

Sound Waves

Volume 25
Issue 4
January 2015

BOBBY KEYS
BILL WHARTON
RAGING FYAH
LIZ DE LISE
BEST OF THE BLUES 2014
CLUB LISTINGS
BAND LISTINGS
CONCERT INFO
RESTAURANTS
REVIEWS & MORE

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Interview
with**

**SAM
SMITH**

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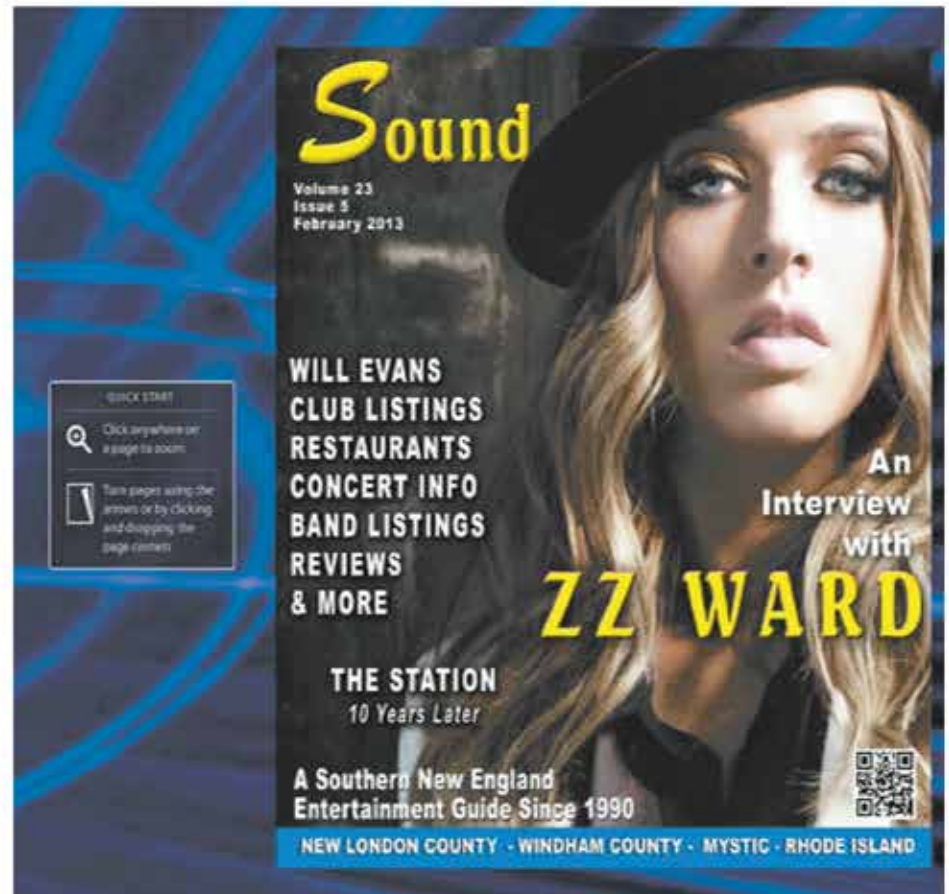
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1 **HAPPY
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Fri
2 **THE
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8 **JOHN FRIES
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Dear Readers,

It's been a while since I did this Mailbag, but this month is the start of a very special year for all of us at Sound Waves Magazine. 2015 is our 25th year of publishing the magazine!

We have been a leading entertainment and dining guide for the area since 1990. And in these 25 years we have remained a free publication! The road hasn't always been smooth, but what got us through has been you, our readers and the support of our advertisers. Some of which have been with us for the full 25 years. Thank you to everyone from the deepest of our hearts.

Over the years we have interviewed many artists. Some being the first time on the cover of a magazine. Susan Tedeschi and Grace Potter to name a couple. And Ana Popovic for her 1st American cover. It has been interesting to see the many artist that we first covered grow and their stars rise. It has also been interesting to see our staff mature over the years. Many of whom have been with us for 20+ years. For example Mark Gould, who went from just starting his law practice when he first starting to write for us to being appointed a Superior Court Judge. Or Bill Harriman, who was a young father and aspiring writer. Who now is a accomplished writer and will probably be a grandfather in the next few years. It has been a long and interesting journey.

This month we also say goodbye to our Dining Column writer Tony Sar-do. We thank him for helping us get the column off the ground. Tony is a good friend and his advice is cherished.

Another thing I would like to mention. During this year we will be giving stuff away. So LIKE us on Facebook so you can win!

Till Next Time

david Pottie - editor

4 sound waves



**We'd like to be out
of work... maybe
someday we will.**



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Sound Waves

January 2015

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 4

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8 Izzy & Matt	9 James Harris	10 The Shiny Lapel Trio
15 Andy & Bethany	16 Mystic Horns	17 Marcy Kelly Trio
22 Christine Cooney	23 kGb Band	24 Stiff Kitty
22 James Harris	23 Dan Watson	24 Rock & Soukl Revue

Happy Hour
 Mon - Fri
 3 pm - 6 pm

Trivia Tuesdays
 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Wine Down Wednesdays
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 Sat & Sun
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SUPER BOWL
 Sunday
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Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Happy New Year	2 Ben Kane	3 We Love the 90's with DJ Solo T
8 Ronnie Barns	9 Sun Dogs	10 T-Ray
15 Call for Info	16 One-Eyed Johnny	17 Frank Lo
22 Federal Q	23 James Rice	24 Mike Rogoff
29 Ronnie Barns	30 No Shame	31 Munsell Brothers

Sunday January 4th ~ 6pm
MADISON RED
 CD Release Party
 Free Buffet

MUSIC NOTES



“Local Boys Make Good”

By Mark T. Gould

When you think of it, there’s probably no rational way to include New Haven, heck, pretty much all of Connecticut, in the conversation about great music meccas.

However, judging by the recent live and recorded exploits of three of our best local musicians Gary Burr, Mark Mirando and Steve Mednick, well, we just might be getting there.

Burr, a native of Meriden, has long been the gold standard of Connecticut popular music talent. For more than three decades, he has written a plethora of memorable songs for a number of artists, starting with Juice Newton’s hit “Love’s Been a Little Bit Hard on Me,” in 1982. Since then, his songs have been recorded by the Oak Ridge Boys, Patty Loveless, Billy Ray Cyrus, Wynonna, Reba McIntire, Conway Twitty, Garth Brooks, and Tanya Tucker, to name but a few. Burr has also produced Olivia Newton-John and recorded and toured with former Beatle Ringo Starr, Pure Prairie League and, currently, with Kenny Loggins, in the Blue Sky Riders.

Somehow, along the way, he has also managed a solo career, which is highlighted by his most recent project, “Juggler’s Logic,” which is available at his web site, garyburr.com.

Logic” is an absolutely terrific collection of great songs, showcasing Burr’s incredible way with words, and, at times, his equally significant sense of humor. It’s all but impossible to select a favorite from its 11 equally songs tracks, but I find myself going back to “Love Is Out There,” “Honk if You Love Jesus,” “Twenty Bucks Says,” and “Find Me.”

After three decades plus in the music business, it is “Logic” to say that Burr’s still got it.

With all of his other projects, Burr is still able to find time to play with one of the hidden jewels of the local music scene, Hamden’s Mark Mirando. Currently playing solo and in various songwriter settings at various local venues, Mirando, like Burr, is a great songwriter, passionate and moving singer, and a fun performer.

So much so that, recently, Burr invited Mirando to play with him, and others, “in the round” at the legendary Bluebird Café in Nashville.

“Gary put the show together. He wanted to do an ‘in the round’ show that included me, and I’m more than thrilled to play there, so we found a date,” Mirando told me. “I’m already looking forward to the next time.”

Mirando, who has also done studio work with Ringo Starr, has played the Bluebird twice before, but admitted that sharing that legendary stage can still be daunting, even to an experienced, seasoned, and talented performer like himself.

“Playing there is a highlight of my career, it’s a thrill to be up there,” he said. “I get the jitters and, yes, you do feel the ghosts of the greats who have graced that stage before you. That actually helps me get over the nervousness I may feel. I know I have to keep up with the talented artists that are up there with me! I’m really more excited to be up there than nervous.

“It’s a special place to play. The audience is there to listen. There is a ‘sshhh’ rule while we’re playing. The crowd is with us whether you play a hit 6 sound waves

you wrote, a song they don’t know, or a brand new song,” he said.

“The set list is in our heads, and is usually just a guideline. When you play ‘in the round’, you play a song and then it’s on to the next performer,” he added. “We’re also set up in a circle in with the audience around us. It was a little strange the first time having people sitting at tables right next to you! That’s one way to get to know the audience. A pace gets set up pretty quickly after the first few songs, though anything can happen. That’s the magic of playing with these wonderful, gifted artists.”

Another one of those wonderful, gifted local artists is Mednick, a lawyer by day, but an incredible singer/songwriter as well. Mednick’s gift for a personal, political and loving tone is no more evident than his last two releases, “Where Are The Bodies Buried? (Problems in Democracy – Volume III),” and his new “Never Mind the Rain.”

What is remarkable about the two releases, when heard together, is the stunning combination of the universally necessary public questions, and maybe equally necessary answers, that lie in the tracks of the former, like “Liberty’s Bells Are Calling,” “Still Time For a Change,” “Wayward Prophets,” and “The World is Being Blown Apart;” with the moving, personal, almost private approach of the latter, inspired by loss and difficulty, in “On The Morrow,” “The Voice in the Wilderness,” “I Know There’s a Reason for Everything,” and “Prospect Hill.”

Mastering and commenting both the “big picture” and the “little picture” of life can be very, very daunting, but Mednick makes it seem all but effortless.

Yes, Connecticut is not New York, Boston, LA, or even Austin for that matter, but judging by the continuing good works of Burr, Mirando and Mednick, our state can more than hold its own on the musical map.



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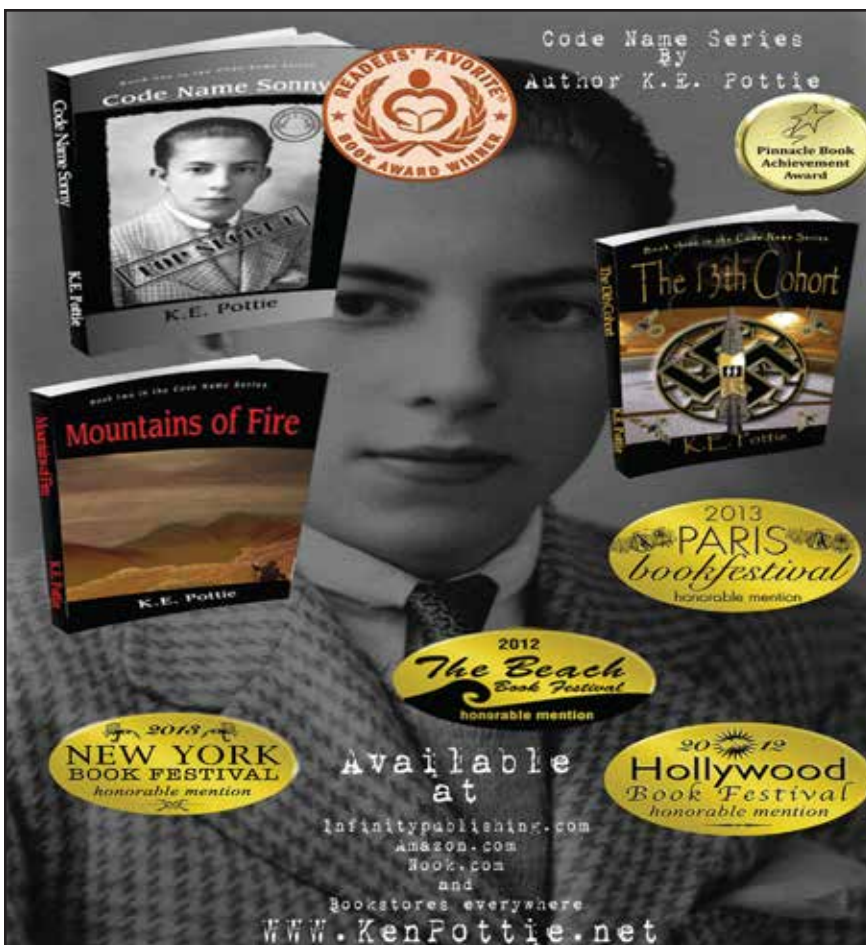
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BAR FLY JOURNALS



By stephanie shawn

Hello My Sweet BarFlies!! A New Year! Can you believe it? I'm starting off the Year with a number of Resolutions, which include a Gym Membership!! I swear to all that is holy, I will be buff!! Look out! RENEGADE in Pawcatuck, there's a whole bunch of us ready to drag our flabby asses in for some whupping, so many in fact that we will be looking for a group discount!!

Ok!! I'm baaack!! What a beautiful day!! The sun was out, the day was amazingly warm for December 27th!! Gotta love our New England weather!! Sat at the Bar in the

HARBOUR HOUSE with some regulars DAVE and I believe his lovely lady was SUZANNE (I apologize if I got that wrong :) and we were served by part-time bartender slash expeditor TANNER! A handsome and personable young aspiring writer, we enjoyed his company but were even happier when DEB and ANDY MC-GUGAN stopped by so we could all interrogate TANNER together!!



We ordered double Margarita Flatbreads (yummy) and a gorgeous plate of oysters from the Raw Bar. Sweeet!! While there we discussed our flabby asses, the sign-up to RENEGADE GYM and

the UNLIMITED TANNING!!! Yes, girls, you heard me right...unlimited! TANNER, overhearing our conversation said "I'll Always be Tanner"..... hahaha get it?? "I'll always be Tanner....kid cracked me up!! Great food, delicious drinks and a "thank you" to JOE MCNEIL and his family for buying us all a round and his daughter MORGAN, for being patient with us and taking some pix... with ANDY consistently being caught mid-wink!

2014 was wonderful! From trips to Block Island to Poker Runs from SUNSET RIBS in Niantic, BULKELEY HOUSE in New London to SANDYS and WINDJAMMER in Misquamicut, we definitely had some fun! As we head into January, I can't help but plan ahead for Spring. Typical New Englander, I'm not letting the cold get me down!

This past month was a whirlwind of activity. I've been doing TWISTED TRIVIA on Sundays or Mondays at the HANDLEBAR CAFE and we've been having a blast! Example: which well known entertainer has her breasts insured for \$600,000? answer Dolly Parton...And, who wrote and produced the song "Coming to America"? answer Neil Diamond. If you answered any of these questions or would just like to join us for a chance at being our next TRIVIA MASTER...stop by on MONDAYS Around 6... bring a partner, form a team, or play alone...it's amazingly fun and addict-

ing and maybe just maybe you'll learn something...just ask HARRY and NANCY ROTH..they are generally our weekly champs!

We will be holding various events in January to try to raise awareness of Heroin Abuse in our communities. SHINE A LIGHT ON HEROIN ON January 17 is asking that businesses in our area hold fundraisers for the victims and social services programs in our areas. Contact WESTERLY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, STONINGTON DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES for more information. Many businesses, restaurants and bars will be donating a portion of their proceeds and also using this day to try to Shine a Light on an Addiction that is effecting so many in our communities. We need to start a conversation, instead of hiding this under the rug...Awareness, people! Do what you can! Check out the SHINE A LIGHT ON HEROIN (OR SALOH) Page on Facebook or the tireless JIM SPELLMAN for more information!

Birthday Club! Happy Birthday to JOHN WODICKA, CAROLINE BALL, DAN BURDICK, JIM MOULTON, LUKE PINATELLO, CHRIS MACKAY, KENNY ATKINSON, JOEL TOMSKY, JOHN HIGGINS, SAL MURANO, DICK BROWN, CRAIG JOHNSON, STEVE CLEARY, GORDON GOULD, ED ADAMS, BECKY SICILIANO, TODD TERRANOVA, DAVEY DREAD TURANO, NELL MOORE CHEVAKLIER, GEORGE DEFREITAS, RON HOXSIE, RACHEL EVERETT, PETER BEERS, JAMES RUTH, CAROL SHAKESHAFT

CANOVA, ALICIA PICCOLO, FRED BOGUE, RONNIE HARKNESS, JON LALLO, JACK BURROUGHS, JODI SHAWN WALKER, MARCI CHEVIAN-HOOPER, JACOB GUY, MIKE RAFFO, LARRY MAIN, KEITH LIPPMAN, JIM CAMPO, BRENDA MARTIN, ZACH GENESE, JENNIFER LENSIS, JAY PALAZZOLA, JOE CARTER, JOHN



HINKLE, KEVIN KOPCZA, DAVE HILL, DINO COZZOLINO, WENDY GARAFOLA, CANDICE STAMM!, MICHELE MITCHELL!, besties WENDY CARR and TAMI ALGIERE and a belated HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Christmas Baby, sweet ED ST. CLAIR!

Well 2015 is here...I am off to LAUDERDALE BY THE SEA to celebrate NEW YEAR'S EVE in the midst of a downtown Block Party with revelers and fireworks, but I hope to see many of you on Sunday Jan 4 at the HANDLEBAR CAFE for TWISTED TRIVIA.. NEW YEAR'S STYLE! Check out my FaceBook page to find out exactly when I'm there cuz I like to keep you on your toes!

New bar in town FRIENDS BAR AND GRILL in the White Rock section of Westerly. Thinking of you to GREG DOUGHTY, CHARLIE LATHROP and MICHELE PAYNE, who are going through some deeply personal losses at this time. You are in the thoughts of many. Also this year, the talent in this area, as I've said before, is phenomenal! Some great bands to see this year... BEN KANE at the STEAK LOFT and PENNY LANE PUB, STYFF KITTY at CC O'BRIENS, MATT SINNER with SINNERS INC., BRIAN MCKENZIE BAND and the JAY DEMPSEY BAND at SNEEKERS and CHRISTINE COONEY at the DRAWBRIDGE...check out their FaceBook pages for more info! Remember shop local, drink local, be Merry and have a HAPPY NEW YEAR! What a Spectacular Year and Wonderful life!! Thank you for your constant support! Love you long time, my Sweet Sweet Flies!

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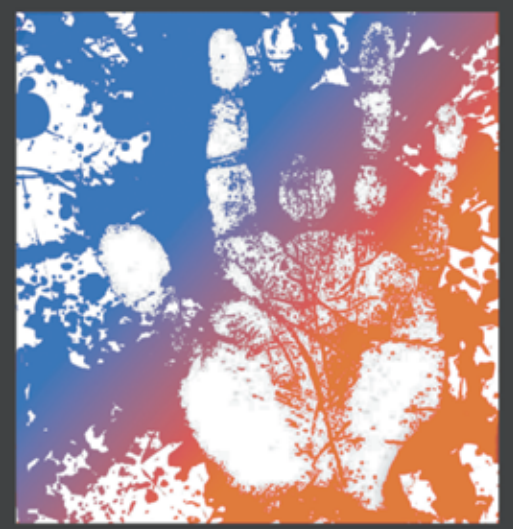
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Camaraderie and fun, a delicious Italian meal, live entertainment with musicians including Stephen Atherton & friends.

Jimmy has some serious health issues and the kidney which Angela, his wife donated several year ago is no longer working. Just the medical bills and living expenses has put a toll on them! Tickets are \$25 for adults, 12-17 \$5.00 and under 12 free.

A delicious Italian meal with entertainment by Stephen Atherton & friends, gift baskets and a few surprises! Tickets are available at the Portuguese Club in Stonington. Questions? More info? Please go to: angelajimmy@weebly.com

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BAND DATES

ANDY & BETHANY

2,16 – AZU, Mystic, CT 8-11 8 – Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm 9 – Angie's Pier 27, Mystic CT 10,23,31 – Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7pm 11 – Red 36, Mystic, CT 12:30pm 15 – Harbour House, Mystic, CT 7:30pm 17 – Breachway Grill, Charlestown, RI 6:30pm 21 – Mystic Pizza II, N. Stonington, CT 7:30pm
22 – Red 36, Mystic, CT 7pm
30 – Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT

AZALEA DRIVE

16 – Burkes, Niantic, CT 8:30
23 – Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm

BEN KANE

2 – Old Roadhouse, New London, CT 7pm
9 – Crossing Brew Pub, Putnam, CT
10 – Ridge Winery, Preston, CT 6:30pm
24 – Lyme Tavern, Niantic, CT
30 – Old Road House, New London, CT 6pm
31 – Penny Lane Pub, Old Saybrook, CT 7pm

THE CARTELLS

2,16 – Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm
– Harbour House, Mystic, CT 8:30pm
– Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
– Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI 7:30pm
– Maple Tree, Simsbury, CT

CRUZ MACHINE

9 – Andover Pizza, Andover, CT 7pm
23 – Burkes, Niantic, CT 8pm
30 – Free Spirit Cafe, Vernon, CT

DAN STEVENS

2 – Old Goat Pub, Richmond, ME
3 – Montsweag Roadhouse, Woolwich, ME
6,13,20,27 – Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT
7 – Social Club, Darien, CT
7 8,29 – Smokin' With Chris, Southington, CT
9 – Manhattan Pub, Burlington, VT
10 – Nectar's, Burlington, VT
11 – Steak Loft, Mystic, CT

14 – Sneeker's Cafe, Groton, CT
15 – The Fez, Stamford, CT
17 – New York Pizza, Plainfield, CT
18 – Delta Grill, New York, NY
23 – Locality Gallery, Bedford, PA

10 Sound wAveS DAN WATSON

4 – Ancient Mariner, Mystic, CT 5pm
6,17,20 – Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT 7,21 – Tipping Chair, Southington, CT 7pm 8,15,22,29 – Ancient Mariner-Mystic, CT 8pm 10 – Bridge, Westerly, RI 8pm 11,25 – Tara's, Matunuck, RI 3:30pm 16,31 – Lansdowne Pub, Uncasville, CT 5:30pm 18 – Ancient Mariner, Mystic, CT 5pm 23 – Dog Watch, Stonington, CT 24 – Breachway Grill, Charlestown, RI 7pm 27 – Angies Pier 27, Mystic, CT 5pm 28 – Mystic Pizza II, N. Stonington, CT 7:30pm 30 – Harbor House, Mystic, CT 8pm

FRANKENPHIL

2 – Brown Derby, Uncasville, CT 5pm 9 – Black Hall Grille, Old Lyme, CT 7pm
10 – Penny Lane, Old Saybrook, CT 7:30pm
16 – Old Roadhouse, New London, CT 6pm
17 – Toyo Hibachi, Colchester, CT 8pm
18 – Tara's, Matunuck, RI 3:30pm
23 – AZU, Mystic, CT 7pm
24 – Seehund, New London, CT 6pm
25 – Buskers, Newport, RI 12pm

THE GOAT ROPERS

2,17,23,31 – VFW, Taunton, MA 8-12 8 – Sandbar Grill, Taunton, MA 8-12

GOPHERBROKE

10 – McKinnon's, Hartford, CT
16 – Bidwell Tavern, Coventry, CT
22 – Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 6:30-9
24 – Blackthorn Public House, Easton, MA 8-11

JAMES HARRIS

2,30 – Latitude 41, Mystic, CT 7pm
3,31 – Cilanto's, New London, CT 8pm
6,13,20,27 – Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT 7,10, 14,21,24,28 – Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
– Harbor House, Mystic, CT 8:30pm
11 – Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI 8pm
– Azu, Mystic, CT 7:30pm
11,25 – Maugle Vineyard, Ledyard, CT 6pm
– Steakloft, Mystic, CT 7pm
– Angie's, Mystic, CT
– Harbor House, Mystic, CT 7:30pm

KARMA & THE TRUTH

3,17,31 – Grill on Main, E. Greenwich,

RI

23 – 1150 Oak Bar, Cranston, RI
24 – CC O'Briens's, Pawcatuck, CT

KEEP IT ROLLING BAND

3 – Hungry Tiger, Manchester, CT
31 – Brown Derby, Montville, CT
CTMUNSELL BROTHERS BAND
32 – Burkes, Niantic, CT
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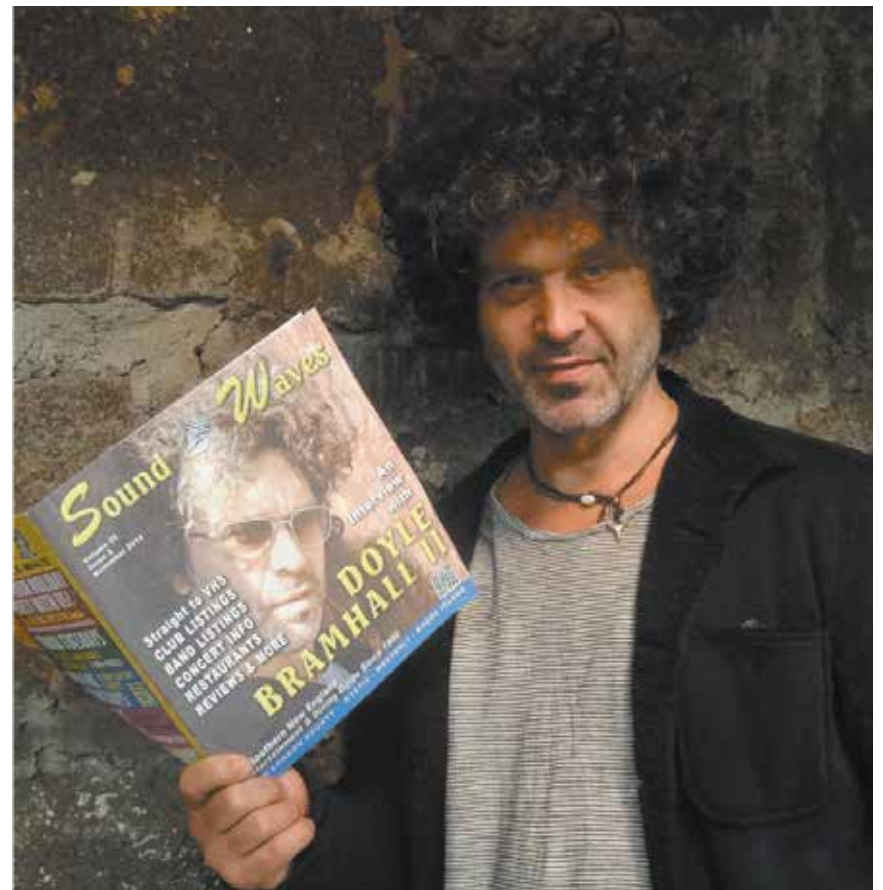
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PERFECT STORM





Heart and Soul: Interview with Sam Smith

By Sam Rowe

Telegraph Magazine / The Interview People

On one side of the Atlantic fans wrestle with an internet connection to secure tickets for Sam Smith's just announced American tour. On the other, 30 or so wait outside the O2 Academy Leeds (showtime is not for another five hours), on the off chance they will catch a glimpse of their idol. After about an hour Smith steps out to oblige the demands for autographs and selfies.

Back inside, he takes the stage for this afternoon's soundcheck. He is wearing a long trench coat, blue suede shoes and his trademark crucifix earrings. Flanked by his backing band and three gospel singers, he belts out his set pitch perfect.

During this, one of his team tells me that his debut show at New York's Madison Square Garden has sold out in half an hour. Later, a 17,500 capacity arena in Los Angeles will sell out in 10 minutes with an additional date added hastily in its wake. Like dominoes, Toronto, San Francisco and Washington, DC, are next to fall.

In the days leading up to our interview, Smith, 22, performed on *Later ... with Jools Holland*; won four Mobos and a Q award on the same day; announced the latest single from his number-one album *In the Lonely Hour*; and embarked on a UK tour that began in Glasgow the previous evening. His trajectory has been astonishing. Only two years ago Smith was working seven days a week in a City of London bar, cleaning the lavatories and walking home because he couldn't afford the Tube fare.

'It's quite overwhelming sometimes,' he admits later, as we sit in his dressing room two hours before stage time. He is more casually dressed now, in a polo shirt, hoodie and jeans. 'It's getting to the point where I really can't digest it. If I sat down and tried I think I would probably break down in tears or just freak out.'

He confesses it is 'impossible to stay completely normal', but the key, he says, is not to remain the same, rather to be 'aware' of the sheer absurdity of the situation, especially as, he says, 'One day I might bring out a really shit album. It will be interesting to see who's still your friend then.'

14 Sound wAveS

For now - armed with a three-million-selling debut album loaded with tales of heartache, influences that include Aretha Franklin, Amy Winehouse and Whitney Houston, and a vocal range to rival Mariah Carey - Smith is Britain's biggest musical export since Adele Adkins. His mournful falsetto elicited heavy expectations before he had even released a single, owing to guest vocals for Disclosure (on 2012's *Latch*, which he also wrote) and Naughty Boy (*La La La*) - with the latter earning Smith his first number one.

Once he finally resigned from his job at the bar, the recognition began, and quickly. He topped the BBC's Sound of 2014 poll in January, which was followed by the Brits Critics' Choice award - an industry nod that previously greased the wheels for the likes of Jessie J, Ellie Goulding and Adele. The comparison with Adele is never far away - in part thanks to the stratospheric sales, brooding lyrics and vocal talent they share, but perhaps primarily as neither conforms to the finely chiselled ideal of the modern pop star.

'It actually makes me sad,' Smith says. 'There should be artists out there of all different shapes, sizes, colours and sexualities.' Where others rely on gimmicks, pyrotechnics and salacious dance moves, for Smith and Adele it is about the voice and nothing else. 'It's quite frustrating actually when you do shows and you're the only person not twerking. I get angry, like, "Why am I the only one standing there singing?" People should be doing that.'

And yet whatever Sam Smith is (or isn't) doing is evidently working. The singles *Money on My Mind* and *Stay with Me* - both of which he co-wrote - were number ones, while the album is the highest charting debut from a British solo artist in the United States. While many of today's musicians find themselves laser-targeted towards a certain demographic, Smith's appeal shows no bounds.

At tonight's gig this is further evident, teen girls jostling for floor space with veteran soul boys and countless couples. How did this happen?

'I don't know,' Smith says, smiling. 'I think it's just me. I hope it's just me. I make music that the builder down the road - who can't sing at all - can sing.'

He must have a theory, though?

'The one thing I would say that I think has done it, it's honesty. Go through any massive song and the key is being relatable. Make a song that makes everyone go, "I have felt like that. I know how you feel." If you strip it back, be yourself and be natural, I think people can sense that, you know.'

In the *Lonely Hour* is certainly a soul-barer of a record, telling tales of loss, heartbreak and unrequited love. On its release Smith made no secret that the object of his affections was a man. 'I've always been an open book about it,' he tells me. 'This was the constant thing; I came out as a gay man at a very, very young age.' Coming out to friends and family at 12 no doubt required courage, yet doing so to the music industry was arguably braver. 'We all had that reservation before the record,' Smith admits. 'Past gay artists, things have happened to them that haven't been great. All I can say is I'm so unbelievably surprised and happy at how far the world has come, because there have been no issues.'

Smith is yet to have a serious relationship but has come clean to the man who inspired the album (a hard but 'very natural' conversation, he says), and he can't stifle a smile when he tells me that he has been dating someone of late. He says there is no time for a relationship right now, however. 'Obviously I want to fall in love and stuff, but I don't yearn for it every day like I used to. It sounds so cheesy but my fans have completely filled that hole.'

Sam Smith grew up in Great Chishill, a village in Cambridgeshire. His father, Frederick, was a house husband, and his mother, Kate Cassidy, worked as a trader for the City broker Tullett Prebon, earning £500,000 a year. Smith was an artistic child with two younger sisters, and claims to

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have been 'always acting and singing', once setting up 'a film company' with his neighbours and shooting DIY horror movies for local parents to watch. After hearing his eight-year-old son singing in the car, Frederick Smith arranged singing lessons with a local jazz musician, who let Sam sing anything he desired. He chose Frank Sinatra's Come Fly with Me in his first lesson and the soundtrack to Cats in his second.

Smith is old beyond his years - a product, he believes, of being forced to hold court at his mother's dinner parties. Often he would perform musical numbers for guests, and on other occasions simply 'tell stories'. 'If someone was talking about a subject, my mum would be like, "Oh, that happened to us last week. Sam, tell everyone,"' he says. 'At 10 years old that is quite daunting, to chat to a whole table of adults and hold your own. There's an art to it: He pauses for a huge swig of water. (He used to drink whisky pre-performances, to settle his nerves. This is no longer required.) 'If that means I've got an old head on my shoulders, then great. I'd never want to lose that.

Smith had his first manager at 12 - a 'tough' time, he remembers. 'I had a lot of adults around me and they could see something, but I don't think they knew what to do with it. Numerous others followed, as Smith endured years of broken promises from managers who claimed they would make him famous, and false starts with record labels.

The first - wholly unwanted - taste of recognition came in 2009, when the Daily Mail reported that his mother was fired from her job for gross misconduct, amid claims she was spending company time on her son's pop career. Cassidy filed for wrongful dismissal. Smith won't divulge whether she won her case or not and has never discussed its outcome. Today he says that the episode only served to intensify his determination to succeed. 'There's a fire in me,' he says. 'There's a fire that ignited in me on the day that happened. And it made Smith feel even more sympathetic towards his father. It was he who had served as everything from a taxi driver to personal trainer in support of Smith's career. 'My poor dad's driving me around London for years and then my mum gets all the credit,' he jokes.

An hour before the show, and Smith is on his tour bus, struggling to teach his band how to play the card game Black Maiden. 'This is us pretending to have fun,' he says, as he explains to the dubious band that the loser must be 'punched in the face'. Complete with high-end sound system, flashy televisions, oversized fridge and video-game consoles, the bus is suitably lavish (though the European plug points are 'a pain', Smith says).

I scan the rider: champagne, beer, vodka, olives, mini cookies, Petits Filous yogurt and, rather oddly, Bisto. The mood is light and there is little sign of hierarchy. Smith dictating a Facebook update to Jack - one of three managers who help run his career - between card hands (to be posted to his 2.3 million Facebook fans) is the only real reminder it is his name up in lights tonight.

Smith's sister Mabel is in town for today's show. Her red Micra is parked behind the bus. Smith tells me it was actually his first car, the one he would drive to gigs when he moved to London four years ago. By this point he was growing frustrated at his failed attempts to get noticed. Meanwhile television shows such as The X Factor and Britain's Got Talent were awarding fame without much heavy lifting. Was he tempted to sign up? 'One hundred per cent: he says. "I did go on to a talent show one time but it wasn't televised. I came third in the country or something so that was interesting."

On the brink of shelving his ambitions in favour of pursuing a regular 19-year-old's life, Smith finally got his break. He found his seventh manager in Elvin Smith (who is still with him), a former singer Smith had once drunkenly heckled at an Adele concert ('This song is for someone I love: Elvin, an Adele support act, had said. 'Ah, thanks!' yelled Smith from the crowd) before bumping into him a couple of years later. Through Elvin, Smith was introduced to Jimmy Napes, who produced his album and con-

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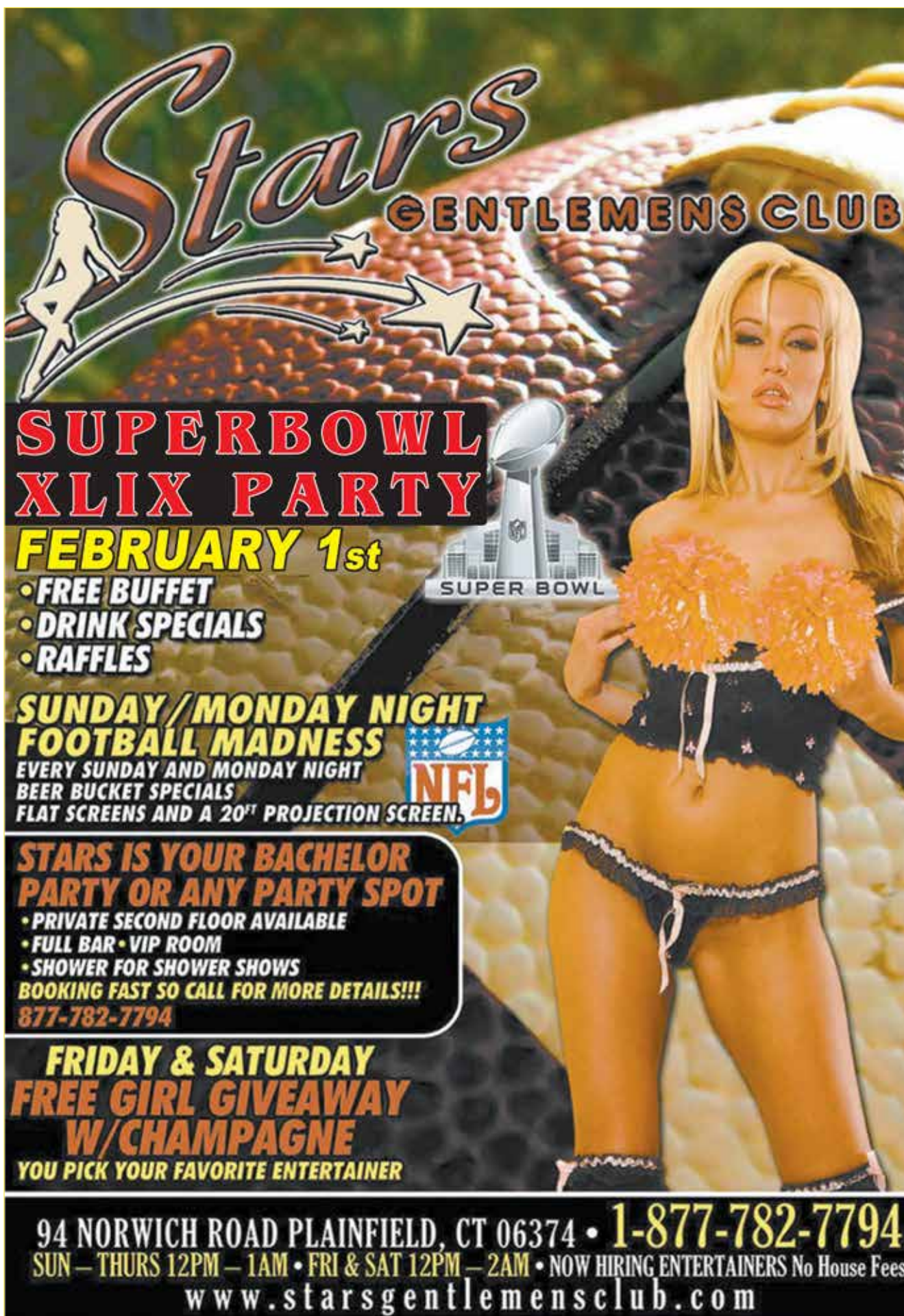
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nected him to Disclosure.

'I'm so lucky to have met the team then because I was at the point where I was going, "I will do anything ... " Not anything, but I was saying, "You can clone me into whatever you want. I just want to be a singer. I don't want to be working in this bar any more. I will do whatever you tell me to do." What they told me to do was just be myself.'

Two years later, and Sam Smith finds himself in the same circles as the artists he once idolised. Ed Sheeran and Jessie J have offered 'gorgeous advice', he says, on how to maintain his voice (rest, water and honey, if you're interested), and he is rarely seen out without a harem of beautiful women, including his best friend Daisy Lowe, Miley Cyrus, Katy Perry and Kim Kardashian (turned on to Smith's music by her husband, Kanye West - 'an amazing woman', Smith gushes). I had also read on Wikipedia that Smith is Lily and Alfie Allen's third cousin, something I had dismissed as false (it was Wikipedia, after all), but can't help asking about.

'It's true,' he says, 'but I know Lily Allen as much as you know Lily Allen. I have only met her three or four times but every time she sees me she goes, "Cuz!", which is great.'

A drawback of fame is, of course, intrusion into one's personal life. In the *Lonely Hour* paints Sam Smith as a candid individual, but he has his hangups. He has always struggled with his weight. He doesn't look overweight, but at 6ft 4in he is certainly imposing. 'I've got a security guard now and he's my fitness trainer as well, so we go and work out all the time,' he says. 'There have been moments I have looked online and thought, "Oh God, that's such an awful angle," but I don't feel any worse about my body now than I did when I was younger. It's true what they say about TV putting weight on people. I'm not fat, I'm just not five foot something, and I don't look like a skinny guy from a boy band.'

Five minutes before show time. Smith is dressed in a navy suit, crisp white shirt and the same blue suede shoes. They are Calvin Klein, his proudest purchase and the only item to survive all three of today's costume changes. He recently met *American Vogue's* editor-in-chief Anna Wintour, at her request, along with Sarah Jessica Parker. This was evidently a very big deal to him. 'The top of that world has given me a nod, he says. 'It's unbelievable. I am such a big fan of Anna's.'

Smith has only recently moved out of a modest £500-a-month flat in Oval, South London (and only because he had been burgled twice) to rent a 'nice, safe place' in East London, with no designs on owning somewhere until next year. His most glamorous purchase to date had come minutes before our interview in his dressing room, in fact - as he had bought a new car for his sister. It seems the Smith family's trusty, rusty Micra is not long for this world, billowing smoke from the engine over the past few days. But even then, 'I'm not overdoing it,' he assures me. 'It's another cheap car; just not a Nissan Micra. His one real treat to himself backfired. Feeling lonely, he bought a blue French bulldog for 'a ridiculous amount of money'. He sold it three days later. 'I realised I wasn't that lonely,' he says, grimacing.

Smith and his five-piece backing band - all dressed impeccably in black suits - join hands and chant, a ritual before every show. Striding on to the stage and dancing playfully around each other, they don't appear to have any nerves. The show itself is surprisingly spectacular, featuring gospel and big-band collaborations, along with cover versions of Whitney Houston's *How Will I Know* and CeCe Peniston's *Finally* intertwined with *Money on My Mind*.

'That was amazing,' Smith says as he comes off stage, accepting hugs and high fives from his band. 'I honestly think that was one of the best shows we've done.' There is no raucous aftershow party to host tonight - the bus is bound for Newcastle for tomorrow's show within two hours of Smith finishing his set, so watching a DVD on the tour bus with his sister is the extent of the celebrations. En route to the bus, Smith makes a detour

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to thank everyone from the venue staff to the roadies dismantling the stage. Holding a box of chocolates he plans on giving one particularly dedicated fan, Smith then bids farewell to 80 or so shrieking supporters waiting behind railings outside. 'Sam, Leeds loves you,' one shouts. 'Did you mean it - were we really better than last night?' another asks. More than half an hour later - every fan request, picture and hug seen to - Sam Smith is on his bus. As the engine rumbles into life, I have time for one final question. This has all happened so quickly, I say - fame, fortune, awards, Madison Square Garden - all off the back of one album. Where do you see yourself in five years?

'I'm going to open up a coffee and flower shop. I even know the name but I won't tell anyone what it is,' Smith says. He can see the scepticism in my eyes, and smiles. 'I'm going to do it, 100 per cent. I don't know when, but give it five years and I'll do it. There's a lot I need to go into. I've got to find the right coffee bean.'



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HEARING AID



Raging Fyah "Destiny"

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I love good reggae, and Raging Fyah's first release "Judgement Day" is near the top of my list of favorite reggae albums. Now Raging Fyah continues to bring legit roots rock reggae that cuts through the bull and inspires you all at once. This band from Kingston, Jamaica released their second album "Destiny" recently, and it's been playing on my stereo every day since.

I was moved by the music from the very first listen. I want to describe it as "holy", because that's the feeling I get when listening to it, but it really doesn't sum it up. The lyrics are truth, inspiration, depth, and spirituality. My hair stands on end, I get goosebumps all over, and even get a little teary-eyed at times. I'm a sucker for good spiritual reggae, and this album is excellent.

The band is extremely talented. They aren't dominated by any particular instrument - they all work together to make a cohesive, beautiful sound. Songs like "Feel Jah Love" get you up and dancing, and the melody will stick in my head for hours. Singer Kumar Bent has such a silky smooth, beautiful voice and really cuts through the mix with his uplifting lyrics of truth and hope.

"Africa" could have been the title track:

"What if our destiny / is that we all be free / when we all meet at our homeland / Africa, where we come from".

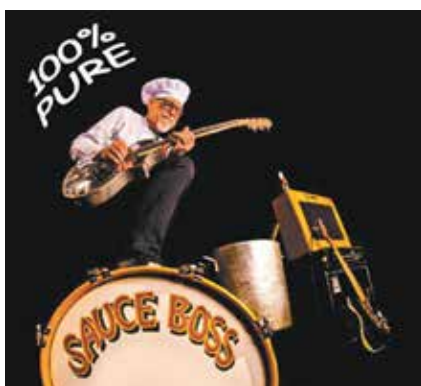
It's a calling back to our roots. I may not be African, but I can still feel the calling back to my own roots, and where I come from. It's a yearning to live in a
18 Sound wAves

world free of materialism and violence, and I can always get down with that. In "Mankind", he begins with "Seek the truth from the roots / you gotta know before you teach the youth"

It's a deeply spiritual song imploring mankind to come to an understanding of the issues so that we can move forward and upward. Like most Raging Fyah songs, it is full of wisdom and beautiful music.

I highly recommend "Destiny" to all lovers of reggae music, and I also recommend just as highly "Judgement Day", their debut. I just can't get enough of good roots rock reggae, and these guys do it to perfection.

- Tom Matthew
Two Ton Music



Bill Wharton, aka, "The Sauce Boss" "100% Pure"

Indie

The first time I saw Bill Wharton, aka "The Sauce Boss" play, it was at The Big E, an enormous county fair held annually in the fall in Springfield, MA. I was immediately impressed with how he could simultaneously sing, play the guitar and stir a huge pot of gumbo that he served up to his audience! When I heard that he had a new CD out, naturally, I wanted to sample what he was dishing out on disc.

The first time I listened to this recording, I found myself thinking, "Where's the bass?" After not finding information on the packaging, I emailed "The Sauce Boss" himself. This was his reply. "I am the only person on the disc. (Except for the vocal chorus on Wilbur) Most of the tunes are in the one man band for-

mat except for Sun, Cadillac, Wilbur, and Zipper. Each of these tracks has a single additional track which I added to the original track. A guitar, rub board, or a vocal chorus on Wilbur. I play the kick, high hat, and guitar/bass simultaneously." (sic)

There it was, plain and simple. Bill Wharton was a TRUE "one man band," almost as he would sound if you saw him live, aiming for "100% Pure!" Now that I had adjusted how I listened to this recording, I put myself back in the audience at The Big E.

Track one, "Zipper Bird," came in with a lot of distortion on the guitar. The intro, as with a few other songs on this disc, was a little long and I felt as if he could have shaved a few bars off the top of this tune. Once it got into the vocals, it had a nice flow, though. Cut two, "Marquis de Swamp" takes you down to the Bayou. The eerie tone of guitar and theme of the vocals made me want to "git out my black cat bone!" This song is drenched in swamp! Track three, "It's Gonna Be Alright," had a little lighter, more optimistic spirit. One passage in particular struck a chord with me. "When the world is heavy on your back, it's what you got, y'all, it ain't what you lack!"

Track four, "Chains," takes us back to the bayou. You can almost taste the gumbo. It ends with a primal scream! The fifth cut, "Delta 9 Blues" gets down, gritty and bluesy as he romances refer as he muses that "Sometimes I need a little something for my mind. Talking 'bout refer to ease my worried mind!" Musically, this tune is heavily laden with slide guitar. The sixth track takes things up-tempo again, with vamping slide guitar riffs and a pounding bass drum. Track six brings the pace up with the tune that vamps playfully on one chord in "Peckerwood." I can picture this song being played at a "hoe-down" as he exclaims, "Goin' down to Peckerwood, gonna have a little fun!"

Track seven, "Chicago Combat Zone," comes in strong with electrified resonator guitar. He goes on a musical journey back home to where he, "lived down on the south side, when I was only three years old." He warns the listener, "If you're goin' to Chicago, you best take your 45!" The eighth cut, "Cadillac of a Woman," is the only tune not penned by Wharton. In contrast to most of the material on this CD, this tune is a gentle ballad, though I must say that his guitar still speaks loud and clear!

Track nine, "Hey Wilber," has a playful call and response. It's just

funny! Cut ten, "Sun," is another tune with a "hoe-down" rhythm to it. When played live, it's likely to get folks up on their feet! Definitely a change of pace, the eleventh cut, "Song of the Irish Band," is somewhat of a folk ballad. Throughout this disc, Wharton's voice has an edgy quality, but, in this tune it takes on an almost Tom Waites style. He laments, "It's four o'clock in the morning, and my mind won't lay down!" in this stripped down tune featuring Wharton and his guitar alone.

In contrast to the previous cut, the final track, "Outlaw Blues" suddenly picks up the pace, starting with Wharton's signature distorted slide guitar. He gives this disc one last stir and it's done... ready to consume. Sometimes it's spicy, sometimes smoky, sometimes sweet, and sometimes all of the above. Delicious!

- Ms Marci

The Best in Blues - 2014

As Sound Waves Magazine approaches it's 25th year in publication, we continue a tradition that started in the early ninties with our picks of the best blues records of the year. Once again I've asked Dana Fargnoli, the blues director at WCNI radio, to join me with his picks. Dana can be heard every Saturday from 9am to noon on his "Out of the Blues" show on 90.9 FM. Some familiar names are on my list, especially the guy at the top who just might be my all time favorite blues musician. Also, a special shout out goes to local legend Sugar Ray Norcia and his excellent band for claiming the top spot on Dana's list. Needless to say, Dana will be playing these new records throughtout the month of January. Feel free to email him at wcnilblues@yahoo.com if you have any requests. With that said here are our lists.

Bill's list:

1. **Lucky Peterson**
"Son of a Bluesman"
Jazzbook Records
2. **Gary Clark Jr.**
"Live" Warner Bros.
3. **Johnny winter**
"Step Back" Megaforce Records
4. **Tinsley ellis**

"Midnight Blue" Heartfixer Music
 5. **eric Bibb**
 "Blues People" Stony Plain
 6. **Ruthie Foster**
 "Promise of a Brand New Day"
 Blue Corn Music
 7. **Rory Block**
 "Hard Luck Child: A Tribute to Skip James" Stony Plain
 8. **Keb' Mo'**
 "Bluesamericana"
 Kind of Blue Music
 9. **Sugar Ray & The Bluetones**
 "Living Tear to Tear" Severn Records
 10. **Knickerbocker All-Stars**
 "Open Mic at the Knick" Cadillac

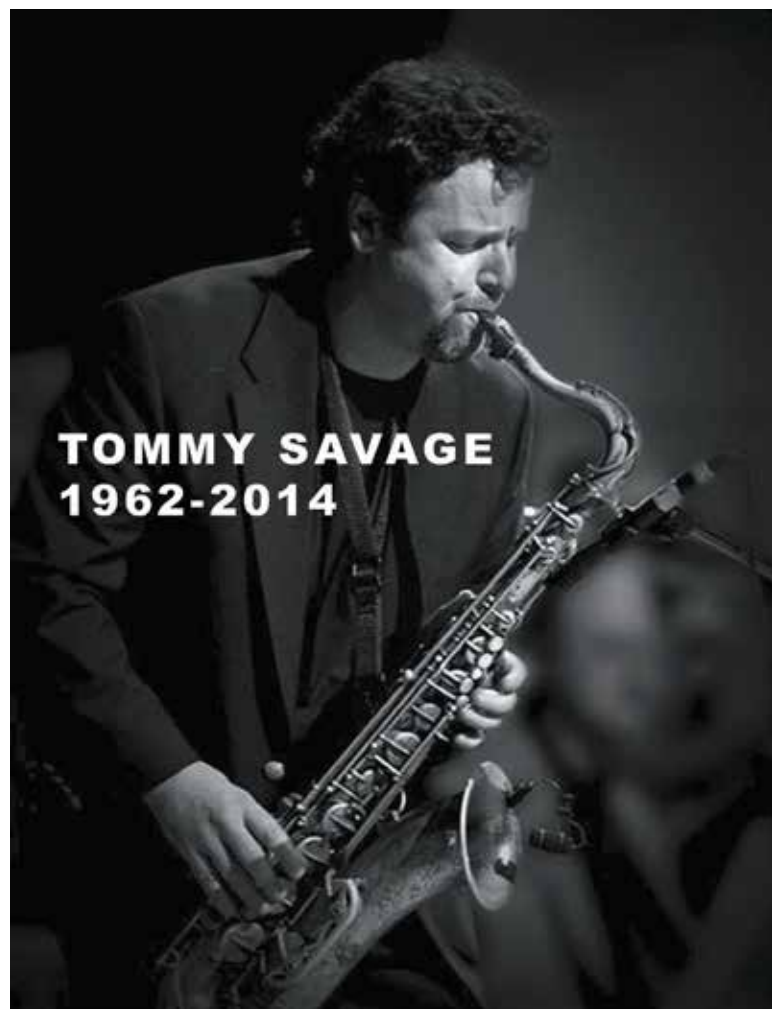
dana's List:

1. **Sugar Ray & The Bluetones**
 "Living Tear to Tear"
 Severn Records
 2. **Mannish Boys**
 "Wrapped Up and Ready"
 Delta Groove Music
 3. **Rick estrin & The nightcats**
 "You Asked for It - Live" Alligator

4. **Mud Morganfield & Kim wilson**
 "For Pops" Severn Records
 5. **eden Brent**
 "Jigsaw Heart"
 Yellow Dog Records
 6. **elvin Bishop**
 "Can't Even Do Wrong Right"
 Alligator Records
 7. **Mickey Junior**
 "Traveling South"
 Swingnation Records
 8. **Missy anderson**
 "In The Moment"
 Main Squeeze Records
 9. **Keb' Mo'**
 "Bluesamericana"
 Kind of Blue Music
 10. **Mark Hummel**
 "The Hustle is Really On"

Dana and I wish to dedicate this year's top ten lists to the memory of Johnny Winter. I would like to wish all Sound Waves readers a very happy and healthy 2015.

- **Bill Harriman**



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LOCAL BEAT



Charming Talented Singer Songwriter Liz de Lise Returns to Play CT College

By Andrew Krebs

Listeners looking for a lively singer-songwriter need look no further than Liz de Lise: an acoustic guitarist and singer whose crisp finger-picking style has earned her many a fan since taking up guitar in her early teens. I had the unexpected pleasure of having Liz grace me with her talent on a radio interview recently. Her very fluid and supple voice was evident on the vibrato “bum bums,” “neighs” and playful “ya yas” on the choruses of some of her catchy sing-alongs, and I was amazed at seeing her hand master the fretboard.

Liz de Lise influences include Joni Mitchell’s “Case of You,” Paul Simon and Andrew Byrd. Liz was also influenced by Green Day, whose “Good Riddance” was the first live song she ever played as a student in 8th grade. She began to play crowds while at Connecticut College several years back and claims she inherited her musical talent, as both her brother and father are musicians. Liz has 3 EPs out: Friends, and To & Fro which are both great and were featured at a homecoming concert at Connecticut College from which Liz de Lise has just graduated.

Travel is a prevalent theme in de Lise’s music as she has been all over the world, from Oregon to India, and has been struck by the similarity of values between types of people regardless of time and place. “Strangers,” with its strident guitar verse and catchy chorus, wonderfully reflects the spontaneity of traveling around and meeting random street kids who share “universal desires and happiness.” Strangers also includes such unusual instruments as a mandolin and banjo which nicely compliments Liz’ high pitched singing on that song. Liz’ father, in addition to playing accordion on “Strangers,” also contributed the percussion and the wonderful piano at the end of the travelogue song “Pan” and on her EP To & Fro. Liz has enjoyed meeting new people around the world and writes songs to reflect that experience.

Liz’ turbulent early 20s transition is evident her music, as she sings of friends and relationships dispersing as young adults travel away from their comfort zones. “Philadelphia” bespeaks the longing for warm and sunny Oregon: something Liz de Lise says cheered her up so much that she almost moved there after college. Being torn between moving to NYC or Oregon with friends or staying in places she already knew with a boyfriend with whom she’d fallen out of love are among the tough themes tackled in the songs off de Lise’s EP Friends, and perfectly described by the lyrics in her song “Brooklyn:” “Don’t make me move.. I cant define where I end and where you begin.” These fine lyrics epitomize the ambivalence of whether (or where) to live after college graduation after seeing friends and boyfriends disperse. In addition to tackling the social and

20 Sound wAveS

geographi-cal transitions of de Lise’s early 20s transition, the song features great jazz, as spare bass notes and guitar chords counterpoint each other as they swirl around empty spaces in the composition.

“For the Ladies” is a song about Liz’ awkward experience with severe acne while at the crossroads between adolescence and adulthood. Embarrassed by her looks and her failure to live up to standards of feminine beauty, Liz rejected those standards altogether by shaving her head. “That haircut made me feel like I could control my appearance. Im loud and clumsy not graceful, light or feminine.” She thought that haircut would boost her confidence (so she could at least feel beautiful on the inside), but all she could think of was: “Oh my god, I cut off all my hair and all that’s left is my pimpled face!” “I’m a girl but I’m not proud” she exclaims as she pokes fun of herself for failing to buy into “elusive,” traditional and long-haired femininity. Liz rejection of the expectations others had of her femininity (including her boyfriends with whom she was breaking up) played a significant role in her coming of age and coming into-her-own as a young female musician.

Finally, the title track “Friends” features Liz’ melodic guitar picking and sonorous vocal harmonies. The lyrical themes speak of the complications of love and the burdens of passing on those complexes to her hypothetical “next of kin.” “I’m still having trouble breathing . . the girl with half a heart is twice as strong as anyone” bespeak the literal complications of a half-hearted hospital-bound woman and Liz’s troubles breathing as a baby. However, these allusions also symbolize de Lise’s inner strength to survive lost or unrequited love.

Liz de Lise is a great musician whose albums are worth buying or hearing for people of all ages, particularly those 20-somethings who are just entering the real world and need a voice who echoes their own experiences.

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DINING OUT

By Tony Sardo



The New Year is here and I hope you feasted to start it off. The Italians live to eat not eat to live. In Italy as well as in the United States E festa or sagra are festivals to saints, for favors granter or sagra, festivals to recognize food items or any important event. Of course carrying statues and eating food is what it is all about. You would be very surprised to know how many festa are held in our area. In Italy festivals are a daily happening. In the spirit of preparing food you must have some basic items in your kitchen. I will try to list items need to prepare gourmet dishes. Gourmet means highly spiced food.

To any good cook the quality of ingredients makes the quality of the dish we are preparing. By now everyone knows that olive oil does not only taste good, but is also good for you. But less well known is unless you choose wisely, you're not getting health nor flavor. In fact, extra virgin olive oil is the only grade that can unequivocally deliver both advantages. The better the grade, the lower the acidity, and the better for you. All other grades are blends and have little nutritional value.

Cheeses: Parmigiano-Riggiano or pecorino (sheep milk) for grating. Parmigiano-Riggiano is known as the king of cheeses and can come only from Emilia-Romagna. The cheese is embossed in red and green dots on the rind. If the cheese has too many air holes in it is lined to show it is of lesser quality, and is sold for a lower price. As like with most things in life you get what you pay for.

Balsamic vinegar: Good balsamic vinegar costs as much as a very fine bottle of aged Borolo, worth \$100-a-bottle. Good balsamic is made from boiled down grape juice, after spending years in wooden barrels the juice concentrates into thick aromatic syrup. The older the syrup the less there is, and the more expensive it becomes. Balsamic is a trademark ingredient that can only be produce in Emilia-Romagna around Modena. How to find good balsamic? Price. The \$5.00 bottles are blends of boiled down grape juice blended with regular vinegar and aged for a year. Keep the real balsamic to enjoy on vanilla ice cream, to top off fresh strawberries, or put on hunks of Parmigiano-Reggiano.

Canned tomatoes: In this country, the best canned tomatoes are the San Marzano variety. San Marzano is a geographic location as well as a type of plum tomato, as well as a brand name. Be careful, some say San-Marzano style which means any kind of plumb tomato. When you open a good can of tomatoes, you should find ripe tomatoes in a thick, syrupy juice. As with many items I list, price is a perfect determination of good and not so good.

Herbs: While many think fresh herbs are better than dry herbs the reality is that dry herbs serve just as valuable a function, Dry herbs are more concentrated in flavor, readily available, able to release there flavors slower

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than fresh herbs. Of the green herbs, chervil, parsley, and chives have little value dried. Better those grown on woody stems, dried too released their flavors slowly, one stews and soups are tastier the second day. Fresh herbs are milder in flavor and you have to use them three times more than dried herbs to get the same results.

Salt: You should taste different salts to see how they differ in flavor. All salt comes from the sea, but is processed in different ways. What we call common table salt is really finely ground crystals mixed with starch and phosphate of lime to keep the crystals free flowing. Kosher salt, which has no additives, is the cleanest tasting commercial salt going and its coarseness makes it easy to use. Sea salt is made by evaporating sea water in protected areas. Sea salt has the most flavors and is available in course or fine texture.

Pepper: One of the most underutilized of all spices, pepper offers a pallet of colors and flavors that can transform ordinary fowl, meat, or fish into a succulent pepper incrustated masterpiece. Green, black, and white peppercorns all start out the same way, the fruit of a perennial shrub called Piper nigrum. Black pepper is the strongest of these peppers and white is the mildest. Use white for dishes you don't want black specks to show.

There or many other basic items needed in your kitchen, but I thought you would like some basic knowledge of these.

Now for this month's comments, see you later this is my last article for a while. Gone ice fishing.

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“The King of The Rock Saxophone: A Tribute to Bobby Keys”

By Mark T. Gould

The sax solo was a relatively simple one, grounded in the rhythmic balance of the basic key of C blues scale, rather than the typical “call and response” of a jazz horn.

It lasted a grand total of only 29 seconds, but, in that less than half a minute, Bobby Keys’ iconic riff in the Rolling Stones’ “Brown Sugar” inspired every rock horn player who has stepped into a recording studio or onto a stage to take music to a higher level.

While clearly the most famous of the many solos he played in a long, distinguished career, his “Brown Sugar” performance was, obviously, the highlight for Keys, who, in addition to being the leader of the Rolling Stones’ horn section for over 40 years, brought his self-described “down and dirty” playing to recording sessions and concerts with a virtual “who’s who” of rock ‘n’ roll, including Dion, Buddy Knox, Delaney & Bonnie, Joe Cocker, John Lennon, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, Etta James, Sheryl Crow, Carly Simon and Eric Clapton, among scores of others.

Keys, who passed away last month at the age of 70, was a hard playing and hard living Texan who, for many, along with his close friend Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards, was the epitome of rock ‘n’ roll and its lifestyle.

The incredible musical journey of Bobby Keys began in the small Texas town of Slaton, near Lubbock—the hometown of Buddy Holly.

“Buddy was the first guy I ever heard play electric guitar, the first rock and roll I ever heard played live in Slaton,” he told me in a Sound Waves interview, one of the last he gave, about two years ago. “There was just a feeling that I got from hearing that live music; it turned my life around.

Clearly inspired by Holly, Keys first tried to play the guitar, but could never quite get the hang of it. He then gravitated toward the saxophone, which, he said, was the very last instrument left unclaimed in his school band.

“Man, I wanted to play guitar so bad I couldn’t stand it,” he told me. “I stood in front of the mirror and I tried a couple of times, and I just could not get it to do what I wanted it to do. I had little short stubby hands anyway, which were a lot better suited for the saxophone.”

Until the end of his career, Keys was a “feel” player on the instrument, never learning how to read music.

“The people who I work with, who hire me, if they want somebody who is just part of a horn section, reading charts, there’s about a million people who can do that, and that’s not what I go for,” he said in the interview.

“I try to find the handle of the feel of the music. I might get a call to go down and put down a solo for someone I’ve never met before, and I’ll put as much effort into that as I would for Mick and Keith,” he explained. “I just listen for something inside the music that I can augment. I’ve got sort of an ability to feel music and hear what is going to happen slightly before it happens. I try to anticipate it. I don’t read music. I play strictly by ear.”

That “ear” certainly sent him on his way, playing the original sax solo on Dion’s classic “The Wanderer,” but which, perhaps not so strangely for a “feel” player, was slightly out of tune and dropped from the seminal recording. He then played on an Elvis Presley recording date, and toured with Dick Clark’s “Caravan of Stars,” where he worked with Bobby Vee.

It was a time, Keys said, that he developed his playing as a “rock ‘n’ roll saxophonist,” mastering an instrument that then, and now, is more associated with jazz.

The difference, Keys told me, goes back to his early days listening to the

radio in Slaton.

“Really the one, rock ‘n’ roll, is what I play and the other one, jazz, is what I don’t play, that’s all there is to it,” he said. “All music that is worth any credibility is about feeling, with some degree of emotion in it. Rock ‘n’ roll and jazz both have that, but rock ‘n’ roll just comes more naturally to me. I got it first listening to the old R&B stations. On those early R&B records, the saxophone was king.”

And, that playing, particularly with Vee, exposed Keys to a band that would be the, well, “key” to his future. It was in San Antonio, while touring with Vee in 1964, that Keys wound up rooming next to an English band in the middle of their first American tour.

That of, course, was the Rolling Stones, and it was the beginning of an incredible run for both of them.

“You know, time brings a lot of change,” Keys told me., “but it has always seemed to me that both Mick and Keith have, personality-wise, remained on a pretty even keel (since then).”

His musical collaborations with the Stones would have to wait, though, as Keys then found himself in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and later, Los Angeles, playing with Leon Russell, Delaney & Bonnie and Joe Cocker.

“Delaney, he was a good old boy from the south, man, a good looking guy, and a hell of a singer, real friendly,” Keys said in our interview. “I first knew him when he was in the Shindogs band, on ‘Shindig,’ on ABC. I liked him right off the bat. Bonnie, man, she knocked my socks off. She was the first white girl that I ever heard (who) could sing that like.”

Their partnership, and friendship, led beyond Delaney & Bonnie to the legendary “Mad Dogs & Englishmen,” the two parts circus, one part band put together at literally the last minute, by Leon Russell, to back Joe Cocker on a tour.

“Leon Russell, whew, man, he was the mad professor,” Keys said. “He was legendary in Tulsa, and the first guy to leave for LA. He was just non-stop music and playing.

“Leon was definitely in control with ‘Mad Dogs,’” Keys recalled. “He took a whole bunch of people who had never played together before; he put a whole lot of stuff together, in a very short period of time. He had the talent to do it, but, because of who he was, he also had the respect of the people involved to pay attention.

“And, we, and he, had a great singer and performer in Joe Cocker,” he added. “Joe was, and is, a gentle, beautiful soul, with such a voice and presentation. He has literally never, ever short changed an audience.”

The crazy atmosphere of that tour opened a number of doors for Keys, who then played on countless recording sessions with the likes of John Lennon and George Harrison, among many others.

“George was a very gentle soul, all about music and peace, and a very, very generous fella,” Keys told me. “John was a very honest man, totally convinced of his beliefs, and willing to go to any length to make other people aware that it was better to have love in the world than war.”

Yet, despite all the work he did with all those artists, Keys cemented his place in rock ‘n’ roll history with more than four decades of work, on the road and in the studio, with the Stones, adding his earthy, singular rock ‘n’ roll sax sound to such classics as “Live With Me,” “Bitch,” “Can’t You Hear Me Knocking?”, “Sweet Virginia,” and, of course, “Brown Sugar.” “I’m very proud of the stuff I’ve done with the Stones, because (I) came in at a time when they were looking for a little transition,” Keys told me. “It started when I ran into Mick in London while they were working on ‘Sticky Fingers.’ He was a fan of Otis, Aretha, Wilson, all of them. I was in town working on George Harrison’s record, and (I) started working with the Stones, bringing another element to their sound.”

And, having played with the Stones far longer than any of their other supporting band members, Keys had a unique perspective on them.

“I’m probably closer friends, hell, he’s my pal even more than my friend,

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with Keith than I am with Mick, but that doesn't mean Mick doesn't like me and I don't like him," Keys said. "Far from it. Mick is one of the most talented people I've ever been on a stage with; I'm never less than amazed to watch him work, how he handles himself, how he plays to the audience, he's the consummate professional.

"Keith is, simply, the best son of a bitch I ever met in my life. Period. I've just been very blessed to have played with them," he added. "It's an inspiration to me to be able to play with musicians whom I respect so much.

And, it has been an inspiration and a blessing for fans and musicians alike to always have that, raw, powerhouse rock 'n' roll saxophone of Bobby Keys in the music.



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