

**BLUES IN** Free every month since March 1987

**THE SOUTH**

JANUARY 2016

**BiTS**

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# HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL BiTS READERS

Now that the holiday blues are over, let's resume our everyday melancholy.



## SOME THOUGHTS, FROM THE EDITOR, FOR THE NEW YEAR

I have been a blues fan for almost as long as I can remember. My love of blues music sprang from the upsurge of interest in American roots music (including old Country Music and Gospel as well as Blues) generated by the skiffle craze which was fronted, in the main, by Lonnie Donegan, but owed its existence to Chris Barber and Ken Colyer who ran skiffle groups that were an integral part of their bands. The bands (and there were dozens, if not hundreds, of them) played music firmly based in the traditions of the American south, in particular, New Orleans. The music was then and is now, in Uncle Sam's Fair Land, known as Dixieland, but in the UK it was called 'Trad'. Importantly, skiffle produced a plethora of young (mostly) men who developed an interest in and a life long love of the blues. The number includes, leading Northern Irish musician Sir Van Morrison and British blues pioneer Alexis Korner, as well as Ronnie Wood, Alex Harvey, and Mick Jagger; folk musicians Martin Carthy, Ashley Hutchings (Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span and The Albion Band) and the late John Renbourn; rock musicians Roger Daltrey, Jimmy Page, Ritchie Blackmore, Robin Trower, and David Gilmour. Did you know that the Beatles developed from John Lennon's skiffle group the Quarrymen? As you will see inside I have recently been able to honour Chris Barber for his part in all this. But that is not the point of this piece.

As the editor of BiTS and as a Blues DJ with three blues-radio shows, I hear a great deal of music and encounter much discussion. It is my view that in the UK, support for the blues has never been stronger. It would of course, be nice to see record reviews in places like The Sunday Times, or The Independent, but I see no signs of the imminent demise of the blues in the UK. Young musicians from the South coast of England to the islands off the North of Scotland, and all points, north, south, east and west, are engaged with the blues. True, venues close, but that is the economy not the music. IMHO, blues is alive and well, and rumours of its death have been greatly exaggerated.

*Ian K. McKenzie (Editor)*

- 05 SAM PAYNE @ THE MINERS ARMS, 6 MYTCHETT ROAD, MYTCHETT, CAMBERLEY, SURREY.  
GU16 6EZ
- 05 STAN'S BLUES JAM @ THE THOMAS TRIPP, 10 WICK LANE, CHRISTCHURCH BH23 1HX
- 07 JIM ALMAND USA @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 08 SOUTHERN COMPANION @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 09 CROPPIES IRISH @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 10 CHARLIE'S PIE & VINYL NIGHT @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 11 AL GRIGG (THE ALL ROADS LEAD FROM MEMPHIS" SHOW) @ THE  
PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 11 BLUES AT THE BRIDGE @ THE BRIDGE INN, TOPSHAM, OPEN MIC:  
ACOUSTIC ONLY. START 8.15 CLOSE 10:30. FREE FOR ALL INCLUDING  
LISTENERS
- 12 CATFISH BLUES BAND @ TUESDAY NIGHT BLUES CLUB, HOOLEY VILLAGE,  
SURREY CR5 3R
- 12 STAN'S BLUES JAM @ THE DEAN PARK INN, 41 WIMBORNE ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH BH2 6NB -  
FREE ENTRY - 8.30PM - 11.00PM
- 13 AL GRIGG @ THE BLUES BAR, PLYMOUTH, UK
- 14 AL GRIGG @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOUTHAMPTON, UK
- 14 THE BRIXHAM BLUES SECOND THURSDAY (BBT2) @ MARITIME INN, KING STREET, BRIXHAM,
- 16 NORMAN BEAKER BAND @ THE LIGHTS THEATRE, WEST STREET, ANDOVER SP10 1AH BOX  
OFFICE 01264 368368
- 15 ALEX ROBERTS TRIO THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 20 STAN'S BLUES JAM @ THE WATERFRONT, SHAMROCK QUAY, SOUTHAMPTON SO14 5QL
- 21 CHICAGO 9 @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 21 ROGER HUBBARD (SOLO) @ THE UNDER GROUND THEATRE, GROVE ROAD, EASTBOURNE BN21  
4TL
- 22 THIS WAY UP @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 23 DARREN VERNALL & HIS MANY FRIENDS @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 24 JOHN WHEELER (HAYSEED DIXIE) @ THE BROOK, SOUTHAMPTON, SO17 3SD
- 27 8:30PM - 11:00PM STAN'S BLUES JAM 2 @ THE OWL'S NEST, 196 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, WEST  
PARLEY, FERNDOWN, BOURNEMOUTH BH22 8SS FREE ENTRY
- 28 JON WALSH TRIO @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 29 STEAMER @ THE OWL'S NEST BEER FESTIVAL, WEST PARLEY, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH22  
8SS
- 29 ANDY GRANT WITH ROBBIE MCINTOSH @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON
- 29 BOB LONG AND LORNA FRANKLIN @ THE WHITE BUCK, BURLEY, BH24 4AZ
- 29 THE BLUE BISHOPS @ THE RANELAGH, 2-3 HIGH STREET, BRIGHTON, EAST SUSSEX BN2 1RP
- 30 BACKWATER ROLL @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON



# 37. BLUES FOUNDATION BLUES MUSIC AWARDS : NOMINEES

## Acoustic Album

Doug MacLeod - Exactly Like This  
Duke Robillard - The Acoustic Blues & Roots of Duke Robillard  
Eric Bibb - Blues People  
Guy Davis - Kokomo Kidd  
The Ragpicker String Band - The Ragpicker String Band

## Acoustic Artist

Doug MacLeod  
Eric Bibb  
Gaye Adegbalola  
Guy Davis  
Ian Siegal

## Album

Anthony Geraci & the Boston Blues All-Stars - Fifty Shades of Blue  
Buddy Guy - Born to Play Guitar  
James Harman - Bonetime  
The Cash Box Kings - Holding  
Wee Willie Walker - If Nothing Ever Changes

## B.B. King Entertainer

John Németh  
Rick Estrin  
Shemekia Copeland  
Sugaray Rayford  
Victor Wainwright

## Band

Andy T - Nick Nixon Band  
Rick Estrin & the Nightcats  
Sugar Ray & the Bluetones  
The Cash Box Kings  
Victor Wainwright & the Wild Roots

## Best New Artist Album

Eddie Cotton - One at a Time  
Igor Prado Band - Way Down South  
Mighty Mike Schermer - Blues in Good Hands  
Mr. Sipp - The Mississippi Blues Child  
Slam Allen - Feel These Blues

## Contemporary Blues Album

Buddy Guy - Born to Play Guitar  
Eugene Hideaway Bridges - Hold on a Little Bit Longer  
Shemekia Copeland - Outskirts of Love  
Sonny Landreth - Bound by the Blues  
Sugaray Rayford - Southside

## Contemporary Blues Female Artist

Beth Hart  
Karen Lovely  
Nikki Hill  
Samantha Fish  
Shemekia Copeland

## Contemporary Blues Male Artist

Brandon Santini  
Eugene Hideaway Bridges  
Jarekus Singleton  
Joe Louis Walker  
Sugaray Rayford

## Instrumentalist-Bass

Charlie Wooton  
Lisa Mann  
Michael "Mudcat" Ward  
Patrick Rynn  
Willie J. Campbell

## Instrumentalist-Drums

Cedric Burnside  
Jimi Bott  
June Core  
Tom Hambridge  
Tony Braunagel

## Instrumentalist-Guitar

Anson Funderburgh  
Kid Andersen  
Monster Mike Welch  
Ronnie Earl  
Sonny Landreth

## Instrumentalist-Harmonica

Billy Branch  
Brandon Santini  
James Harman  
Jason Ricci  
Kim Wilson

## Instrumentalist-Horn

Al Basile  
Doug James  
Kaz Kazanoff  
Sax Gordon  
Terry Hanck

## Koko Taylor Award (Traditional Blues Female)

Diunna Greenleaf  
Fiona Boyes  
Ruthie Foster  
Trudy Lynn  
Zora Young

## Pinetop Perkins Piano Player

Allen Toussaint  
Anthony Geraci  
Barrelhouse Chuck  
John Ginty  
Victor Wainwright

## Rock Blues Album

Joe Bonamassa - Muddy Wolf at Red Rocks

Joe Louis Walker - Everybody Wants a Piece  
Royal Southern Brotherhood - Don't Look Back  
Tinsley Ellis - Tough Love  
Walter Trout - Battle Scars

## Song

"Bad Feet/Bad Hair" written and performed by James Harman  
"Fifty Shades of Blue" written by Anthony Geraci and performed by Anthony Geraci & the Boston Blues All-Stars  
"Gonna Live Again" written and performed by Walter Trout  
"Southside of Town" written by Sugaray Rayford and & Ralph Carter and performed by Sugaray Rayford  
"You Got It Good (and That Ain't Bad)" written and performed by Doug MacLeod

## Soul Blues Album

Bey Paule Band - Not Goin' Away  
Billy Price & Otis Clay - This Time for Real  
Jackie Payne - I Saw the Blues  
Tad Robinson - Day into Night  
Wee Willie Walker - If Nothing Ever Changes

## Soul Blues Female Artist

Bettye LaVette  
Dorothy Moore  
Missy Andersen  
Toni Lynn Washington  
Vaneese Thomas

## Soul Blues Male Artist

Frank Bey  
Jackie Payne  
Johnny Rawls  
Otis Clay  
Wee Willie Walker

## Traditional Blues Album

Andy T - Nick Nixon Band - Numbers Man  
Anthony Geraci & the Boston Blues All-Stars - Fifty Shades of Blue  
Cedric Burnside Project - Descendants of Hill Country  
James Harman - Bonetime  
The Cash Box Kings - Holding Court

## Traditional Blues Male Artist

Cedric Burnside  
Dave Alvin & Phil Alvin  
James Harman  
Jimmy Burns  
John Primer

# EDITOR'S CHOICE 2015: TOP 100

*The following selections are the personal choice of the editor based on airplay, fan responses and experience*

- 01 Buddy Guy - Born To Play Guitar
- 02 Erja Lyytinen - Live in London
- 03 Joe Bonamassa - Muddy Wolf At Red Rocks
- 05 Kentucky Headhunters with Johnnie Johnson - Meet Me In Blues Land
- 05 Micke Bjorklof & Blue Strip - Ain't Bad Yet
- 06 Ian Siegal - One Night In Amsterdam
- 07 Shemekia Copeland - Outskirts Of Love
- 08 Zoe Schwarz Blue Commotion - I'll Be Yours Tonight
- 09 Walter Trout - Battle Scars
- 10 Mete Ege - Mette Ege's London Blues
- 11 Martin McNeill - Lately I've Let Things Slide
- 12 Doug MacLeod - Exactly Like This
- 13 Various Artists - Muddy Waters 100
- 14 Bert Deivert & Copperhead Run - Blood In My Eyes For You
- 15 Bob Malone - Bob Malone - Mojo Deluxe
- 16 Charlie Musselwhite - I Ain't Lying
- 17 Damned and Dirty - Hoodoo Down
- 18 Joe Louis Walker - Everybody Wants A Piece
- 19 Tommy Castro And The Painkillers - Method To My Madness
- 20 Danny Bryant - Blood Money
- 21 Dave Hunt - Whiskey and Demons
- 22 Eddie Martin's Big Red Radio - Live In Tuscany
- 23 Fiona Boyes - Box & Dice
- 24 Guy Tortora - Bluesman In A Boneyard
- 25 Blacktop Deluxe - Presence & Gain
- 26 Boom Band - Deluxe Edition
- 27 Lachy Doley - Conviction
- 28 Clarence 'The Blues Man' Turner - The Caster Blaster
- 29 John Cee Stannard and Blues Horizon - Stone Cold Sober
- 30 Connie Lush Band - Renaissance
- 31 Guy Davis - Kokomo Kidd
- 32 Half Deaf Clatch - The Life and Death of A.J Rail
- 33 James Burton, Albert Lee, Amos Garrett, David Wilcox - Guitar Heroes [Live at the Vancouver Island Music Fest]
- 34 Clayton Doley - Bayou Billabong
- 35 Debbie Davies - Love Spin
- 36 Hazmat Modine - Extra, Deluxe, Supreme
- 37 Mark Pontin Group - Textures
- 38 Mike Vernon and Los Garcia - Just A Little Bit
- 39 Mitch Mann - Blackwater Creek
- 40 Pete Gage - Left Over Blues
- 41 Spikedrivers - Live in London
- 42 Stomping Dave Allen - Live From The Sticks (live)
- 43 Wily Bo Walker - Moon Over Indigo
- 44 Clare Free - Sniper Fire (Single)
- 45 Amanda Fish Band - Down In The Dirt
- 46 Angela Lewis Brown - Face The Music EP
- 47 Blues Overdrive (Denmark) - Clinch
- 48 Blues Evolution, [Ziggy True & Elexus Quinn] - Blues Evolution
- 49 Dan Patlansky - Dear Silence Thieves
- 50 Henrik Freischlader - Live 2014
- 51 Malaya Blue - Hope/Let's Reinvent Love (Single)
- 52 Omar and The Howlers - The Kitchen Sink
- 53 Jimmys - Gimme The Jimmys
- 54 Savoy Brown - The Devil To Pay
- 55 Swampcandy - Swampcandy Land
- 56 Voodoo Sheiks - Voodification
- 57 Albert Cummings - Feel So Good-Live
- 58 Canned Heat - Songs From The Road
- 59 Dan Phelps - Goin' Home
- 60 Troy Redfern - Backdoor Hoodoo
- 61 Joe Bonamassa - Live At Radio City Music Hall
- 62 King Rollo - Easy Street
- 63 Martin Harley and Daniel Kimbro - Live at Southern Ground
- 64 Philipp Fankhauser - Home
- 65 Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters - Father's Day
- 66 Sue Foley - Change
- 67 Giles Hedley - Rain Is Such A Lonesome Sound
- 68 Jared James Nichols - Old Glory And The Wild Revival
- 69 John Mayall - Find A Way To Care
- 70 Mike Zito and The Wheel - Keep Coming Back
- 71 Royal Southern Brotherhood - Don't Look Back
- 72 Trevor Sewell - Hollow
- 73 Thorbjørn Risager & The Black Tornado - Songs From The Road
- 74 MonkeyJunk - Moon Turn Red
- 75 Mitch Woods - Mitch Woods
- 76 KingmiXers - Flyboy
- 77 Jon Cleary - GoGo Juice
- 78 Alice DiMichele - Swim
- 79 Andy Broad - Every Penny Of The Deal
- 80 BlueTone Groovers - The Blue Tone Groovers
- 81 Breezy Rodio - So Close To It
- 82 Bruce 'Mississippi' Johnson - The Deal Baby
- 83 Divinchi - The Divinchi
- 84 Dudley Taft - Skin And Bones
- 85 Jesse Davey - Big Blues
- 86 Mentulls - Reflections
- 87 Jo Harman - Found A Place EP
- 88 Sean Costello - We Can Get Together
- 89 Taj Mahal & The Hula Blues Band - Taj Mahal Live from Kauai 2015
- 90 Tomislav Goluban & Nebojsa Buhin - For a Friend & Brother
- 91 Chris Daniels & The Kings Featuring Freddi Gowdy - Funky To The Bone
- 92 D'Mar & Gill - Take It Like That
- 93 Lucy Zirins - What's In Front Of Me
- 94 Murray Kinsley & Wicked Grin - Stormy Water
- 95 Poppa Dawg - What You Got
- 96 Stolen Hearts - Dirty Southern Soul Vol 1
- 97 Lazer Lloyd - Lazer Lloyd
- 98 Mighty Mojoes - Mojo Rising
- 99 Babajack - Babajack Live
- 100 Lenny Henry - New Millennium Blues

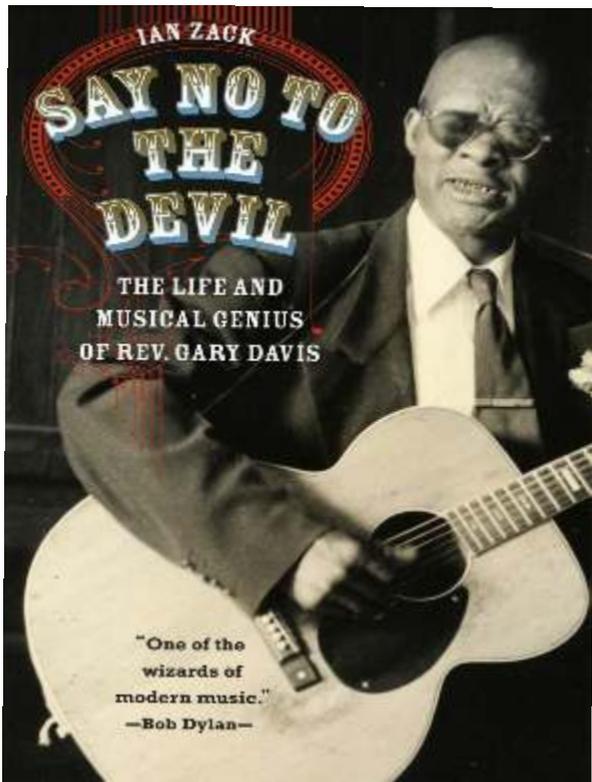


# SAY NO TO THE DEVIL : The Life And Musical Genius Of Rev.Gary Davis

by Ian Zack / University Of Chicago Press (2015)

So you're a guitar player eh? I thought I was doin' o.k. too, until I heard Larry Johnson. Hearing him play made me want to sell my guitar. I guess he felt exactly the same way the

day he heard Rev. Gary Davis - from whom he would later take lessons at five dollars a session. This book is a must for any guitar player or for anyone learning to play.... it's also a true eye opener on one of the (*generally*) unsung heroes of the guitar. Essentially a blind street evangelist, playing in all kinds of weather and having guitars stolen regularly, a major influence on many of today's household names, among them a certain Robert Zimmerman.



As biographies go, this is absolutely superb. The author has certainly done his homework with



research and interviews.... so much information on an artist who's been overlooked for far too long. Many of the books written about the artists who perform(ed) 'our' favorite styles of music turn out to be missed opportunities, I'm delighted to inform you that it's not the case here. As the chapters flew by - it really was difficult to put down - I realised the need to actually play some Gary Davis, to reacquaint myself with his work. Listening to his "Pure Religion And Bad Company" album (*77 Records LA12/14*) was proof of just how gifted he was.

To my knowledge, there's only one other book which concentrates solely on Rev. Gary Davis, and that's 'Oh! What A Beautiful City' (*Robert Tilling*) reviewed more than favorably in *Blues & Rhythm (No.78)* by our good friend Alan Balfour. I'm confident that Ian Zack's 'Say No To The Devil' will receive similar praise and more from all who read it.

The Reverend Gary Davis may have passed on to Glory in 1972, but through his recordings and those he taught, he still has plenty to say!!! Excellent and highly recommended.

**Bob Pearce**

# The BITS INTERVIEW: Alain 'Leadfoot' RIVET

Sponsored by Wendy Smith

**OK – let's make a start then. Tell me how you got into Blues music in the first place – because I guess you've been doing a lot of things over the years.**

*Yeah, yeah – well it started, in fact, when one of my younger cousins at the end of the 50s – he got into Ray Charles and he played him to me and I got completely blown-over by Ray Charles. And it was something like '58, you see, so I knew a little bit of rock and roll in a time that was (budding – white rock and roll?) and when he played Ray*



*Charles it really opened new doors to me. And then a little after that I started going to – a guy – that was instrumental in getting me into blues and even though he was not then very well known. It was a man called Lonnie Donegan!*

**Oh really? I remember Lonnie Donegan very well indeed.**

*And then, well I turned to rock and roll at the very beginning of the sixties – like Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley – and from then on, as these guys were recording Chess records mainly, it was hard to get copies of their records but I finally realised just listening to the first British blues bands of the time that there was some guy called McKinley Morganfield who had recorded – composed – a few songs so finally I discovered that he was the man – that he was key bluesman And also Long John Baldry. I got my hands on an album by Long John Baldry – 1964. That was some kind of a compilation of all the great Blues classics, you know – and that's the way I was going to go! And from the Blues I went to Soul music. I played a lot of Soul music at the end of the second half of the sixties – different bands. And after that I got interested in Jazz*

*singers and then Folk singers – a lot of the American musical scene from California – all the bands from California, like the Byrds and everything. And then I went back to the Blues at the end of the eighties.*

**Let me ask you a specific question. Are there musicians – Blues musicians that have specifically influenced you in what you do?**

*Yes – I think that the first heavy influence after Ray Charles was Howlin' Wolf – who I've never seen live, but I've seen some footage of what he did, from time to time on television and he was so incredible – his presence first of all. His voice – the way he used his body he sort of danced. He was really one of the ones who impressed me the most. Albert King is another one.*

**Nowadays – and I guess all the time that you've been performing, you write a lot of the music yourself. How do you go about writing a song? Do you write things down – or do you record them and put it all together? How does it work for you?**

*Well – very often the lyrics kinda come first. And sometimes, well they just pop out like somebody was guiding my hand. So I'm writing a song in about half an hour – and sometimes I put a few words and I get like a couple of lines and an idea or a title, and then I rework it – I come back and rework it. And sometimes I work on it over two years of time and then we'll set a time and the words – I mean the lyrics are just underlining a melody that comes afterwards.*

**I'm intrigued by some of the arrangements that you do for some of your music – particularly the stuff that you do with the resonator. There's a rather beautiful – what looks like an electric resonator on a picture of you – I think on the previous album that you did. Do you use the resonator a lot?**

*No, not much because I'm not a great guitar player. I'm just a strummer mostly, see – but I used that resonator on that song because it (?) was giving it a good (scatter?) of sound even under a rhythm part – you know? And then I've got an instrument that I'm working with that plays the lead parts on the resonator, in fact. They are real guitar players – I am not. I'm a singer mostly. I play a little guitar, I play some harps, but I consider myself as a singer mostly.*

**OK. Tell me about the occasions when you've worked with some of these great names that you've got listed on your website. Tommy Castro, Roy Rogers, Amos Garrett. Popa Chubby is one of my favourites, believe it or not.**

*Oh really?*

**Absolutely. I love Popa Chubby. I think he's absolutely terrific. (Laughs)**

Yeah – he’s such a - It’s strange because when I made my record in 1998 that was called Bluesmanic Anyway – when it came to the session with Popa Chubby I was pretty impressed because although I knew him just because we’d been bumping into each other a couple of times I wasn’t sure what he could do. He came to the session and said ‘OK – play me the tape [of my song]’ And he started playing a solo and that was it. He said did I want him to do a second one, but the first one that he played was perfect. There was nothing to add or anything else. It seemed so easy!

**I think that’s one of his skills. I’ve never seen him live, but I have seen film of him and he does make it look incredibly easy – there’s no doubt about that at all.**

Oh yeah, yeah. He’s such a gifted guy – that’s true.

**And tell me also about having Anson Funderburgh also another one of my favourites, on one of your latest records. Was that done in the studio, or did he kind of phone it in transatlantic – or what?**

Well the thing is that, as you know – I have a house in the North of France, and also in Haute Provence where I am now, in the South; and not far from here, there is a place where the Blues Association [EuroBlues] organise something like six or seven concerts a year, mostly with top names like American bands or artists that are touring in Europe. Something like six or seven – eight months ago, Anson came over here with his band and with Big Joe Maher (Big Joe and the Dynaflores) on drums and blocks. I’ve known Anson something like fifteen years ago because I brought him over for a couple of tours at the time, when I was organising tours in Europe. And he was with Sam Myers at the time. When I met him again at this concert it was just like we’d seen each other yesterday. It was really strange. And during the conversation I mentioned that I was recording a new album and he said ‘If you want me to play on it, send me a couple of songs – I mean your tapes – and I could put some guitars on them.’ So we sent a couple of tapes to his studio by WeTransfer™ – which is so easy now. It’s



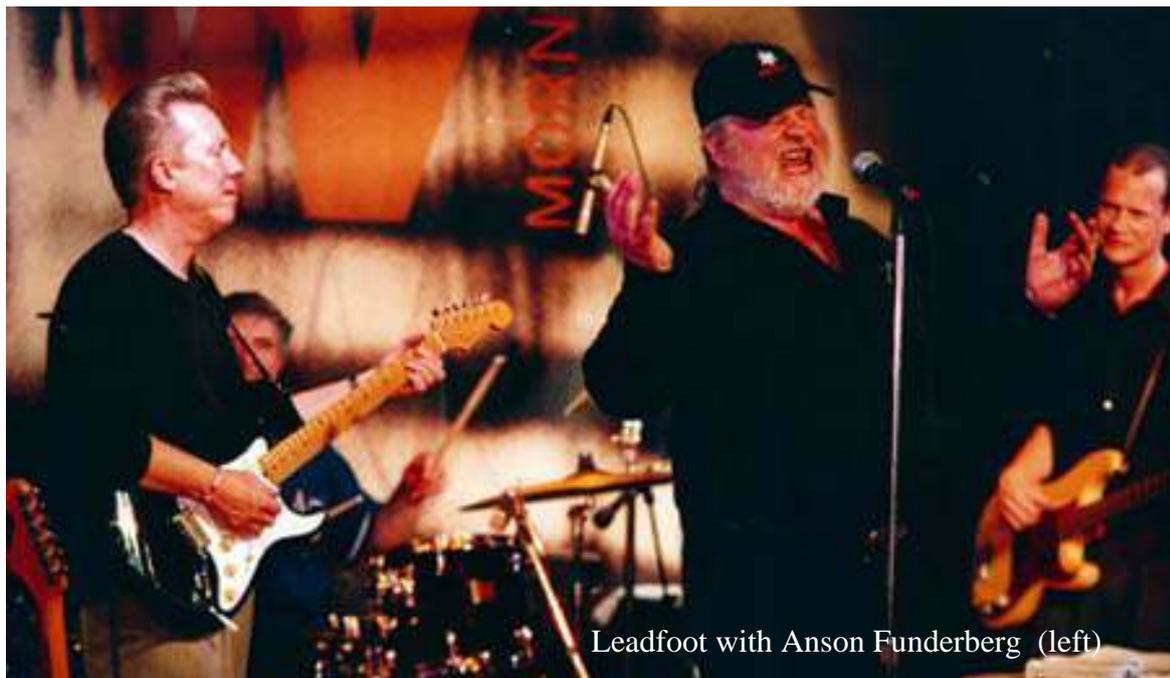
Leadfoot and band with Popa Chubby (left)L

so easy. These days. He could record on one of them and sent it back. The other one he said ‘Well I don’t think it’s gonna be possible – it doesn’t correspond to the way I want to phrase it, so we’ll leave it OK?’

**Tell me something about the making of that record. When you go into the studio, do you have all the songs written? Or do you make stuff up when you’re in the studio? How does it work for you there?**

No, the songs are all written. The only thing that we – well sometimes we have a precise idea of how we want it to sound, so I can tell the

guys we’re going to that direction. I play the chords, I sing some kind of a demo – a basic demo so they can start thinking about it. Then maybe that same day or sometimes a few days later they’ll probably come back and add in some ideas of their own that we will include or not include in the spontaneous arrangements – you know? Then most of the time – I mean all the time the songs are already written. Then sometimes



Leadfoot with Anson Funderberg (left)

we consider – it happens for a couple of songs on this album – including the one that’s called ‘Living’ with Misha Feigin [the Russian guitar player]. In the first place it was a kind of slow countrified kinda tune and we worked two different kinds of rhythm parts that didn’t really go with the words and the atmosphere. And finally about a month and a half later, we found the right sound – the right way to do the right Blues.

**Have you ever thought of doing Cajun music, which you could sing in French if you wished to?**

Yeah – I've done it in the past. I've done a couple of songs, notably on the record that we did about ten years ago (2004 Ed) with my friend, Neal Black. We formed a band called Blues Conspiracy Neal is going for that style of his own that he calls some kind of a Texas boogie or something – when he plays acoustic he's a great player and he plays and sings differently – also great playing, and he got some kind of a cultural thing from Southern Texas – he's from San Antonio. Well he's got real vibes of Cajun music and TexMex and country music [in his performances]. He's very much into the things that I do, so we put an album together that was called **Let's Have A Blues Party** and a couple of the songs were Cajun songs translated in French.

**Oh good. Tell me something about your parents. They sound like very interesting people. Classical singers I gather from your website. Is that right?**

Yep – yeah that's true. They didn't sing opera – instead they were singing operetta and something as well called Opera Comique. I don't know if you know what that means. A style that's between opera and operetta. And they had a professional career for about 15 years.

**Oh they were professionals, were they?**

Oh yes – they were professionals for about 15 years then – they went as far as they could go, but they couldn't launch into the very first roles because it was all locked up and tied up. And after a while they got fed up and said – OK, we still love music but we don't want to stick around with all the hard times that we were experiencing.

**OK – so is that the sort of music that you grew up listening to before you got trapped by rock and roll and blues and jazz and all that?**

Yeah – I was listening to it and not really liking it too much – like very often when kids are listening to what parents are listening or what they are doing they don't like it. But then I've got to incorporate all that and I know all the opera parts of all the great opera pieces. It's really funny the way it works – the way the mind works, you know. And also my father took me to the theatres where they are singing, watching from the aisles, you know.

**And tell me – I can't talk for very much longer without asking you this question – where does the nickname Leadfoot come from?**

Oh – well it comes from a trip that we did with Larry Garner something like twenty years ago. He was playing in a little town in the centre of France in the mountains and he was touring with [and driving] a bus that was pretty slow and with all the passengers they were going at maybe 55 miles per hour. The day after that he was playing in Luxembourg which is (pretty far away). At the time I had a Subaru Legacy and these cars are pretty fast and at the time it was not so hard as it is these days in France with the limits. So he told me – he had picked up a girl in the audience and he wanted to spend some time with her – he wanted to wait to leave as long as he could in the morning too – and he asked me 'Can you drive me there tomorrow so I don't have to drive the bus? It's really boring having to leave at six in the morning – see?' So yeah – we left later on, but I drove all the way at something like – let me see 110 miles an hour – 120 miles an hour all the way to Luxembourg. So when we reached Luxembourg that night and he was singing on stage he introduced me as 'Leadfoot Rivet' and the name has stuck!

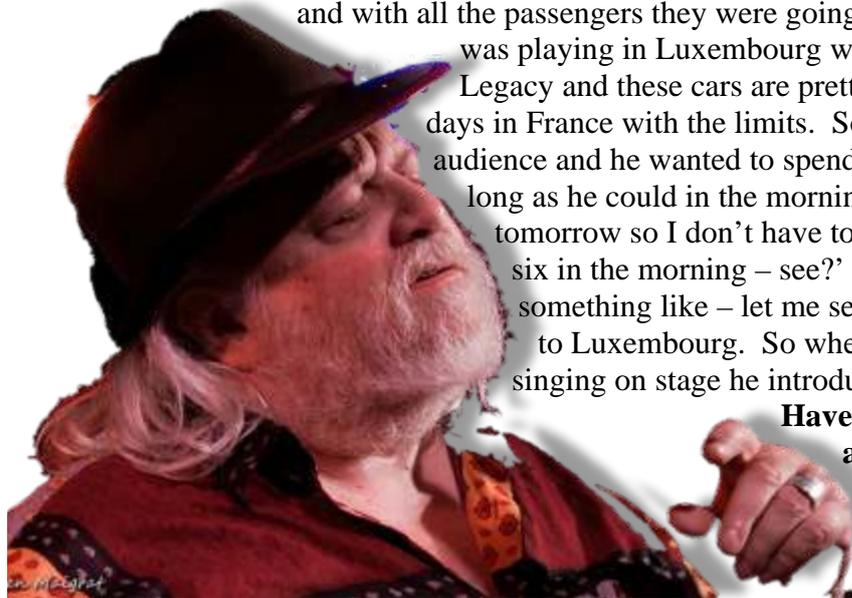
**Have you got any plans to go back into the studio again?**

Oh yeah – now I have several projects in line. There are projects with French songs. Some that are already recorded and some others that our tour already knows. Another French album that I want

to do are songs of a guy that you probably don't know that was really famous over here – a guy that was called Alain Bashung. Alain was a French rock star. He was very influential over the last 30 years and he was a close, close friend of mine so we want to do an album as some kind of a tribute. He passed away five or six years ago. He had a brain tumour and a lung tumour – and so I want to record the songs for him that are not well known – that he never recorded, and songs that we wrote together at the end of the seventies. And I've got at least two other projects to be released too. I've got a bunch of things to record.

**OK – that's good. Tell me – what does a typical week look like to you? Do you do a lot of travelling or are you pretty much static? How does it go?**

Well these days I don't play a lot. I think I'm going to play a little more next year. We've got a few albums we've got to push so I'm going to play more festivals. Some are already organised and then some others, people are working on it. But besides that, what I'm doing – I don't go home too much any more. I've done it for thirty years at least – got to be when I was organising these Blues tours in Europe, see – with all those people. And now I commute North to South and South to North about each month. I spend a month in the South and a month in the North because my wife is younger than me and she still works. She stays in the North, not far from Paris so –



**OK. Now tell me – what do you consider to be the most outstanding thing that’s happened to you in your career as a professional musician?**

Wow – wow, well there’s quite a few, so it’s hard to choose – But one of the great things that happened to me in the seventies is that I had the chance – in 72 about. Yes – 72/73 – 73/74 to produce an album of American singers and musicians; most of them were living in France and Belgium at the time. One of them then was a friend of mine – a guy that I’d met in the cast of Hair, the musical, in Brussels which he was part of. His name was Bill Carr and he’s now a preacher here near San Francisco – he’s got his own church. He was a great Soul and Gospel singer and with a couple of other singers from the cast and a bunch of American musicians who were in France at the time, we put together a project that was called Bad Child. It was not very successful, because we had a hard time putting it out. Most of the record companies in Europe were blocking that kind of project because they already had a hard time themselves to put out all the Soul bands that they wanted to expose to the better known ones like the Temptations, Sly and the Family Stone and people like that. It was a great album and I had the chance keep producing these albums and do some of the background singing. When I listen to it today, it’s comparable to the Temptations or groups and bands like that sounded.

**How many albums have you actually made yourself, Alain?**

Well, I’ve made an album in the seventies on the RCA records, but it was more like French pop album. Then after that I recorded a few singles. I recorded also an album that never was released but it was Blues and Folk and Country – both in French and in English. And then a sort of band at the very end of the seventies called Rocking Chair and we were singing and playing a blend of Blues, Rock, Country music and Soul music. It lasted about seven, eight years. It was pretty successful – yeah we kind of would sing mostly in French and that’s what started me writing songs, in fact. And then I recorded another album that was some kind of a cross-breed album that was very strange. It was a mixture of synth, drums, slide guitar, harp and so on. It was in French also with really obscure lyrics – very dark lyrics. Then I recorded an album that was a tribute to Merle Haggard and the Strangers. But I tend to make an album each year (Check out Alain’s discography at <http://www.leadfootrivet.com/en/discography.php>)

YYeah – I don’t really know about what you’re saying.

**OK. I’ve got a couple more questions and then a favour to ask you. The first question is – you’ve talked about what’s the best thing in your career. Do you have any idea as to what you would cite as being the worst thing in your career?**

Oh god (laughs) well there’s quite a few, in fact. The worst thing probably, on the business side is when I had that band called Rocking Chair we had that hit that I mentioned and thing was really that, we sold 100,000 copies of the album and a little more of the single so we normally would have made a lot of money – but it seems like these people in the record company, they went down shortly after the record was a hit so we never got any royalties and they didn’t pay any of the record rights. We didn’t get any money on that ...

**Well it’s surprising the number of people that I speak to who tell these very similar stories. I do have to say unfortunately. I was wondering what you saw yourself as doing in four or five years time – are you just going to keep on doing what you’re doing now?**

I’m going to keep on doing until I’m dead,man!

**Good for you. That’s the way to do it!**



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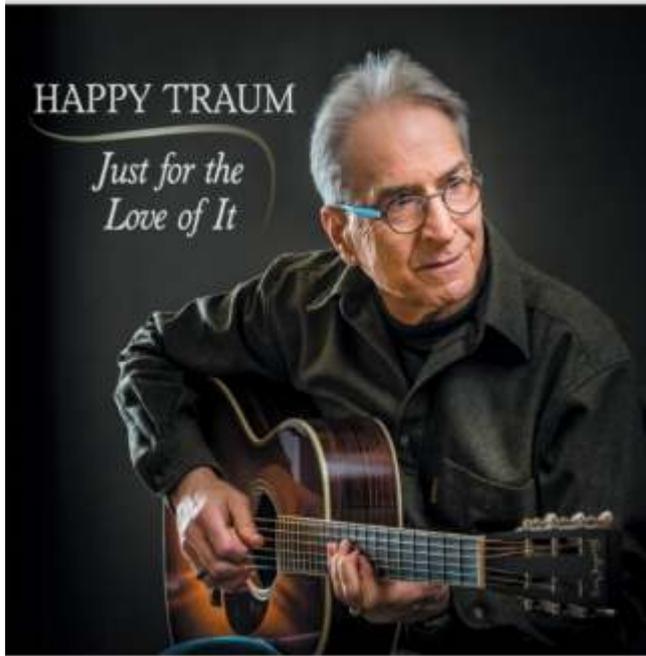
# A BITS SPECIAL: HAPPY TRAUM

BY Iain Patience

**H**arry P. Traum is unlikely to register with many, a name that slips past with neither a nod nor a glance perhaps. Shorten it, however, pulling it together to read HAPPY TRAUM and it rings the bell, bangs the drum and resonates with roots music lovers worldwide.

A New Yorker, Happy is one of those rare musicians, a musician's musician. Revered by most in the musical know, he is easily one of the most significant acoustic-roots musicians and guitar pickers of his - and many other - generations. His guitar mastery is without equal or question and his importance to the development of many world famous - and aspiring - musicians is genuinely astonishing.

Traum recalls with evident glee and deserved wonder and amusement how as a young guitar aspirant himself in late 1950s/early 1960s New York, he picked up a phone book and rang Brownie McGhee to ask for guitar lessons with one of modern blues music's notable greats.



'At college, New York University, I'd heard Brownie's Folkways album 'Brownie McGhee's Blues'. I loved it. I rang him up and he said, "Come on down. Let's see what you can do and I'll decide." I spent the next two or three years with Brownie, visiting him every few weeks or so, just playing together. He'd tell me if I was going wrong and I'd ask him to show me what he was doing and where he was going. We'd spend two or three hours like that. It was wonderful. Sometimes Sonny Terry would turn up and we'd all just play along together.'

Back then, as the sixties folk boom began to explode on the world music stage, bringing with it a remarkable wealth of talent, inspired music and unsurpassed genius, New York was certainly the place to be. Liverpool and the UK music rocket had yet to surface let alone take off to the stratosphere.

Happy remembers sharing licks and verses with almost everyone of note, then relative newcomers, unknowns before the music industry had even developed. John Sebastian, Maria Muldaur, John Hammond, Rory Block, Mary Travers (Peter, Paul & Mary), Dave Van Ronk, Bill Keith, David Bromberg, Phil Ochs and a rough-edged, fledgling guy, destined to become a lifelong buddy, with a strident voice and desperate desire for success, Bob Dylan.

Tom Paley, one of the original members of leading, radical band The New Lost City Ramblers, also gave his time and encouragement freely to the young Happy Traum. 'I remember Tom as a really nice player, a very fine picker. He did a great version of 'Railroad Bill', running through it many times for me, always helpful, never dismissive, bored or irritated. It's great to know he's still around playing and picking.'

At this time, the beginning of the 1960s, many of these seminal musicians would meet up, jamming, busking and simply having fun in New York's Washington Square most weekends. Happy Traum was always there, picking his guitar, alongside his fairly recently passed brother, Artie, and picking the brains and fingers of others who also converged on the park each weekend.

He remembers Izzy Young, who ran the Folklore Centre in the city being around always and how they all had a run-in with authority when attempts were made to outlaw the weekly music meetings. And he recounts how the young, unknown Bob Dylan - soon to be given his first professional gig thanks to Young - first pitched up in New York in the early sixties: 'He's on one of my 'Broadside' records. I did a duet with him and he wrote the sleeve/liner notes for another with Atlantic. Records.'

Never surprised by Dylan's extraordinary success, he says: 'We are friends. We were real close for about six or seven years and Bob lived nearby (in Woodstock, where Traum has been resident for around 50 years). I did a



lot of work with him. In the early 70s. In 1971, I think, I did the sessions with him that became his 'Greatest Hits' albums. We always got on well together.' (See pic ®)

Amongst his other neighbours at the time were John Sebastian - still a resident - and Dylan's backing band, The Band's, drummer and singer, Levon Helm. Larry Campbell, another Dylan sideman, and stalwart of the Americana Music Awards annual blast, also lives nearby. The Band's famous - or infamous - 'Big Pink' house was another local landmark and spawned Dylan's famous 'Basement Tapes' album. Traum also recalls working with Beat poet Allen Ginsberg around this same time.

For many years, he has been involved with what is probably the single, most influential, important roots and blues music teaching resource, Homespun Tapes: 'I initially set it up about fifty years ago as Homespun Tapes. We did it all from home, reel-to-reel. Then came cassettes,

followed by video and now CD and DVD,' he laughs with evident pleasure. 'We've about 200 artists now.'

Of particular pleasure and a source of some evident satisfaction is the fact that one of Traum's own personal roots music heroes, Pete Seeger, signed over the rights to his famous 5-String Banjo tuition book to Happy's



From the 1976 Walnut Valley Spring Thing in Winfield, KS. Left-Right: Stuart Mossman, Merle, Doc Watson, and Happy Traum

Homespun operation before he died a few years ago. 'I was always a great fan of Pete's and it was amazing that he did that. It means a lot to me.'

These days, apart from his teaching brief and Homespun, Traum still enjoys getting out and about, picking guitar, passing on the music and playing US festivals like Merlefest in North Carolina, and teaching at Jorma Kaukonen's famed Fur Peace Ranch in the Ohio hills.

He believes the music is in a safe place, with young students eager to keep it alive and give it new meaning. And he still derives great pleasure from recording, even as a seasoned veteran. Traum has just released his latest album, 'Just For The Love Of It', a fourteen track master-class in tasteful fretwork and delicious covers including takes on 'Careless Love', 'In The Pines', both from Leadbelly's back

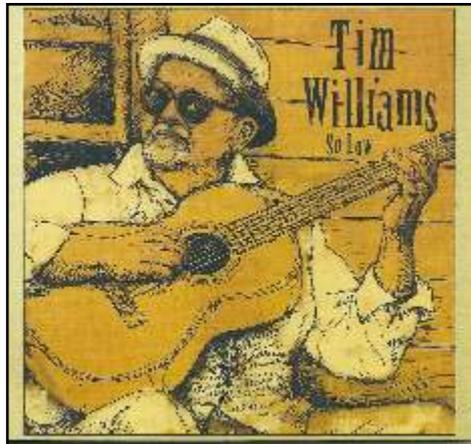
catalogue, and a stunningly beautiful, pared-down version of the old standard, 'Tennessee Waltz'. Recorded mostly without overdubs and as close to live performance as a studio allows, Traum says of it: 'My idea was to play and sing, alive and live in the studio. To try capture that wonderful interaction that happens spontaneously with musical friends. There are a few obvious places where overdubs were inevitable, but for the most part the music on this CD reflects the way it happened in the moment - no frills, as honest as I could make it.'

Looking ahead, to what might yet be in store, Happy Traum remains upbeat and optimistic: 'I don't know what the future holds, maybe not much more for me at my age,' he laughs. 'But the acoustic music scene seems to be thriving, with some fantastic stuff coming out. It always ebbs and flows. It's just how it is.'

TIM WILLIAMS

Blue Highway

LowdenProud Records: LOWD20132



This is an all-Canadian release from a true master, an acoustic bluesman of some significance. Williams, from Calgary, Alberta, picked up best Solo and best Duo performer at this year's International Blues Challenge awards in Memphis, a remarkable feat; recognition by a jury of his blues music peers that this guy can sure pick that ole guitar.

From the opening title track, 'The Blues Highway', this album positively rips along. Around half the compositions come from Williams himself with others including 'Nobody's Fault But Mine' and other traditional blues standards like 'I'd Rather Be The Devil.' There's even a cracking take on Stephen Foster's sensitive, seemingly ever-pertinent 'Hard Times.' Williams also includes an interesting diversion with the Hawaiian-sounding, slack-key 'The Lei Vendor's Song.'

Recorded at the Broom Closet studios in Calgary, Williams, who majors in Guitar, Mandolin and Washboard, is joined on second-guitar by Kay Bass, Steve Marriner on Harp, Howard Chapman on Accordion, Allistair Elliott, Trumpet and Kevin Belzner, Snare. It's a blend that works wonderfully, capturing the essence of a live performance in-house while finding sufficient space to allow all the musicians to breathe and show

their skill. This album is a true delight.

Iain Patience

MICHAEL MESSER'S MITRA

Call Of The Blues

Knife Edge Records: KER CD001

Now, here we have that genuinely rare thing - a total original of wondrous cross-continental music that makes you pinch yourself and ask why it hasn't been done before.



Messer is a UK resonator/blues/slide guitar master with a positive pedigree in acoustic blues. For Michael Messer's Mitra, he has teamed up with two young Indian musicians, Hindustani, Manish Pingle on Mohan Veena (a new instrument to me) otherwise known as Indian slide guitar, and Gurdain Rayatt an English Tabla player of some distinction.

Messer says he has long been interested in the possibility of bringing this Indian sub-continent musical tradition into the studio to merge with his own love for traditional US blues music. With this extraordinary release, he has successfully done just that.

Astonishingly, perhaps, the whole project was completed in a matter of a few days with virtually no overdubs and the result is little short of jaw-dropping.

Not since the Beatles teamed up with Ravi Shankar back in the day has there been such an experimental and inspired meeting of musical cultures. I've no doubt this album is going to be internationally lauded for both its musicianship and Messer's stunning vision.

This is an album of pure, sparkling, sublime originality. Anyone with an interest in traditional acoustic blues will be inevitably bowled over by the seamless fusion of what

could easily have been two clashing musical cultures.

Tracks covered include a couple from Mississippi Fred McDowell ('You Go to Move' and 'You Gonna Be Sorry'), another few from Muddy Waters ('Rollin' & Tumblin'' and 'I Can't Be Satisfied'); add a traditional Indian Raga, 'Bhupali Blues' and old country standard 'Rolling In My Sweet Baby's Arms', and you have a fair idea of what to expect here. Even then, you'll be amazed by the soulful sound. 'Mitra' itself means 'Friends' - an apt title for such a wonderful musical meeting.

[www.michaelmesser.co.uk](http://www.michaelmesser.co.uk)

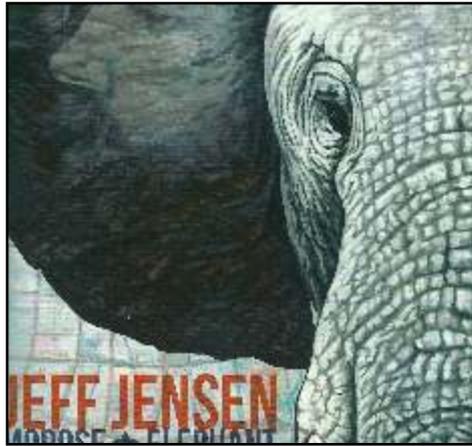
Iain Patience

JEFF JENSEN

Morose Elephant

Self-produced

Jensen is a Memphis-based rock-blues guitarist/singer/songwriter. Morose Elephant is a hi-energy, rocking release featuring some excellent fretwork from Jensen himself and fine percussion from Robinson Bridgeforth, and Wurlitzer from band-member Victor Wainwright. This is the core of Jensen's band and a few other musicians also guest here on this eleven-track album.



'Morose Elephant' is an album that pounds along for the most part, with catchy riffs and licks galore pouring from Jensen's guitar. Tracks move effortlessly from hard-rocking, guitar-led numbers to slower, soulful songs often Wurlitzer-fuelled (frequently building nicely to a fast-moving, upbeat middle eight) that allow everyone to do their thing and add to the whole mix.

Jensen is clearly a talented guitarist and his skill is nicely showcased here with touches of jazzy, chord-strewn, octave-driven picking and spare, clean, simpering blues flourishes that always excite and are full of interest. His voice is more than capable at carrying off everything he aims for in this release, including a neat take from the early 1950s with Amos Milburn's , classic hit, 'Bad, Bad Whiskey' closely followed by another old classic,

originally from the late twenties and made famous and her own by Brenda Lee in the fifties, 'I'll Always Be In Love With You.' Jensen closes the album with a strong self-written number, 'Empty Bottles' that merely hints at his knowledge of the blues tradition and slips along tightly, leaving you looking for more. A rewarding album worth catching.

[www.jeffjensonband.com](http://www.jeffjensonband.com)

Iain Patience

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LARA & THE BLUZ DAWGZ

Howlin'

Lock Alley Music

Nashville based Lara & TBD are, with this second album, grooving their way into your heart and soul with this wide ranging selection of twelve original blues compositions that mix funky saxophone and percussion excursions with traditional slinky late night urban or even urbane slow-burners. The make-up of this very fine outfit are Lara Germony; lead vocals, (her husband) Gregg Germony; bass, Al Rowe; guitar, Dan Nadasdi; keyboards, Ray Gonzales; drums and certainly by no means least Reggie Murray; saxophone. Together, they combine the laconic moods of late night smooching as in the sweetly mellow and burning saxophone led "Don't Mess With My Baby", where a cool rich Jazz fuelled guitar dances with a seventies styled floating and bubbling organ, to a fine foot-tapping Rockabilly styled mover that is "You're Wearing Me Out", in which classy saxophone solos entwine smoothly with a rocking guitar and rolling piano. Lara confidently commands your attention with a vocal that is not bawling or raucous but, strong, sweet and mellifluous. The soulfully tearful ballad "Say Goodbye" has an understated emotional saxophone and piano that splendidly supports the evident sadness in Lara's voice as she ruefully bids farewell to a failed love affair. "Love Of Mine", is little more optimistic with an uplifting



rolling piano and mellow swinging saxophone that helps to spread the message of love. The Jazz influences and themes found in these numbers allow Lara to relax and vocally spread and flex her obviously talented vocal muscles. The very relaxed preening and second line strutting feel of "Howlin'", is marinated in the rich textures and influences of classic New Orleans sights and sounds, which are the very essence and soul of the town on a Friday or any other night. "Uh Huh", is a splendid mixture of swinging saxophone and rolling piano that tumbles and spills under a solid back-beat and an urging scratching guitar that possesses an alluring fifties groove. Don't be deceived by the title, this album is a very sophisticated and solidly classy little collection

Recommended!

Brian Harman.

## Clarence 'The Blues Man' Turner

### The Caster Blaster

### Uniqek Sound Records

After spending many a happy hour in his youth listening to his father's music collection it emerged through the many sounds he was hearing that the overwhelming influences were artists such as Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf; it was these bluesmen that Clarence was inspired by at the age of eight to learn to play the blues. Although he played in various bands in his youth it was during his early twenties he considered that a period of self exile, reflection and solitary practice was in order. In due course the lure of the blues was too great and he returned to the scene older, wiser and certainly more experienced and began to play in various bands in the local area of his hometown in Washington, D.C. To mark his return he released a live album entitled "Live at Blues Alley in two thousand and eleven, he followed that release a year later with his official debut album "Payday". Clarence has not only earned his place on the American blues stage but, now he has also become a firm favourite in the Netherlands.



He is a talented multi-instrumentalist excelling on; guitar, bass and drums.

Now, here on this his second album he takes lead vocals and guitar and enlists the help of; Sean Graves; drums, Charles Pearson; keyboards, David Satterwhite; bass, with Gene Meros on saxophones and Gary Henderickson; trumpet.

On the eleven numbers here a relaxed groove is firmly established, for, on the opener "Fame And Fortune", we are treated to a soothing mixture of funky strutting brass and cool, cool guitar stroking 'n' bending in the very striking style of B.B. and Albert King. "Mojo Hand", very pleasantly continues this theme of relaxed listening. While Chuck Willis's "C.C. Rider", is very firmly planted in the territory of the Jump master Louis Jordan, the gleefully swinging horns and laid back guitar sway you nicely into the very sweet trumpet and saxophone solos. A distinct change of mood is apparent on the almost fusion instrumental "Sabrena", a slow, brooding and swaying almost fuzz-bass guitar is matched with a strangely satisfying low droning horn section that also moodily uplifts as it sways its way forward, a rich guitar weaves in and out sewing it all together. The fast paced and intricate "Fender Bender", is a very accomplished and highly toe-tapping nod to Albert Collins with its drawing and clawing, almost Jazz inspired, tightly packed and exhausting string picking.

Recommended!

Brian Harman.

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## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### Blues Harp Women'

### Ruf Records B0169H1GAA

For years the only woman blues harmonica player that anyone had ever heard of was Big Mama Thornton and she was primarily a singer who played a bit of harp on the side. Then in the 90s two younger players emerged who could hold their own with any man, Annie Raines in the US and 'Little Jenny' Bohman in Sweden. I was therefore very interested to hear this record featuring thirty one, mainly American, "Blues Harp Women" - including Big Mama and Annie Raines but sadly not the late Jenny Bohman.



This is a varied collection of tracks, which features both electric Chicago-style harp and also acoustic country blues - and all points in between. The standard is also variable and although there is some excellent playing there are also some distinctly average tracks, so I'll focus on the tracks that impressed me most. Lynn Ann Hyde plays lovely acoustic harp and also sings on a nice version of Robert Johnson's "32-20 Blues", Teresa Lynne plays impressive blow-bends on her song "One More Lie" and Beth Kohlen

does a very authentic nod to Walter Horton's "Easy" with her instrumental track "Ain't Easy". Jane Gillman's "Stuck on You" was an unusual slightly Cajun-influenced song and Australian Dorothy Jane Gosper plays a nice minor key jazzy blues "Sadder than Sad".

Annie Raines' track is a live instrumental with her partner Paul Rishell, a riff on Elmore James' tune "Shake Your Money Maker" with Annie playing great electric harp, although of course she is also a master of acoustic harp as well. Multi-instrumentalist and singer Terry Leonino plays very tasteful jazzy harp on "Meet me Where They Play the Blues" with lots of fluttering hand vibrato, while Beata Kossowska from Germany plays in a very individual style that mixes blues with a distinctly Eastern European edge, while Jill Fromewick is pure Chicago, although again she can also play in a more country style. French woman Christelle Berthon plays wonderful chromatic harmonica on her version of "Summertime", which is followed by "Hit the Road" featuring Judy 'Mama J' Rudin's down-home, rasping electric harp.

It's great to see that there are so many "blues harp women" around, many like Judy Rudin who have been playing for 40 years or more, and that they are finally getting some wider recognition. I hadn't heard of hardly any of these players but this record is a good, varied collection of blues that stands up on its own and many of the players deserve to be much better known – I'll certainly look out for them touring in the UK.

G. E. Harrison

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## NORMAN BEAKER BLUES TRIO

Live In Belgrade

JNR (20150)

I've seen Norman many times over the years both with his own band and backing artists like Chris Farlowe and Larry Garner and I've always been impressed by his guitar playing, his singing and his song writing, honed to perfection after over forty years in the business. As the title suggests this album was recorded live in Belgrade during a 2015 European tour featuring Norman with his bassist of twenty years John Price, together with drummer Steve Gibson.



We get off to a rocking start with "Only I Got What the Other Guys Want" where it's hard to believe that you are only hearing one guitar as Norman keeps the rhythm going as he adds bits of lead in between. Next is the atmospheric "When the Fat Lady Sings" followed by another couple of original songs, including the seven and a half minute "Talk to Me". Then we get a version of John Mayall's "It's Over" from his 'Hard Road' LP, followed by the Peter Green song "Love Her Like the Sky". The rest of the record features a similar mix of originals and well-known covers – "Born

Under a Bad Sign" with its long bass solo, "I Can't Be Satisfied" complete with wah-wah guitar and Eddie Boyd's "Five Long Years" with its biting lead guitar.

I really wanted to like this record but I'm afraid that I thought that the stripped-down trio format didn't really suit Norman and I missed the keyboards that round out the sound of his regular band and allow Norman himself to lay back and take a subtler approach. Also, I wasn't keen on the production which has a strange 'deadness' to the sound and Norman's vocals seemed a bit strained at times. However, the record does have its moments, I thought that Norman and the boys seemed most at home on the slow blues like "Break it Down" and the aforementioned "Five Long Years", where his guitar really soars in the solo over the rock-solid rhythm section and his impassioned vocals light up the verses. The audience seem very appreciative but I thought that the excitement of the performance didn't really come across in the recording – I guess you just had to be there.

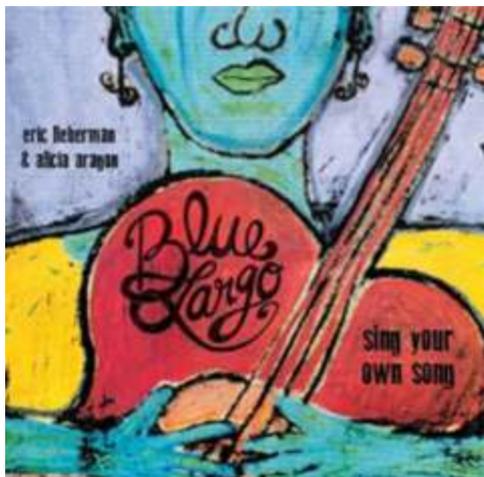
G. E. Harrison

## BLUE LARGO:

### Sing Your Own Song

(Coffeegrinds – no issue number)

Blue Largo is a Californian band under the joint leadership of vocalist Alicia Aragon and guitarist Eric Lieberman, with members such as saxman Johnny Viau (who first worked with Eric in 1982) and guests like guitarist Nathan James in several roles on six tracks (as well as mixing and co-producing), and Missy Anderson on backing vocals on four. The band has been active since 1999, and they certainly sound like it, in the nicest possible way. You may have heard of them before as pianist Carl Sonny Leyland was a member many years back.



This is their third album and there is a fine early 60s feel to much of the material, from the time when the blues boundary was becoming blurred with R&B and the upcoming sound of soul – think Ray Charles, Rufus Thomas, Sam Cooke, or BB King maybe - with horns driving the tracks along, up tempo or strutting items, sounding a lot like they should be on a vintage juke-box. 'Prisoner Of The Night' and 'Evening' hark back to T-Bone Walker's golden age, whilst Otis Rush's 'You Know My Love' and

Magic Sam's 'I Need You So Bad' evoke classic West side Chicago blues, and 'Elevator To The Gallows' is a smoky, jazzy, bluesy tune, with echoes of Billie Holiday, and the standard 'Sittin' on Top Of The World' makes for a lovely closer.

Alicia's excellent vocals are way out front throughout the CD, the seven original songs are thoughtful and enjoyable – try 'Tears Of Joy' - and Eric has overcome some serious health problems that affected his playing to present himself as an economical and very effective guitarist. He takes some very fine instrumental breaks here, and there are three guitar instrumentals, with Earl Hooker's 'Guitar Rhumba' an accomplished version of this little heard showcase; ditto 'Okie Dokie Stomp' from "Gatemouth" Brown and the country styled 'Remington Ride'. In short, this CD is a solid and varied blues set, well worth the effort involved in tracking it down.

Norman Darwen

([www.bluelargoblues.com](http://www.bluelargoblues.com))

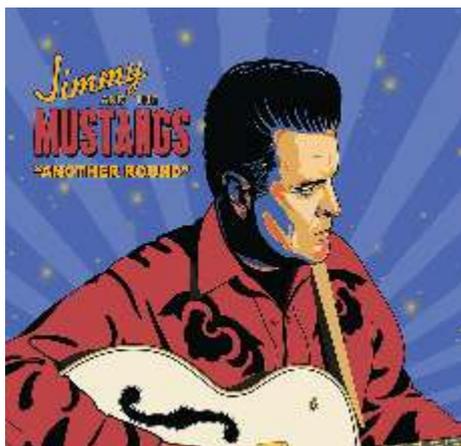
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## JIMMY AND THE MUSTANGS

### Another Round

Independent Release – available on CD Baby, etc)

This five piece outfit, under the leadership of big voiced singer and guitarist Jimmy Haddox (plus sax, guitar, slap bass and drums), originally emerged out of the California punk scene of the 80s, but you would never guess that from this set, unless you make the connection with the energetic approach. Now based in Austin, Texas, they have a fine rocking ten track set, mainly rockabilly based, making it easy to understand just why they have worked with the likes of The Blasters, Los Lobos and other "new wave" Americana outfits from the 80s and 90s. 'Rock My World' is a suitably powerful rocker in a Bo Diddley vein and has some excellent blues harp playing by local favourite Greg Forsyth, who also crops up to good effect on the Louisiana flavoured rocker 'I Won't Cry For You'. New Orleans is the inspiration for the Fats Domino-ish 'Hotel San Jose', which precedes the hillbilly bop of 'Bourbon Street', though again there are some Crescent City tinges, appropriately enough. 'Love Is Just Pretend' is one of those big 50s ballads, and contrasts strongly with 'Long Black Train', excellent rockabilly but sporting some lovely slide guitar work. Apparently



Jimmy has been out of the music business for a good few years, but on this evidence (and hence the reason for the CD title, I guess), he and his group are certainly extremely welcome back on the scene!

Norman Darwen

[www.jimmyandthemustangs.com](http://www.jimmyandthemustangs.com)

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## RANDY MCALLISTER

Gristle To Gold

Reaction Records)

Some may recall Randy from his stint with JSP Records beginning in 1997, but anyone who has ever heard this Texas singer and harmonica player will surely remember his rather original compositions. This set continues that tradition – how about ‘Crappy Food, No Sleep, A Van And A Bunch Of Songs’, which is pretty descriptive of life on the road. Then there’s the opener, ‘The Kid With The Really Old Soul’, which is indeed Randy’s take on classic soul music, whose influence can also be heard on many of the other tracks, as for example the blues and soul mash-up of ‘Something That Don’t Cost A Dime’, or ‘I’m Like A Boomerang’, with Randy’s best singing of the set. He has a fine, rough-hewn, soulful voice that suits his approach and he is backed by “The Scappiest Band In The Motherland” as the sleeve informs us, though they can be pretty tight, and guitarist Rob Dewan provides some fine licks, whilst backing vocalist Andrea Wallace also makes a noteworthy contribution. Texas blues bandleader Mike Morgan also crops up, playing guitar on two tracks and bass on one other, surely a good indicator of the esteem in



which Randy is held in the Lone Star State. If you don't already know the guy, this is as good a place as any to check him out, and if you've previously made the man's acquaintance, you probably don't need my recommendation – though I'm giving it anyway!

Norman Darwen

[www.randymcallister.com](http://www.randymcallister.com)

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## THE KNICKERBOCKER ALL-STARS

Go Back Home To The Blues

JP Cadillac

'Brand New Fool' is playing, a romping, 60s styled blues with slight soul touches, and I'm racking my brains – who was it first recorded this? Bobby Bland on Duke, was it? It certainly sounds like it. So I check the sleeve and find that it is an original from the pen of cornettist/ singer Al Basile, sometime member of



Roomful Of Blues – as are many of the musicians on this set. The Knickerbocker Café in Westerley, Rhode Island, was the birth-place of Roomful, the big, brassy band that revolutionised the blues revival in the 70s, and to some degree can claim responsibility for the jump-blues boom of the following decade... and that is the style of this wonderful CD. This release is the follow-up to 2014's equally excellent "Open Mic At The Knick" and features musicians of the calibre of Al Copley (piano), Doug James, Rich Lataille and Sax Gordon (saxes), Carl Querfurth on trombone, and the former child prodigy Monster Mike Welch – listen to his guitar work on Guitar Slim's 'Something To Remember You By', 'He Was A Friend Of Mine', and 'Annie Get Your Thing On', taking off Albert King to a "t" on the latter track. Guest vocalists include Al Basile himself, Sugar Ray Norcia, Brian Templeton and Willie J. Laws ("The Last Prophet Of The Funky Texas Blues", as he bills himself), each adding significantly to the quality count. If you like your music quiet, thoughtful,

and reflective, this certainly isn't for you! On the other hand, if you're looking for blasting, good-timin' sounds – and the opening number ain't exactly subtle, a bunch of guys chanting the chorus of Bobby Bland's '36-22-36' – then you've definitely come to the right place.

Norman Darwen

[www.jpcadillacrecords.com](http://www.jpcadillacrecords.com)

# ESSENTIALS: ALL THE STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW



In the December edition of BiTS we asked you to identify the individuals in this picture of Blues royalty. The first person to provide the correct answer to win a CD. The artists from left to right and from back row to front row are: Johnnie Johnson, Roy Rogers, John Hammond (Jr.) Charlie Musselwhite, Albert Collins, Bonnie Raitt, John Lee Hooker, Robert Cray. The first correct answer was received from Brian Cope of Bexhill-on-Sea, who is now the proud owner of Charlie Musselwhite's outstanding album "I Ain't Lyin".

If you are reading this on or before December 31, 2015, there is still time for you to enter the BiTS annual Christmas Quiz. Just answer these questions:

1. What was Robert Johnson's middle name?
2. Who wrote *St Louis Blues*?
3. What was the recording name used by Robert Hicks?
4. Which Texas guitarist was nicknamed the 'Ice Man'?
5. Which world-class female guitarist and singer broke her arm and made an album based on that event, called "After The Fall"?
6. Who is the well known son of the late Tabby Thomas?
7. What do Dave Arcari, Alan Nimmo and Lewis Hamilton (the musician, not the F1 driver) have in common, apart from being musicians?
8. Who is married to Susan Tedeschi?
9. To which blues super-group did Mike Zito belong?
10. Who was Lester William Polfuss?

Send your answer to [competitin@bluesinthesouth.com](mailto:competitin@bluesinthesouth.com) by midnight December 31, 2015. In the event of multiple correct entries a draw will take place to decide the winner and one runner up

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**B**uddy Guy's *Born To Play Guitar* is nominated for two Grammy's – "Best American Roots Performance" (for the title track song) and for "Best Blues Album" – in the 58th Annual GRAMMY awards.

Mavis Staples' "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean" off her album *Your Good Fortune* is also nominated for "Best American Roots Performance"

Shemekia Copeland's *Outskirts Of Love*, received a Grammy Award nomination in the "Best Blues Album" category from the Recording Academy. This is Copeland's third Grammy nomination. Copeland, the reigning "Queen Of The Blues," also appears on *Muddy Waters 100*, a various artists tribute album also nominated for "Best Blues Album."

Other nominees in the "Best Blues Album" category include the Cedric Burnside Project's *Descendants Of Hill Country*, Bettye LaVette's *Worthy* and *Muddy Waters 100* featuring various artists.

Jon Cleary's *Go Go Juice* is nominated in the "Best Regional Roots Music Album" category.

*The Rise & Fall Of Paramount Records, Volume Two (1928-32)* is nominated for "Best Boxed or Special Limited Edition Packaging." *Lead Belly: The Smithsonian Folkways Collection* is nominated for "Best Album Notes." Jeff Place is the album notes writer.

*Parchman Farm: Photographs And Field Recordings, 1947-1959* is nominated for "Best Historical Album."

*Mr. Dynamite: The Rise Of James Brown* is nominated for "Best Music Film."

Winners will be announced in Los Angeles on February 15, 2016. The complete nomination slate is at [www.grammy.com/nominees](http://www.grammy.com/nominees).

# BETH HART RETURNS TO THE UK IN NOVEMBER 2016 FOR SEVEN CONCERTS INCLUDING LONDON ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL



Following her critically acclaimed May UK tour in 2015 and the rapturous response to her latest studio album, *Better Than Home*, Grammy nominated singer-songwriter, BETH HART will embark on a Nationwide 7-date UK tour in November 2016.

Tickets went on sale on Friday 18th December from the 24 hour ticket box office: 0844 871 8819 and from [www.alt-tickets.co.uk](http://www.alt-tickets.co.uk).

Sultry blues, jazzy influences, rocking tunes and touching ballads; Beth Hart does it all! Very special guest will be announced in the coming weeks.

## BETH HART - NOVEMBER 2016 UK TOUR

Birmingham Symphony Hall	Friday 11 November
Gateshead Sage	Sunday 13 November
Glasgow O2 Academy	Monday 14 November
Bristol Colston Hall	Thursday 17 November
Bournemouth Solent Hall	Saturday 19 November
Manchester Bridgewater Hall	Monday 21 November
London Royal Festival Hall	Wednesday 23 November

# BLUES FOUNDATION - BLUES MUSIC AWARDS

Ian Siegal has scored his third Blues Music Awards nomination.



Nominations for the 2016 Blues Music Awards were announced shortly before Christmas by the Memphis-based Blues Foundation. The UK's Ian Siegal is nominated for Acoustic Artist of the Year. He was previously nominated in 2013 and 2012 in the Contemporary Album category. Siegal now ranks as the most nominated British artiste of all-time in the Blues Music Awards.

This caps a year in which his two album releases - one acoustic (*The Picnic Sessions*) and one with his band (*One Night in Amsterdam*) - have received outstanding reviews. Earlier this year he was awarded Acoustic Artist of the Year in *The British Blues Awards* and Male Artist of the Year in the *European Blues Awards*, bringing his tally of British and European awards to eleven.

[Click here for the full list of nominees in the 37th annual Blues Music Awards.](#)

**BLUES MUSIC AWARDS**

Ian will tour in Europe April-June as a duo with Mississippi native Jimbo Mathus. An album (titled "Wayward Sons") recorded on their previous tour together will be released March 4, 2016.

# UK BLUES FEDERATION BECOMES BLUES FOUNDATION (USA) AFFILIATE



The UK Blues Federation has announced that the growing organization has been appointed an Affiliate of the Blues Foundation, in Memphis the premier, international body supporting and promoting blues around the World but based, of course, in the USA.

Chair Ashwyn Smyth told BiTS, “UKBlues is the first organisation in the UK to become an Affiliate which is something we are very proud about. This is wonderful news for UKBlues and, indeed, for the blues in the UK. As an Affiliate we will be in a position to promote UK blues to the Blues Foundation members and help blues in the UK have a voice in the Blues Foundation.

As an Affiliate, UKBlues will receive support and backing from the Blues Foundation and will work with them promoting and encouraging the blues in all its forms.

Importantly UKBlues will also be able to nominate national representatives for the annual International Blues Challenge which takes place in Memphis each January.

UK representation at and participation in this important and high profile event is long overdue and UKBlues hopes to send the UK’s first representatives to this great event in 2017.

“As Active Members of the European Blues Union and now Affiliates to the Blues Foundation we have laid some strong foundations upon which to build the future of the UKBlues and its mission to work to encourage, promote and support UK blues, both in the UK and worldwide,’ Ashwyn Smyth emphasised

Barbara Newman, the recently appointed President & CEO of the Blues Foundation said :“The Blues Foundation is thrilled to welcome the UK Blues Federation as our newest affiliate. We know that the blues are strong as ever in the UK, and we are excited to begin partnering with UK Blues as our first affiliate in that region of the world. I’ll also be cheering them on during this next year, while we provide them the support that they need to create their own local Blues Challenge so they can send the best of the new blues artists coming out of the UK to Memphis for the 2017 International Blues Challenge.”



## 2ND UK BLUES CHALLENGE

On Saturday 24th October 2015, the 2nd UK Blues Challenge took place at the Boom Boom Club in Sutton, Surrey jointly promoted and organised by Pete Feenstra Real Music Live and UK Blues.

The evening saw the four acts who had been chosen under the selection process organised by UKBlues and detailed in our last Newsletter and approved by the EBU - Brothers Groove, Malaya Blues, Katie Bradley & Red Butler - each play a 30 minute set in front of an enthusiastic and near sell-out audience as well as five judges drawn from across the UK blues scene.

Popular winners on the night were Red Butler who will now be going to represent the UK at the 6th European Blues Challenge (EBC) organised by the EBU which will take place in Torrita di Siena, Italy on 7-8-9th, April 2016.

## CROWD FUNDING CAMPAIGN

UKBlues has launched a Crowd Funding campaign to raise money to help with Red Butler's costs in attending the EBC and, it is hoped, raising funds for UKBlues, all expenditure so far incurred having been underwritten by members of UKBlues' board.

This fundraising project is now live and you can read all about it at <http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/ukblues> where you can also contribute and show your support for Red Butler and UKBlues.

Ashwin Smyth said "Please help us to support the UK's representatives at the 6th European Blues Challenge and help us take the next steps to support and promote the blues in the UK. Any contribution will be gratefully received and will be of great help."

Website: <http://www.ukblues.org/>

Twitter @ukbluesfed

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UK-Blues>

The mailing address is:

The UK Blues Federation

67 Gordon Road,

Blackwood, Caerphilly NP12 1DS

United Kingdom

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## Zoe Schwarz Blue Commotion at Milford Blues Night 26 March 2016

Zoë and the band have come right to the fore of the British Blues Scene as a result of an intensely busy, exciting and creative three years. Their latest live recording '**I'll Be Yours Tonight**' (Jun 2105) is their fourth release in three years. It follows hard on the heels of the acclaimed studio albums '**Exposed**' and '**The Blues Don't Scare Me**', both of which generated a series of awards and nominations including Runner-Up for 'Best Band' in the 2015 British Blues Awards, plus Runner-Up for Zoë in the 2014 & 2015 British Blues Awards.

*"Their exemplary song writing skills coupled with outstanding performance, puts them at the very edge of triumph on the world blues scene."* - Ian McKenzie, Blues In The South, UK 2015

*"Zoë, once again proving that there is not a better female blues singer in the UK and probably far beyond."* Dave Scott, Blues In Britain, June 2015

Their exciting live set is based around the band's rootsy originals; featuring strong catchy riffs, interesting arrangements and exciting grooves, providing the perfect vehicle for Zoë's yearning, passionate and commanding vocal style, and Rob's unmistakable touch and flow on guitar. The highly accomplished rhythm section of Pete Whittaker-Hammond organ, and Paul Robinson-drums (Nina Simone, Van Morrison, Paul McCartney to name a few) bring massive musical authority with the ability to push the music in unpredictable and exciting directions.

Zoë has made a considerable impact in a very short space of time and is one of those new artists that have added a fresh approach and vibrancy to the thriving UK blues scene.



artists

Doors and bar open 7.30pm. Show starts 8pm. Tickets £10. <http://moscommunitycentre.org.uk/box-office>

Enquiries [long.boblong@gmail.com](mailto:long.boblong@gmail.com)

Below is the IBBA air-play chart for NOVEMBER 2015 produced by Dave Raven. Check out the outstanding music on the compilation 2 CD album Blues Harp Women. You won't regret it. Congratulations to Mike Zito, Lilly Martin, Walter Trout and Mitch Laddie for their high placing, and a big shout out for funky Hazmat Modine and British blues superstar Connie Lush. More great music to come in 2016.



Position	Artist	Album
1	VARIOUS ARTISTS	BLUES HARP WOMEN
2	MIKE ZITO & THE WHEEL	KEEP COMING BACK
	LILLY MARTIN	RIGHT NOW
4	WALTER TROUT	BATTLE SCARS
	MITCH LADDIE BAND	LET YOU GO
6	HAZMAT MODINE	EXTRA-DELUXE-SUPREME
7	CONNIE LUSH	RENAISSANCE
8	STOLEN HEARTS	DIRTY SOUTHERN SOUL VOL 1
9	LEWIS HAMILTON	SHIPWRECKED
10	THE DAMNED AND DIRTY	HOODOO DOWN
11	DANNY BRYANT	BLOOD MONEY
12	THE MIGHTY BOSSCATS	BOSSMAN
13	BLACKTOP DELUXE	PRESENCE & GAIN
14	VOODOO SHEIKS	VOODIFICATION
15	RON SAYER & CHARLOTTE JOYCE	LIVE AT THE LITTLE THEATRE
16	BAD BOB BATES	BX3 EP
	THE JACKSON FOUR	LOVE THE LIFE
	OULD MAN'S BACCIE	RESONATING WITH THE BLUES
	BEIGE FISH	SNAKES 'N' WIMMEN
	CATFISH	SO MANY ROADS
21	REBECCA DOWNES	BACK TO THE START
	FANTASTIC NEGRITO	DELUXE EP
	EDDIE MARTIN'S BIG RED RADIO	LIVE IN TUSCANY
	LEWIS FOREMAN	THE RIDE EP
	THE HUSKY TONES	TIME FOR A CHANGE
26	THE PAUL GARNER BAND	BIG ROAD BLUES
	SOLOMON HICKS	CARRYING ON THE TORCH OF THE BLUES
	CHANTEL MCGREGOR	LOSE CONTROL
	SUNJAY	BLACK & BLUES
30	THE LACHY DOLEY GROUP	CONVICTION
	TIM GREEN BAND	FREE AT LAST E.P.
	ERIC BIBB AND JJ MILTEAU.	LEAD BELLY'S GOLD
	RUBY & THE REVELATORS	LIVE AT THE TUESDAY NIGHT MUSIC CLUB
	TOMMY CASTRO AND THE PAINKILLERS	METHOD TO MY MADNESS
	KING KING	REACHING FOR THE LIGHT
	REBEL ROAD	REBEL ROAD
	MICK CLARKE BAND	SHAKE IT UP
38	KATIE BRADLEY BAND	ANCHOR BABY SESSIONS
	BUDDY GUY	BORN TO PLAY GUITAR
	THE KNICKERBOCKER ALL-STARS	GO BACK HOME TO THE BLUES
	WILLY PORTER	HUMAN KINDNESS
	MARTIN HARLEY AND DANIEL KIMBRO	LIVE AT SOUTHERN GROUND
	TODD WOLFE BAND	LONG ROAD BACK
	THE ANDY TAYLOR GROUP	LOOSE CANNON
	PAUL COX	MAN OUT OF TIME
	WILY BO WALKER	MOON OVER INDIGO
	THE BOOM BAND	THE MOON GOES BOOM
	REVEREND SHAWN AMOS	THE REVEREND SHAWN AMOS LOVES YOU

**IBBA PICKS OF THE  
MONTH  
FOR JANUARY 2016:**

**COTTON BELLY'S - RAINY  
ROAD**

**DAVE WELD & THE  
IMPERIAL FLAMES - SLIP  
INTO A DREAM**

**LEWIS HAMILTON -  
SHIPWRECKED**

**THE NORMAN BEAKER  
BLUES TRIO - LIVE IN  
BELGRADE**

## **A BITS SPECIAL**

David Cozens of Lyme Regis, Dorset is writer and poet of the first order. He has been published in dozens of outlets and is also a long time lover of jazz and blues. Here is one of his short poems, which he describes as "an experiment in using words in a rhythmical way to create a sound picture in the mind." The poem is called, simply, Banjo.

Plectrum plucking chords and trills announce  
Tapping toots and bubbly bounce.  
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Joy for the box and big bass pick.  
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SONNY TERRY AND BROWNIE MCGHEE - WALK ON



REV. GARY DAVIS Slow Drag AKA Cincinnati Flow Rag



LARRY GARNER TELLS A STORY - YOU SHOULD HEAR IT.

# VIDEO BLUES



In early December, at the Concorde Club, Eastleigh, Hants, BiTS editor Ian McKenzie presented Chris Barber with the British Blues Awards' trophy recognising his achievements as a British Blues Great.

Leader of a hugely popular traditional jazz band, Barber was at the core of the skiffle craze in the 1950s bringing blues music and American roots music to the attention of thousands of young people, including, but not limited to Van Morrison and Long John Baldry to say nothing of a skiffle group in Liverpool, called the Quarrymen that later morphed into the Beatles.

A little later, Chris was responsible for bringing to the country Muddy Waters, with Otis Spann, Big Bill Broonzy, Brother John Sellers, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, Jesse Fuller, Sister Rosetta Tharpe and others.

Chris (85) now fronts the Big Chris Barber Band, which, with its 11 person line up keeps alive the fabulous music of Duke Ellington and others. When presented, at a Big Chris Barber Band gig, with the handsome engraved glass award. Chris (left above) told the audience, "I am delighted to receive this award and thank the British Blues Awards for honouring me in this way."

The award is sponsored by Ian McKenzie Presents

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## Buddy and Hopkins

By Jason Nocera ([www.buddyandhopkins.com](http://www.buddyandhopkins.com))

