals and Lacocque's harp blend well and the trade off on lead is beautifully done. Weathersby adds a nice understated solo here, too.

Pierre Lacocque authored the rest of the songs. He's done a superb job here. From jumping and lively opening and closing tracks "Let's Live It Up!" to "Until we Meet Again (Au Revoir et A Bientot)" we get to hear great vocals, harp and Weathersby and a little of Primer doing what they do best. I can't pick a favorite here because they are all pretty damn good! Slow blues, swing, and shuffles all sound sweet when these guys play together. This is a sweet CD and it comes highly recommended for fans of real, traditional Chicago blues at their best!

Reviewed by Steve Jones

A Night in Woodstock

Paul Rishell and Annie Raines
Mojo Rodeo Records
www.paulandannie.com
DVD run time – 66 minutes



Nominated for a 2010 Blues Music award in the "Best Blues DVD" category, this video package is the companion to the audio version of this live show released in '08 to lots of critical acclaim. It captures a stellar performance by guitarist Paul Rishell and Annie Raines on harmonica. Recognized as

masters of the acoustic blue styles, the duo also gets to perform with a full band, featuring Rishell on electric guitar. They get additional support from John Sebastian on harmonica and Bruce Katz on keyboards. The DVD includes two extra tracks absent on the cd – "Kansas City Blues" and Magic Sam's instrumental, "Lookin' Good", that closes out the show.

The first five songs feature the duo alone with Rishell on steel resonator guitar. He lays down a sprightly rhythm of Blind Boy Fuller's "Custard Pie" before picking a more intricate pattern on "Canned Heat Blues". His slide playing on Johnny Winter's "Dallas" builds to a ferocious conclusion. Raines backs Rishell with tasty harp licks that complement his work, especially filling in behind the vocal lines. Rishell's deep, expressive voice really shines on "It'll be Me", done as an up-tempo piece by Jerry Lee Lewis. Rishell slows the pace almost to a standstill, holding on to notes at length to really capture the mournful nature of the lyrics. The spotlight shifts to Raines on the original "Got to Fly" as she takes the lead vocal and dazzles with her country-style harp licks.

Reed Butler joins in on bass, Rishell switches to an acoustic guitar while Raines breaks out her chromatic harp for Louis Armstrong's "Old Man Mose". The band keeps expanding as drummer Billy MacGillivray makes his entrance on "Blues on a Holiday" along with Katz on piano. Rishell's forlorn vocal makes this cut another highlight.

Sebastian makes his first appearance on "Kansas City Blues", playing some inspired harp while Raines switches to mandolin. Chris Rival adds his slide guitar to the mix. Rishell finally makes the move to electric guitar on "Moving to the Country", his edgy vocal supported by a strong solo from Raines that reaches into the upper register on her harp. Even better is the marvelous rendition of "Blues Shadows" with Rishell firing off plenty of hot lead guitar in the style of B.B. King. Katz contributes a fine piano solo from the shadows, only his hands visible as they dance across the keyboard.

Raines takes the lead on Lazy Lester's classic "I'm a Lover Not a Fighter", singing with conviction. Sebastian returns on "Can't Use It No More" as he and Raines trade harp licks. That leads to the big finale – a harmonica duet with Raines and Sebastian on "Orange Dude Blues" with the rest of the band sitting on the sidelines. Sebastian solos first on a diatonic harp with Raines on a bass harp in the rhythm role, then they switch things around without losing momentum.

The DVD features Dolby Digital sound and great close-up shots from a variety of camera angles, although Katz never escapes the darkness. An added bonus is the audio commentary track that includes Rishell, Raines and Sebastian. They fill you in on many details of the filming session including an hours-long search for the source of a loud noise that ended after virtually every cable in the entire sound system was replaced. You also hear about the romantic break-up that occurred on the dance floor during the set and one man's attempt to revive his drunken friend right in front of the stage. Also

included is instructions and chord structure on guitar from Rishell for two of the songs. This is a thoroughly enjoyable package that makes it clear why Rishell and Raines were nominated for a second Blues Music award this year in the Acoustic Artist category. They deliver a memorable performance that highlights their instrumental skill and vocal talents on a wide range of material and styles. Don't miss this one !!!

Reviewed by Mark Thompson

Ernie & The Po Boys and Doug Furze Win RAMI Lifetime Achievement Awards

April 29, 2010 marked a milestone for the legendary Rockford Area Blues Band Ernie & The Po Boys. The band was awarded a lifetime achievement award from the Rockford Area Music Industry (RAMI) Awards Committee. Ernie Brown with his harp and vocal work has influenced many a musician in the Rockford area and this award cements his position along with his band as an icon in the local music scene.

Born in Meridian Mississippi, Ernie "Sugar Lips" Brown on vocals and harmonica was most recently joined in his band by "Barstool" Bob Levis and Larry "Guitar" Pendleton on guitar, Link Leary on drums and Victor Watts on bass. This tight and talented group has entertained tens of thousands over the years.

A sadder note was marked with the induction of Doug Furze in the RAMI Hall of Fame. A long time Rockford musical standout and founder of Concerts for Charity, "Boulas" passed away on December 27, 2009 from pancreatic cancer. His legacy is a strong one, with over 30 years of entertaining and raising money for those in need.

It was a bittersweet night. Ernie Brown's health also precluded his attendance at the event.

The Rockford area blues scene has been made up in large part by The Po Boys and The Boulas Band. These are fitting and well deserved awards for two great area music legends.



Top Blues Releases April 2010 Sunday Morning Blues Podcast

The Kilborn Alley Blues Band / Better Off Now / Blue Bella
 Johnny Moeller / BlooGaLoo! / Severn
 The Mannish Boys / Shake for Me / Delta Groove
 Kirk Fletcher / My Turn / Eclecto Groove
 Janiva Magness / The Devil Is an Angel Too / Alligator
 Guitar Shorty / Bare Knuckle / Alligator
 Catherine Russell / Inside This Heart of Mine / World Village
 Jimmy Thackery and the Drivers / Live in Detroit! / White River
 Sharon Jones and the Dap-Kings / I Learned the Hard Way / Daptone
 Seasick Steve / Man from Another Time / Rykodisc
 Mighty Sam McClain / Betcha Didn't Know / Mighty Music
 Lurrie Bell / Let's Talk About Love / Aria B.G.
 Cash Box Kings / I-94 Blues / Blue Bella
 Arnold - Primer - Branch - Bell / Chicago Blues A Living History / Raisin' Music
 Jimmy "Duck" Holmes / Ain't It Lonesome / Broke & Hungry
 Peter Karp & Sue Foley / He Said She Said / Blind Pig
 Coco Montoya / I Want It All Back / Ruf
 Joe Bonamassa / Black Rock / J&R Adventures
 Shakura S'Aida / Brown Sugar / Ruf
 Mark Hummel / Retro-Active / Electro-Fi
 Anders Osborne / American Patchwork / Alligator
 Treasa Levasseur / Low Fidelity / Slim
 Chicken Enterprises
 Nick Curran and the Lowlifes / Reform
 School Girl / Eclecto Groove

Rich Gordon
 Sunday Morning Blues
 Podcast
www.mmrfd.com/podcast
 WRTB-FM
 2830 Sandy Hollow Road
 Rockford, IL 61109

Blues Calendar for May and June 2010

Big Cities Lounge, Rockford, IL
 Sat. May 1- Pistol Pete
 Sat. May 15- Mark and Andy BDs with Westside Any/Mel Ford Band
 Fri. May 21- Pistol Pete
 Sat. May 22- Pistol Pete

Café Belwah, Beloit, WI
 Every Wednesday: Harlan Jefferson

Charlotte's Web for the Performing Arts
www.CharlottesWebofRockford.org
 Tue, May 18 Colin Hay of Men at Work
 The Sullivan Center (formerly N.A.T.) - 7:00 PM, 118 N. Main St. (formerly N.A.T.)
 Rockford Price: \$30 general
 Sat. June 26 Treasa LeVasseur
 Sinissippi Park Music Shell - 7:30 PM
 1401 North Second Street, Rockford
 Price: -FREE-

Dave Weld and the Imperial Flames
 May 14 9:00P STEVENS - CD RELEASE PARTY GURNEE, Illinois
 May 21 8:30A The Starlight Theater - CD Release Party Sterling, IL
 May 22 9:00P Da Bar Morrison, Illinois
 Jun 11 12:00P CHICAGO BLUES FESTIVAL - GIBSON GUITAR CROSSROADS STAGE CHICAGO, Illinois
 Jun 12 9:00P KATERINA'S CHICAGO, Illinois
 Jun 26 9:00P Ffat Daddys Seneca, Illinois

Gun Club, Beloit, WI
 Every Thu: Glenn Davis & Matt Goodwin

Harry's Café, Lake Geneva, WI
 Every Wed: Glenn Davis - Blues Jam

House Café, Dekalb, IL
 Every Thu: Johnny & The Boomers

Rockton Inn, Rockton, IL
 Every Thu: Harlan Jefferson

Steve Ditzell
 May 10 9:30P House of Blues Chicago -- Back Porch Stage Chicago, Illinois
 May 15 5:00P 7th Annual Mooseheart Run & Bike Blessing -- Elgin Moose Lodge Elgin, Illinois
 May 15 9:00P Last Shot Bar & Grill South Elgin, Illinois
 May 20 9:00P The Horseshoe Chicago Illinois
 May 25 8:00P Fulton's On the River Chicago, Illinois
 Jun 12 9:00P Cardinal Lanes Brodhead, Wisconsin
 Jun 13 11:30A Rockford First Car, Truck & Motorcycle Show Rockford, Illinois
 Jun 18 11:30A Friday in the Park Concert Series Beloit, Wisconsin

Sud's O'Hanahan's, Beloit, WI
 Every Mon- Blues and Brews Live 7pm - 10pm with Dave Potter & The Alley Kings - Blue Jam

2010 Blues Music Awards Winners
 B.B. King Entertainer of the Year: Tommy Castro
 Album of the Year: Between a Rock and the Blues, Joe Louis Walker
 Acoustic Album of the Year: You Got to Move, David Maxwell

Membership Application www.crossroadsbluesociety.com

Yes! I'd love to be a part of the Crossroads Blues Society!

Name _____

Phone _____

Street Address _____

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New -or- Returning Member

Send newsletter by: email -or- mail

This will be a membership for an:

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Crossroads Blues Society Bring this to
 P.O. Box 722 our next meeting
 Freeport, IL 61032 and get a free CD!

- & Louisiana Red
- Acoustic Artist of the Year: Louisiana Red
- Band of the Year: Tommy Castro Band
- Best New Artist Debut: Tiger in your Tank, Monkey Junk
- Contemporary Blues Album of the Year: Hard Believer, Tommy Castro
- Contemporary Blues Female Artist of the Year: Ruthie Foster
- Contemporary Blues Male Artist of the Year: Tommy Castro
- DVD of the Year: "It Ain't Over! Delmark Celebrates 55 Years of Blues, Live at Buddy Guy's Legends," Delmark Records
- Historical Album of the Year: Muddy Waters, Authorized Bootleg, Chess Records
- Instrumentalists of the Year-Bass: Bob Stroger; Drums: Cedric Burnside; Guitar: Derek Trucks; Harmonica: Jason Ricci;
- Horn: Deanna Bogart; Other: Buckwheat Zydeco (accordion)
- Pinetop Perkins Piano Player of the Year: Eden Brent
- Rock Blues Album of the Year: Already Free, Derek Trucks Band
- Song of the Year: "Pearls River," Cyril Neville and Mike Zito
- Soul Blues Album of the Year: Ace Of Spades, Johnny Rawls
- Soul Blues Female Artist of the Year: Irma Thomas
- Soul Blues Male Artist of the Year: Curtis Salgado
- Traditional Blues Album of the Year: Chikadelic, Super Chikan
- Traditional Blues Female Artist of the Year: Debbie Davies
- Traditional Blues Male Artist of the Year: Duke Robillard

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- Friday and Saturday evenings from 9 PM to midnight

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- Sunday Morning Blues Podcast from 95.3 Bob FM with Rich Gordon



Blues News and Upcoming Blues Events

The Byron Crossroads Blues Festival is approved and tickets are on sale! Get your tickets in advance for only \$5. They will be \$10 at the gate. Volunteers are needed. Get a free admission and other perks by volunteering your time. See Festival Chairman Steve Jones or Volunteer Coordinator Karl Dahlen to sign up to work. Page 1 has more info on our festival.

Speaking of blues festivals, the summer scene is heating up. Chicago kicks off the major area fests with the **Chicago Blues Festival**. The Petrillo Music Shell lineup headliners include:

Friday, June 11, 2010

5 pm – Howlin' Wolf alumni featuring Eddie Shaw & the Wolf Gang w/Jody Williams, Sam Lay, Henry Gray, Abb Locke, Corky Siegel & special guest Hubert Sumlin
6:05 pm – Otis Taylor Band
7:10 pm – James Cotton Blues Band w/ special guest Matt "Guitar" Murphy
8:20 pm – Zora Young's Tribute to Wolf and Sunnyland w/special guest Hubert Sumlin

Saturday, June 12, 2010

5 pm – Nellie "Tiger" Travis & guest
6:20 pm – Bobby Parker and the Blues Night Band
7:35 pm – Chicago Blues A Living History featuring Billy Boy Arnold, Billy Branch, John Primer, Lurrie Bell and special guest Carlos Johnson
Sunday, June 13, 2010
5 pm – Erwin Helfer's Chicago Boogie Woogie Ensemble
6 pm - Vivian and Vance "Guitar" Kelly and the Backstreet Blues Band
7 pm – Chicago Blues Reunion featuring Barry Goldberg, Corky Siegel, Nick Gravenites, Harvey Mandel and special guests Charlie Musselwhite and Sam Lay
8:30 pm – T.K Soul
Lots of other stuff going on there, too!

The following weekend is **Blues on the Fox** in Aurora and their lineup is:

Friday, June 18, 2010

Tinsley Ellis 6:30 p.m.
Trombone Shorty 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 19, 2010

Hix Brothers Jr All-Stars 2:00 p.m.
Guy King 3:30 p.m.

Ronnie Baker Brooks 5:15 p.m.
Joined at the Hip 7:00 p.m.
Jimmie Vaughan 8:30 p.m.

Mississippi Valley Blues Fest is a perennial favorite of CBS members at LeClaire Park in Davenport, IA. Dates are **Friday, July 2 through Sunday July 4, 2010**. Performers include: Li'l Ed and the Blues Imperials, Ana Popovic, Zac Harmon, Vasti Jackson, Rosie Ledet, Ruthie Foster, Billy Branch and the Sons of the Blues, Shawn Kellerman, Lucky Peterson, The Legendary Blues Cruise Revue featuring Tommy Castro and Debbie Davies, Dave Riley and Bob Corritore, and The Nighthawks with Hubert Sumlin. The first night, Friday July 2, will be a tribute to descendants of blues legends, featuring Mud Morganfield, Bernard Allison, Little Pink Anderson, Caroline Shines, Lurrie Bell, and Shirley King. There will be 28 acts total on two stages, with free workshops in Penguin's Comedy Club in the Freight House, and BlueSkool for the kids in LeClaire Park.

2010 is shaping up for some good blues!