

Sound ^{#DSTRONG} Waves

Volume 26
Issue 3
March 2016

PAUL KANTNER

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Editor
David L. Pottie

Contributing Writers
Bill Harriman
Mark T. Gould
Rex Rutkosk
Don Sikorski - Nik Hall
Andrew Kerbs
Stephanie Shawn
R. L. Oeser ~ Jeff Howard
Ali Kaufman
Tom Matthew
Sue Menhart
Ms Marci Chevia-Hooper
Jack & Luci Chaplin

Advertising Sales
David L. Pottie
Anthony Arruda
860-572-5738

Email
editor@swaves.com

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Volunteer for America PAUL KANTNER

By Rex Rutkoski



It was the early '90s and Paul Kantner sat in his home in San Francisco eyeing a whole wheat peanut butter sandwich as he ruminated over the phone with me on music and his role in it.

"I'm a child of Pete Seeger, really," said one of the founders of the pioneering rockers, Jefferson Airplane, and its spinoff band Jefferson Starship, who died Jan. 28 at the age of 74, just weeks after learning that the Airplane would receive a Lifetime Achievement Grammy at the awards ceremony Feb. 15.

Ironically, Signe Anderson, 74, the Jefferson Airplane's original female vocalist, who performed on the band's 1966 debut album, "Jefferson Airplane Takes Off," died the same day.

In our interview, Kantner said: "I don't think music necessarily has the power to change the world any more. Pete Seeger said if it could, 'I'd do nothing but play banjo all day.' Music is a good part of life and exists within a certain realm of imagination that is incalculable. You can't really say why a song brings you to tears or joy, or another emotion, but it does."

But in 20,000 years or so of written history, nobody has been able to figure out why that occurs. You get hold of a fantastic power of fantasy.

Sometimes you find you move people as well as yourself for totally inexplicable reasons. There is something metaphysical to music that embraces people, both player and participant, such as in ceremonies that celebrate the joy of life and the actual cycles of life. It goes beyond religion and laws to basic things like the ocean and the wind. Music is one of these things. There is still an adolescent thrill for me of having a toy, a tool-toy that you still haven't found out why it does what it does, that has the body of meaning it has."

Rolling Stone praised the guitarist, singer and songwriter as the Airplane's conceptual heart, "bringing along a love of literature and science fiction that seeped into the Airplane's songs along with his fuzzed-out guitar tones."

His long-time interest in science fiction was born in second grade when, as a punishment, he was made to stay in the library.

"Alone, down on the bottom of a shelf, there was a bunch of science fiction stuff," he recalled. "I just picked up one, started reading and haven't stopped since." He said he found science fiction "a great tool and opener to the threshold of the unusual."

"It's a great tool for entertaining people if you just want to talk on a pop level," he said. "That door is always worth opening. It allows people to

think of solutions to problems or just life situations they might not have thought of in a regular, normal, mundane world approach: 'Here is a situation we have to deal with. How do we deal with it?' You start by just expecting you can get away with the impossible, which we did, particularly in the '60s in San Francisco and which we continue to do in more mature, world-weary ways.

Kantner pointed to John Kennedy's assassination as his baptism of fire.

"It set the world off in other directions, with repercussions felt well into the next century. It was a focal point for me where things changed radically. Even before the assassination his election set off a real positive level of achievement, from space to educational programs to the Peace Corps. It encouraged support of the environment, of caring for the environment. It encouraged people's rights, from civil rights to worker's rights, women's rights, gay rights. It was a focal point for a whole generation."

He hoped that the Airplane's legacy was in "opening doors, opening eyes. We were just hawkers for the universe: 'Step right up, take a look at this!'" He laughed.

"I'm still alive writing songs," he added. "I've done my sex, drugs and rock'n'roll time and continue hopefully in a more mature area pursuing freedom of expression, I guess you might call it."

Success, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member said, "is opening the doors of imagination, making a real connection with people."

Paul Kantner certainly opened those doors and made that connection and, thanks to the wonderful magic of music and art, that bond will never be broken.





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MUSIC NOTES



The Boss' "Big Record That Felt Like Life"

By Mark T. Gould

"I was trying to get a little closer to those things I was looking for in my life." —Bruce Springsteen, Pittsburgh, January 16, 2016

He decided it was time to run toward, rather than away, from something.

Or, in his case, somethings.

Over the course of his first four albums, "Greetings From Asbury Park, New Jersey," "The Wild, The Innocent & The E Street Shuffle," "Born to Run," and "Darkness on The Edge of Town," his characters had fashioned a mythology out of running away.

Running away from life. Running away from family. Running away from responsibility. Running away from growing up.

On his next album, "The River," Bruce Springsteen's characters, and by extension the Boss himself, started to run toward something, yet proved, in undertaking that responsible, adult act, they still could have a good time.

Released in the fall of 1980, "The River" was a rocking, rollicking, rolling masterpiece, equal parts serious and fun. I have been a devoted fan since I first saw him perform in a UConn parking lot back in '74, and, to this day, "The River" remains, by far, my favorite Bruce album.

And, that's saying a lot, because there is an entire catalog of great Bruce Springsteen albums.

The record was the result of more than two years of backbreaking songwriting and recording, rising like the phoenix out of the ashes of an earlier single disc, called "The Ties That Bind," that Springsteen ditched at the last minute.

Late last year, the entire story of this extraordinary double album was revealed with the release of "The Ties That Bind: The River Collection," which not only captured the entire finished product, but also the more than two dozen outtakes that Springsteen and the E Street Band recorded, but ultimately decided to leave in the can.

This winter, Springsteen has taken "The River" on the road, performing the entire album, in track-by-track order, as the centerpiece of a tour. Much like listening to a record many times over before its nuances are exposed, each night has brought a slightly different, albeit significant, texture to its songs.

After all, it's been over 35 years since its release, and its 20 songs mean different things to different people, then and now, particularly to Bruce and his band.

It is a different band, too, with the addition of Nils Lofgren on guitar, Soozie Tyrell on acoustic guitar and fiddle, Charlie Giordano replacing the late "Phantom" Danny Federici on keyboards, and, of course, Jake Clemmons replacing his departed "Uncle 'Big Man'" on the saxophone.

But, of course, with all things E Street, it still works.

"I wanted a big record that felt like life," Springsteen told the tour opening

night audience in Pittsburgh. "I wanted it to be like the home I was trying to find, trying to get a little closer to the things I was looking for."

At the Hartford show we attended, Springsteen talked about "The River" being about "Time. Limited time. We have limited time to grow, to raise our families, to love, to make a difference in our communities." The album demonstrates clearly those challenges, and, with it, those limitations, and it was ironic that on his next release, the stark, harrowing "Nebraska," Springsteen wrote about, in a way, the end, and the dark consequences, of that growth. But, then, he came roaring back to more positive possibilities within the relative party atmosphere of "Born in the USA," from which he performed four songs, "No Surrender," "Cover Me," "Dancing in the Dark," and "Bobby Jean," in Hartford.

Although some of the songs on "The River" were written during the sessions for his previous album, "Darkness," the record, over its sprawling four sides, shows a different, and dual, commitment and yearning on Springsteen's part.

Other than the two ballads, the father-son dialog of "Independence Day," and the pathos and reluctant acceptance of the title track, "The River," the first two sides bust out with some of the most rocking party music that Bruce and the E Streeters have ever made.

It is virtually impossible to sit still through the blasts of "Sherry Darling," "Two Hearts," and "Out in the Street," and those songs, long a staple of the band's live shows, are even better in the concert context of the entire album, and, as was more than evident in Hartford, provides an emotional balance for its quieter tracks.

Yet, it is sides three and four of "The River" where Springsteen shows that his characters' search, and, by extension, his own search, was becoming more refined, and, arguably, more mature.

Starting with "Point Blank," the opening track on the third side, winding its way through "Fade Away" and "Stolen Car," and bursting through on the moving, dramatic and dynamic anthem "Drive All Night," the last of which is perhaps the most beautiful song he has ever written, Bruce shows an entirely different side from those younger and more naïve times, where his protagonists were "pulling out of here to win."

Performed live, they give Springsteen, his band and his audience a chance to sit back, and down, and regroup.

By the time he reaches the album's final track, "Wreck on the Highway," we've got a virtually new person looking at life and its possibilities in a very different way.

Bruce Springsteen was barely 30 when he recorded "The River." He's now approaching 68, with a wife and three grown children. His concerts, judging by Hartford, are now more measured, calm and serene, although, at more than three hours, just as long, than they were years ago.

Like the rest of us, he's grown up, and grown out.

"The River" is testament to his earliest stage of that growth.



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BAR FLY JOURNALS



She's baaaaaaack! Hello, my Sweet Bar Flies..well, I tried, but apparently I just felt that I had waaaaay too much to say:) I've missed you all so much in the time we've been apart. So let's get started immediately with some very important sheeott!

As many of you may know, I've been out of the loop. The BARFLY loop. But I did manage to head to a JERRY SPRINGER SHOW taping to celebrate my Bestie TAMI'S Birthday! It was on my bucket list, because seriously? The man has been a staple of American Television for 25 years! I hadda go!

The Girls and I made a plan to meet at the Westerly Train Station at 7:15 on a Tuesday, and as usual,

there was One Girl who had to be a Problem. Why o why does there always seem to be 1?? At this time she will remain anonymous, but those in the know, know. Love ya, girlfriend, but sometimes you gotta let someone else



be the Center of Our World! I know! You were taking lessons from me? Silly Girl. Well, we boarded the train and within minutes we were being asked to quiet down, the 9 of us. Really? It was going to be rough.

In the end, the cute Amtrak ticket taker gave us our very own car, all to ourselves, to dance, dine and drink in, and Miss CrabbyAss eventually came around, after threats of bodily harm and joined us in the audience. JERRY was adorable, the stories were same ol' same ol'. But I knew I wouldn't be happy unless there were dwarves or transsexuals, or at least a semi-skanky stripper sliding down the JERRY POLE? But I was able to cross one item off my list! Yay me!

I've been off FaceBook or AssBook as my brother in law CHRIS CIP calls it, so I apologize for not having any good entertainment stories. I will secretly spy and tell you that my other bestie, hmmm... I'll call her MI AMIGA, is beating the on-line bushes in search of a MATCH..DOT COM dammit!

Having been a married girl for many a year, this is something I've not had to do, but with MI AMIGA'S guidance, I've become somewhat of an

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expert! First off and most importantly, people? The proper screen name. Like, who knew that if you called yourself by your actual real first name you'd be a total freakin' loser?? 2hotforallofu? Pplease69? Ipiledrivu? Richrthngod? Yup, those are all acceptable. Your actual First name? Big N O. Oh the searching, complete and utter soul searing searching for "Just The Right" screen name, it was excruciatingly exhausting. We must have gone through every English language cutie name-number combo there is... with some Spanish phrases thrown into the mix for good measure! What the hell? Why not?

Then "The Profile". You must write it perfectly. It must be endearing, enticing, entertaining and educational. And if you get it wrong? Well? Ain't nobody gonna Wink, or Flirt or email you. It freakin' sucks! And the ones that do? Oh dear God! Give me a rock...a large one. To crawl under and hide. It is so freaking stressful, I got hives just hearing the stories from her. Why is it so hard for a beautiful, successful woman who has so many positive qualities and is very clever and Very funny find a man? Surely, there has got to be a few Good Men left in the World? No? Message me if interested, peeps! I'll keep you posted on my matchmaking efforts!

So I will be visiting some of our SOUNDWAVES advertisers in the next few months, as Spring Rears Her Gorgeous Head. I apparently butt dialed JACK CHAPLIN, fellow SOUNDWAVES writer and owner of DADDY JACK'S in New London a couple times, just to keep him on his toes.

Whoops! But I can't wait to meet both LUCI and JACK! And of course, breakfast with ARTIE and the BAAAFATHA will be in my future, either at bartender ALLIE BOO BOO'S BACKTRACK'S on Industrial Drive in Westerly or KITCHEN LITTLE @ the MYSTIC RIVER MARINA on MASON'S ISLAND! Or listening to BOBBY CHRISTINA on Tuesdays at BRAZEN HEN! An hopefully out to BROWN DERBY for BRANDED COUNTRY THAT ROCKS or STEVE DAGGETT at FOXWOODS on the 19th. I'd also like to mention GARY GIDMAN a founding member of the TIREBITERS. They came together at the PARROT DELANEY TAVERN recently for a Benefit for GARY who was found to have a tumor wrapped around his spinal cord. You're an amazing musician. Thinking of you.

And of course, it's My Birthday Month! Along with sis BETSY and bro ARTHUR... all on same day, we have many others to celebrate in the month of March. Romper Stomper Time!! I see DARLA VEILLEUX, KEVIN SLOCUM, WALT SLOCUM, GEOFF HAUSMAN,

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Well, assuming you've missed me as much as I've missed you, feel free to message me on FACEBOOK with Band Dates and Events again, and I will do what these Lazy Ol' Bones can do to be the Bar Fly we know I can be! Also, I'd like to blame my resurrection on many family members, along with many friends who either missed me or I missed.. DAN at HOME DEPOT, JEAL my favorite Doorman at the KNICK, SCOTT RAICHE, SHIRLEY RAE, BUFFY CHRISTINA, SUE MENHART, FRANKENPHIL, STEVEN SLOSBERG and TONY CARDWELL! Happy Easter! I hope you gorge your ass on Chocolate and Jelly Beans! Love you long time, my sweet flies!



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All The World's a Stage



“Book Em Danno”

By Sue Menhart

I adjusted the microphone stand to align my silver Seinnheiser so it pointed straight at my upper lip. Not too high, not too low, not pointing up and not pointing down. I screwed my water bottle holder precisely half-way down on the left side of the stand, not the right side.

I swung my electric Fender strat over my head, stood up to the microphone, and waved my guitar to the left to be sure I wouldn't knock the stand over, or whack my bass player. It was 15 minutes to show time and the bar was filling up.

The waitress seated a party of four directly in front of the stage and I smiled at them. A coiffured woman in her sixties said to the group but mostly to me, “Oh No! There's a band? We're going to go deaf!” I quickly scanned the room and saw there were literally no more seats to be had so I politely interjected, “We're not loud at all. It will be nice dinner music for you.” Huffy-Puffy lady was not convinced.

Would you like to know what I REALLY wanted to say?

“Listen you old fogey, enjoy your shrimp but, do you have ANY IDEA the steps I had to take to set up this microphone in front of your ungrateful self? HUH?!? It's not just a microphone. If you would look past your salad fork you'd see it's also guitar amps and monitors and speakers, which involved the heaving of those said speakers on top of whimsy old speaker stands that may loosen and come crashing down smack dab in the middle of your carafe. And it's not just the the bags and bags of super heavy maple-shelled drums and copper symbols and metal stands with delicate screwing knobs that were also lugged in here at 11 a.m. so we wouldn't get in the way of ‘your party.’ We also did a sound check hours earlier so your delicate ears weren't subjected to any squealing or pounding snare drums. In order to set up this microphone you see before you, first we had to learn how to play our instruments, then we had to become a band, then we had to rehearse once a week after working all day at our day jobs, and then we had to hone down an entertaining show – FOR YOU. Then we had to PROMOTE the fact that we now ARE a band, and then we had to BEG the manager for this grand opportunity. You see my dearest, this microphone in front of you should actually be referred to as the eighth wonder of the world.”

As most musicians know, booking gigs is worse than root canals, the mere thought of colonoscopies, and stomach flus that come out both ends – combined. It's like what Tom Cruise in Jerry Maguire says: “It's an up-at-dawn, pride-swallowing siege that I will never fully tell you about.”

But let me tell you about it. Here's how it goes down.

You scan Facebook event invites, newspapers, and especially this wonderful publication – Sound Waves Magazine – to see where other bands are playing. You see if there is anybody in those bands who will talk to you and you ask them who the booking contact is at the venues they have bookings. You call the venue and ask for that person. That person is never

there so you ask when they will be there. You call back at the designated time, but miraculously they are still not there. How do they make a living if they're never at work? You set a plan to drive to the venue and spend a few dollars at the bar so you can talk to the booking contact who should be there who maybe just never wants to come to the phone. You get there and ask for the booking contact, but they are not there. So you ask...again...when they will be there. They say they don't know. Obviously, all booking contacts are independently wealthy.

So then you move on to the next lead, and the next, and the next, and they all pretty much work out the same: NO GIGS and out a lot of gas money.

Sometimes venues want you to send them a package in the mail with a demo CD, a “Fact Sheet,” and a nice glossy picture. So, you scrounge up the money to record a demo CD in a studio, a photographer for a photo shoot, and a print shop for the 8x10s. Then, you make up some facts in a Microsoft Word document and list all the places you have managed to play. You buy some ink and paper for your home printer and print out the facts. You go to Staples and buy some fancy colorful folders to put the facts, the picture, and the demo CD into. You also buy some 10x13 yellow clasp envelopes to put the colorful folders into. You write the mailing address of the venue on the yellow clasp envelope and drive to the post office. You pay the post master to deliver your yellow clasp envelope. You wait two weeks to call the person you addressed the yellow clasp envelope to but get his voicemail so you leave a message informing him that he should have received a brightly colored folder in a yellow clasp envelope for booking consideration. YOU NEVER HEAR BACK. EVER.

Sometimes venues have fancy forms on the Internet for you to fill out where you list your band name, upload an .MP3 (from the demo CD if you can figure out how to burn it off the CD and attach it to the form), and you enter in your band's web site. Sometimes, free Facebook band pages aren't enough, as well as other free services such as SoundCloud, ReverbNation, or BandCamp. So, in order to have a REAL band web site, you have to make up a domain name for your band and register it with a service like Go Daddy so they can make your band name into a URL (the stuff behind <http://>.) Sometimes you have to add “TheBand” to the end of your domain name because there are only so many domain names to choose from. Then, you have to find an Internet provider to host your band web site, but you also need an Internet provider at your house so you can build the web site and upload it to the other Internet provider so when people type in your URL, Go Daddy knows where to send the people who look at booking consideration forms. But in the meantime you have to learn how to build web sites so you can have a band web site so you can type it into a form so the booking contact at the other end of the form can ignore it. Sometimes it's just too complicated so you have to hire your next-door neighbor's 12-year old son to build it for you. But regardless, you NEVER hear back from the people behind the form. EVER.

For this particular gig mentioned at the beginning of my whining here, it took THREE YEARS of going into the venue, not getting to talk to anybody, finding out the booking contact had changed and the new one preferred emails, so emails were sent, to no response, ad nauseam. The BIG LONG AWAITED BOOKING DAY came on an unexpected Sunday afternoon while having lunch at the venue, with no particular agenda. I was just hungry.

The bartender said, “Hey – when the heck are you playing here?”

“Apparently never.”

“No wait, she's here, let me go get her.” She went and got the billionaire from her yacht or the back office or something. We talked. She booked us for three gigs, one every other month.

Well that was easy.

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18 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
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5 - Lake Tavern, Dayville, CT
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29,16,23,30 - Daddy Jack's, New London, CT 8pm
3,10,17,24,31 - Maury's, Danielson, CT 7:30pm
4 - Hank's, Brooklyn, CT 7pm
11 - Rock Garden, Watertown, CT
12 - Harp n Hound, Mystic, CT
15 - Angie's Pizza, Mystic, CT

THE CARTELLS

2 - Steak Loft Mystic, CT 7pm
3,10,17,24,31 - Filomena's, Waterford, CT 5pm
4,25 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm
5,30 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI 8pm
11 - Yantic River Inn, Yantic, CT 7:30pm
12 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 7:30pm
13 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm
26 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT 8:30pm
27 - Wolf Den, Uncasville, CT 8pm

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4 - Club Meadows, E. Longmeadow, MA
5 - Nanola, Saratoga Springs, NY
11 - Blackstone, Southington, CT
12 - Newport Blues, Newport, RI
18 - KC Dubliner, Burlington, CT
19 - Hennesseys, Boston, MA
26 - Johnny Utahs, S. Norwalk, CT

FRANKENPHIL

11 - McBrides, Providence, RI 7pm
14 - Rathskeller, Charlestown, RI 8pm
18 - Penny Lane, Old Saybrook, CT 7:30pm

10 SOUND WAVES

27 - Midtown, Newport, RI 4pm

GRUMPY OLD MEN

11 - Arts Center, Norwich, CT 7:30pm

HOPE VALLEY VOLUNTEERS

20 - Wood River Inn, Hope Valley, RI 6-10

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11,25 - Haversham, Westerly, RI
17 - Buon Appetito, N. Stonington, CT 7:30pm
18 - Amigos, Westerly, RI

JAMES HARRIS

1,8,15,22,29 - Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT
29,12,16,19,23,30 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
3 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI 8pm
4,18 - Venice, Westerly, RI 7pm
5,11,17,26 - Pizzetta, Mystic, CT
6,20 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm
24 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm

JAY DEMPSEY BAND

5 - Sneekers, Groton, CT 8pm
16 - Steakloft, Mystic, CT 7pm
24 - Atrium, Mashentucket, CT 8pm

KEVIN MANZELLA & HEATHER LEPAGE

10 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7-10
11 - Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7-10

THE LOCOMOTIVES

5 - Rte 66 tavern, E. Hampton, CT
11 - La Vita Gustosa, E. Haddam, CT
19 - Toyos, Colchester, CT
26 - Gelston House, E. Haddam, CT

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19 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT 8:30pm

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10 - Hardrock Cafe, Foxwoods, CT

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25 - Angies Pizza, Mystic, CT

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5 - Octane, New London, CT
12 - Social Club, Bradford, RI
25 - Sneekers, Groton, CT
26 - CC O'Brien's, Pawcatuck, CT

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5 - Players Theater, Peterborough, NH
6 - Infinity Music Hall, Norfolk, CT
11 - Rosch Recital Hall, Fredonia, NY
18 - All Souls, New London, CT
19 - Center for the Arts, Natick, MA

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1 - Johnny D's, Somerville, MA 6:30-10
5 - Chamard Vineyards, Clinton, CT 4-7
11 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7-10
31 - Sneekers Cafe, Groton, CT 7-10:30

WEEDHAWKS

5 - Stash's, New London, CT
19 - Birdseye, New London, CT 7pm
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9 - Columbus Theater, Providence, RI

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11 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

"Experience Hendrix"

17 - Oakdale Theatre, Wallingford, CT

Fall Out Boy

5 - Foxwoods, Mashantucket, CT

G. Love & Special Sauce

19 - Wolf Den, Uncasville, CT

Jesse Cook

4 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

J.J. Grey & Mofro

20 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

Joe Satriani

29 - College St., New Haven, CT

31 - The VETS, Providence, RI

Jorma Kaukonen

5 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

Leo Kottke

13 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

Los Lobos

11 - Wolf Den, Uncasville, CT

Lucinda Williams

12 - College St., New Haven, CT

Red Hot Chilli Pipers

9 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

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Twiddle

12,13 - Toad's Place, New Haven, CT




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MOTOWN & CLASSIC

JJ Grey

By Sue Menhart



JJ Grey and his band Mofro are soulful, bluesy, funky, swampy and fun. They fit in just fine whether at a blues fest, a jam fest, a roots fest, a dive bar, a nice theater, or on the front porch. They are in a word, Everyman. JJ's southern inspired narratives mirror the place he was born and raised – Jacksonville, Florida - where the St. John's River meets the Atlantic Ocean, and it's all clicking with his steadily growing fan base. Much of his songwriting revolves around this place. As he describes it on the DVD film "Brighter Days," he's happy this area "hasn't been turned into a Botanical Garden because it's already beautiful." JJ & Mofro have just released their seventh album, "Ol' Glory," with Provogue Records.

In support, the ensemble is about to embark on a spring tour that will take them through venues in Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, New Mexico, Nebraska, and Oklahoma including the Tampa Bay Blues Fest in St. Petersburg, Florida, the Tortuga Music Fest in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, the Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado, and the Shaky Knees Fest in Atlanta, Georgia. Closer to home, don't miss JJ at the Capitol Theater in Port Chester, New York with the North Mississippi Allstars and David Ramirez on March 19 and most importantly at Infinity Hall in Hartford on March 20.

I spoke with JJ via phone from his home in northern Florida while I sat out a snowstorm and power outage in Connecticut. He was getting to ready perform that night with the "Southern Soul Assembly," the brain child of JJ's management team that put together JJ, Mark Broussard, Anders Osborne, and Luther Dickinson (of the North Mississippi Allstars.) They were headed to a show in Tallahassee, then on to Tampa and Clearwater. It's collaborations like these that have been the secret formula for JJ's sustained success through a few different record companies (Fog City, Alligator, Provogue,) various band member changes, and tours with some pretty famous friends.

In the late 1990s, JJ was playing southern rock in cover bands, like lots of others. He borrowed some money from friends to record studio demos of his original songs, he sent out packages, and waited to hear back. Acid Jazz in London liked what they heard and asked JJ to come over to London and sent him a deal memo. He stayed over there for a year and a half, but eventually, the whole deal fell through as the label suffered through some setbacks. When he got back home to Florida, he kept plugging away searching for formal support. He emailed Fog City Records, and they took the bite. The band recorded two albums with this company, "Blackwater" in 2001, and "Lochloosa" in 2004 under just the band name "Mofro." After JJ's grandmother asked if he was ashamed of his own name, he decided to change the name of the band to "JJ Grey & Mofro." At this point he got a new deal with Alligator Records. This partnership brought the 2007 "Country Ghetto," the 2008 "Orange Blossoms," the 2010 "Georgia Warhorse" and the 2013 "This River" albums.

In 2010, JJ's long-time friend and guitar player Daryl Hance left the band. JJ's voice softens when he recalls: "My buddy Daryl who is doing his own stuff now was a huge part of it. I wouldn't be here if it weren't for him. I wouldn't be here if it weren't for a lot of people. I don't know what 'here' is, but I know I wouldn't be anywhere if I hadn't met all those great people."

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I asked JJ how he had built his fan base. He said, "One show at a time. It's like the coyote on the Road Runner show, like when he runs off the cliff and as long as he doesn't look down he doesn't fall. I actually wrote a song about it called 'Walk Off The Air.' As long as I don't look down, I'll be fine. I try not to think too hard about that stuff and just concentrate on what I'm doing. If I think about it, it will become part of a thought process instead of it just coming naturally."

After speaking with JJ for a while, it was evident that he is indeed a thoughtful, down-to-earth, grateful, and humble guy. He's the kind of guy you just like. His packed shows, industry respect and loyal fan base prove it.

And then there are the songs. When he writes the lyrics, he thinks he knows what it's about, then years later, the meaning changes, as if it were there all along; the songs grow right along with him. When he writes the music, he usually settles on three chords, then experiments. When he hears something he likes, whether it be from Carol King, or a rendition of Ol' Man River from Ray Charles, if it moves him, if he "feels like he got punched in the stomach," he studies it and tries to incorporate it. He grew up listening to Gospel in church and became a fan of the minor six chord. The one, four, five progression with the killer minor six shows up in his songs "Sun is Shining Down," "This River," "King Hummingbird," and "Light a Candle."

When he is getting ready to record in the studio with his band, he lays down every single instrument as a baseline, and lets the musicians take it from there. He illustrates the intent, and it "always gets better when the guys start to play it. They stay true to the arrangement but it drifts to somewhere better."

Derek Trucks, who has lent his guitar stylings on two of JJ's albums, is given free reign, of course. JJ's powerful baritone voice mellows again when he talks about their relationship. "I've known him from here in Jacksonville, him and Susan live just across town. I wouldn't be able to do what I'm doing if it wasn't for them. Luther Dickinson gave me a start, letting me and my band at the time open for the Mississippi All Stars. It's the same with Susan Tedeschi, which is now the Tedeschi Trucks band. They would take us out in Europe and they are as good as it comes. They are one of the best acts out there period. And they're just good people. They are family. I feel really really lucky to have all the friends I have from my New York crew, to Derek and Susan, to Galactic. So many of these people took me under their wings and pointed me in the right direction, whether it was the business side or whatever."

JJ & Mofro have played every kind of music festival there is from blues, to roots, to jam. When asked if he changes his set list according to the venue, he said, "I gave up on trying to second guess what people want to hear. All that matters is the movement throughout the show, where's it going, where you are moving to; like a story, a movie."

He also said it doesn't matter to them how many people are at the show. They are still going to put on the best show they can. He recalled playing the BB King Summer Festival many years ago for thousands of people for 30 minutes. Then they played a show in West Virginia for 9 people that remains one of his favorite shows. "The club had broken beer bottles on the stage and your feet stuck to the floor, and I had a blast."

JJ's early influences were Jim Reeves, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Jerry Reed, Toots Hibbert, and Otis Redding. Some of his current influences, or the people he really digs are: Sam Smith, Corrine Bailey Rae, Blackberry Smoke, and reggae singer Holly Cook.

JJ's voice is powerful and passionate, and at times like James Brown. Rigorous tour and recording schedules lend itself to "committing vocal suicide every night" but he found a vocal coach in Boston who taught him how to pare down the amount of effort it took to get out more sound. Plagued with pneumonia and constant coughing for one entire year sprained the muscles

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Fri. 3/4 • 9p • \$15a/\$20d Sage Francis w/special performances by B Dolan and Ceschi Sage Francis is widely considered one of our generation's greatest lyricists. His career derives mainly from gifted wordplay which creates vivid narratives to instigate as well as inspire, but since it often derives from an accumulation of public disdain and personal turmoil, it's more about storming the castle than about watching the throne. Sat. 3/5 • 8p • \$10 The Cartells Jazz/Swing/Motown Fri. 3/11 • 9p • \$10 Sugar Disco/Funk/Hip-Hop/R&B Sat. 3/12 • 8:30p • \$12 Roger Ceresi's Allstarz Roger rocks the planet with the "All Starz". With Roger's powerful vocals leading the way and his ability to motivate and incite crowd participation, the "All Starz" will deliver high energy jump blues, rhythm & blues and a bit of rock & roll. Fri. 3/18 • 9p • \$10 • ALL AGES! The Knickerbocker Collective Presents a Tribute to the 90s Featuring Natalia Mortrude of Sugar, Will Evans of Barefoot Truth, Glenn Kendzia of Wild Sun, & Marty Moroney of Green Tea Sat. 3/19 • 8p • \$10 Franklin Bros. Rock/Jazz/Blues "Sophisticated, polished, intelligent pop music...along with a sneaky, evocative dash of New Orleans seasoning." - Rick Koster, Peter Huoppi. The New London Day	Fri. 3/25 • 9p • \$10 Kat Wright & the Indomitable Soul Band Kat's voice is both sultry and dynamic, delicate yet powerful, and gritty but highly emotive and nuanced, has been described as "a young Bonnie Raitt meets Amy Winehouse." Add to that voice enough stage presence to tame lions, and the combination of feline femininity proves immediately enchanting.  Sat. 3/26 • 9p • \$10 • ALL AGES! Shakedown New England's Grateful Dead Tribute Band LET'S DANCE WEDNESDAYS \$10 Doors 6:30p \$10, Music 7:30-10p FREE DANCE LESSONS at 7pm! Weds. 3/2 Mystic Horns Weds. 3/9 Superchief Trio Weds. 3/16 Neal Vitullo & the Vipers Weds. 3/23 Johnny & the East Coast Rockers Weds. 3/30 The Cartells OPEN MIKE NIGHT EVERY THURS. WANT TO BE A HOST BAND? Doors, 7p • 8pm • NO COVER 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/31: TBD 3/24: World Record Players, Interested in being a Host Band? Contact: shawnallen1115@gmail.com
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In the trailer video for 'Ol' Glory', JJ says he doesn't like to tell people

I highly suggest checking out JJ Grey and Mofro live, or grabbing the full length documentary concert film with separate live audio CD “Brighter Days.” It includes footage from a concert recorded at Variety Playhouse in Atlanta, Georgia, a conversation with JJ while he rows down his beloved river, and testimonials from the people around him who love and support him. All seven albums are also available for purchase at www.jjgrey.com.

March 20 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT



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16 SOUND WAVES

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HEARING AID



Mike Crandall Band

"Deep Blue C"

It's been said that many of the greatest blues albums were recorded live; that the blues resonates and percolates in a live setting. The Mike Crandall Band's third and latest album, *Deep Blue C*, dives deep into a crystal clear blue ocean. Covers credited to blues icons Chester Burnett, Willie Dixon, BB King, JJ Cale, Jerry "Boogie" McCain, and more, Crandall shows that he can flawlessly blend his own originals with the works of those blues masters.

Recorded live by Jack Gauthier of Lakewest Studios with assistance from Shawn Allen at the famed Knickerbocker Cafe in Westerly, RI on September 25, 2015, Gauthier's engineering expertise is obvious in the clarity of subtle vocal and instrumental inflections. The "Knick" is a venue with 60 plus years of colorful blues history; an obvious choice for a live recording. The band includes the guitar of Shawn Leonard, the drums of Liviu Pop, former Roomful of Blues Bassist Ed Parnagoni, and special guest Bruce Bears on Hammond B-3 and piano. Crandall's well placed diatonic / chromatic harmonica and definitive vocals have won him several trips to Memphis's International Blues Challenge over the years, and combine well with these talented artists.

Mike bravely dives into *Blind Love*, one of BB King's many stories of love torn asunder. Mike's vocals stand out here. Bears B-3 call and response with Leonard's guitar are simply epic.

Living the Blues (Crandall), introspective look into the hectic, hard-scrabble world most of us struggle through, features some great chromatic harp, genius B-3 from Bears, fire out of the guitar of Shawn Leonard, and a splash of spanish rumba from the rhythm section.

Howlin' Wolf's *Commit A Crime* takes the listener right into smokestack country! Leonard channels Hubert Sumlin while Bears piano swings and sways like being at the top of the pines.

A Time For Love, a Leonard – Crandall composition, gives a soft Santana tango feel to the blues....and it feels good.

Steady Rollin' (McCain) really shows what Mike can do with a \$20 diatonic harmonica; Stretchin' out in a Little Walter style that'll make you smile.

Crandall's original, *Evil*, puts the spaces in all the right places; impassioned and definitive vocals and harmonica, smoldering rhythm, and some great runs on Bruce's B-3.

Performing Jerry Portnoy's *Poison Kisses* for the last 20 plus years, the bands attack on this cut is as deadly as ever. The haunting dynamic in this tune is palpable.

Another Crandall original, *I Know A Little Bit About Love*, takes the listener to Magic Sam Land – a place where the guitar goes to cry, the harp crunches and wails, the rhythm swirls, and the piano just keeps on chugging.

Same Thing (Dixon), a great story of man's animal instincts, provides a swagger to the swing that can make you stop, listen, and put a "dead fish" look on your face.

Shawn Leonard's *Exeter 23*, is an instrumental with the high order feel of Freddy King meets Ronnie Earl. The Bears B-3 makes this tune sizzle.

Tigerman (Joe Hill Lewis) is the king of the swingin' jungle. The grand piano leads the safari through this jungle that will have you dancing in your seat!

The album completes with JJ Cale's *Sensitive Kind*, a Carlos Santana Classic. The rhythm flawless, guitar pugnacious, B-3 and piano riveting, and the vocals / harmonica would make Carlos proud. This music is the "take no prisoners" blues style of the Westerly / Stonington vibe that began half a century ago. Its deep, and its bright blue. The Mike Crandall Band returns to the Knickerbocker Cafe for the official re-

lease of *Deep Blue C* on April 16th.

The CD is available From Mike directly at mikecrandallblues@sbcglobal.net or from Tumbleweeds in Niantic.

- Tom Retano



Tedeschi Trucks Band

"Let Me Get By"

Fantasy Records

Tedeschi Trucks Band needs no introduction. As one of the most talented and respected blues rock bands out there, they have repeatedly impressed both fans and critics alike with their straight ahead, soulful style and their roster of incredibly talented musicians. Led by husband and wife team Susan Tedeschi and Derek Trucks, they have released another great album that is sure to please.

Susan Tedeschi's vocals on this album are just amazing. She reminds me a lot of old school singers like Bonnie Raitt or a bluesy version of Karen Carpenter. The tonality of her voice is just beautiful, and her sense of style is impeccable. Tedeschi doesn't feel the need to show off with lots of dramatic melodic meanderings – she just belts out song after soulful song with a sense of reserved mastery, staying true to the styles of music from their roots.

Augmenting the great melodies is the fierce slide guitar work of Derek Trucks. A prodigy who has played with many of the top blues players at a young age, he's most well known from his time spent with the Allman Brothers. He injects some of that energy into all these songs, bringing fire to counterbalance Tedeschi's coolness.

The album starts off strong with the catchy tune "Anyhow". It's a straight ahead blues rocker themed on feelings of power, strength, and drive: "I would go anywhere, anytime; I would do anything, anyway, anyhow". Trucks pro-

vides the outro with some wicked slide work and helps to punctuate this opening track with a bang.

The next track "Laugh About It" takes an easy, bluesy tempo and by the chorus almost has a gospel feel to it, with a chorus of harmonies backing Tedeschi up. Again, the lyrics focus on positivity, learning from our mistakes and moving forward. Like much of the album, it is inspirational.

They rock it out quite a bit too. There's a lot of blues energy here in songs like "Don't Know What It Means", "Let Me Get By" and "I Want More". They do a great job of maintaining a traditional roots feel, while at the same time adding their own individual flavor to the sound.

They have some pretty interesting change of pace songs on here too, like "Right On Time" which has a similar feel to The Turtles' hit "So Happy Together". They've also got a couple of nice ballads on here, like "Hear Me" where Tedeschi's voice just glides over the music and enchants you.

Front to back, this is a solidly enjoyable listen, and the kind of album you could play anyway, anytime, anyhow.

- Tom Matthew
Two Ton Music



R.B. Stone

"Some Call It Freedom" Middle Mountain Music

Nashville, Tennessee resident RB Stone has been working at his craft and recording for quite some time. As near as he can estimate, this disc is number 17. "Some Call It Freedom" consists of all original compositions that cover a plethora of styles, including blues, Rock 'n' Roll, soul, R&B and NOLA fusion with authenticity and authority! Playing harmonica, cigar box guitars, lead, slide and rhythm guitars, Stone has his hands firmly on the reins in

SOUND WAVES 17

this recording; producing this project as well on all eleven cuts.

This CD begins with “Hill Country Stomp,” a full out boogie ala “Hip Shake” style as the lyrics pay homage to the founding fathers of the blues. With its powerful slide guitar and commanding vocals, and bold blues harmonica, this song was a perfect way to launch this disc...and it just keeps getting better from there! The second cut and title track, “Some Call It Freedom (some call it the blues)” is fueled by optimism...reflected in lyrics such as, “If you ain’t got no money, there’s no money to lose!” His philosophy becomes completely clear in the last chorus as he declares, “I call it freedom...!” Track three, “35 Miles To Mobile” is a rocker/love declaration, as he makes his way to his “Bama sweet thing who treats me like a king. I might not be Elvis, but tonight he wanna be me!” Great rockin’ rhythm paired perfectly with great lyrics!

The fourth cut, “Mind Your Bizzness,” has Stone does double duty in this NOLA style tune, playing lead guitar and harmonica in the solos. The fifth tracks rocks in a tale of woe about his “Yo Yo Lover” a finagling femme fatal! The song features an organ solo by Larry Von Loon in addition to Stone’s hot guitar riffs. The next track, “Another Thief” is a Mississippi hill country/RL Burnside-ish tune. This one has some hoo-doo! It’s not just the music, but once again, Stone’s instrumentation and lyrics drive the bus. His mastery of the cigar box guitar is powerful as he plays Capn Ron Arnett’s Lobo Cigar Box guitar on this tune and the seventh cut, “Nickajack”...a foot stompin’ instrumental featuring Stone on John Nickle’s Nickajack Cigar Box guitar.

The eighth cut, “You Don’t Want Me” is another hard drivin’ boogie featuring Stone’s penetrating guitar riffs! True to the title, “Can’t Stop Rockin,” he lets the rocker loose on track nine. Clever lyrics and driving instrumentation work in tandem, making this one of my favorite tunes on this disc! Case in point...the first verse, “Before I was born I didn’t have much room; tappin’ my toes in my mama’s womb. I heard the tunes radio playin’ in that hot rob Chevy where I was made. The day I was born, the doctor slapped my (pause) I said I won’t stop rockin’ and I slapped him back!” I could put ALL the words to this song here for you, but, it would be better if you just experience it for yourself. This song has the potential to be a Rock ‘n’ Roll anthem!

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The tenth cut, “Weapons of Mass Persuasion” features special guest, Tim “Too Slim” Langford on slide guitar, leaving Stone to blow blues harp in this lustful number. It seemed appropriate that it was set to “Hoochie-Coochie Man” style blues. Stone praises her “red ruby lips, curvaceous hips” as “Godly gifts” as her “sensual arsenal she knows how to work!” The last cut, “Standin’ On Top of The World” has an up-tempo, R&B flavor. Austin Young does a guest appearance on lead guitar. There are some great solos in this tasty tune, starting with Larry van Loon on a roaring organ solo, leading to Josh Fairman on bass guitar (also on track nine), Terrance Houston on drums. Stone takes this tune out on a note bending blues harp solo, punctuated by Houston on drums.

If you are a fan of blues without borders, “Some Call It Freedom” is right up your alley. It goes WAY beyond the typical five stars rating! You can buy it at; <http://www.rbstone.com/>

Other players; Larry Van Loon: B3, B2 & piano- Randy Coleman: bass guitar on tracks 2 thru 5.

- Ms. Marci



The Frights “You Are Going To Hate This”

Dangerbird Records

The Frights are the youthful punk band we’ve been missing. With huge amounts of angsty lyrics combined with kick-you-in-the-throat rhythm, The Frights drive home the California-garage-punk of the 70s underground scene and eloquently modernize it with distorted vocals and lyrics reflective of the new generation.

The album kicks off with “All I Need,” a desperate plea for romance and affection that is filled with brilliant riffs. “Is this what I’m supposed to do? Blow out

my vocal chords for you,” Mikey Carnevale wails over a heavily distorted guitar and a killer, pounding drum beat. The key point of this leadoff track is its juxtaposition of tempos as it effortlessly moves from a full-speed punk song to a slow melodic track.

Next comes “Kids,” a song that deals with the realities of mid-20s independence. “Kids,” is the key track to this album and really hones in on the true sound of The Frights. The strong bass and snare that come through over the poignant lyrics drives home the tones of anxiety and dread present in the song. Reminiscent of a Dookie-era Green Day, this song captures the same tones as “Welcome to Paradise.” There is honesty in these lyrics. Carnevale, the lead singer, captures the disquietude of his generation as he calls out “Have you ever felt the pressure building in your brain? Growing up is suicide and it’s making me insane.” This track shows the band’s expertise as they balance powerful beats and wicked SoCal guitar riffs with poise.

“Afraid of the Dark” is an offbeat song that focuses on vocals and allows for the band to play at a slower pace. At its base, this song is a groovy song whose simplicity is felt throughout. The simplicity of this song is its best quality; it eloquently eases itself from a somewhat-slow rhythm into a catchy chorus consisting of such lyrics as “I will live in my head; and she will sleep in my bed.”

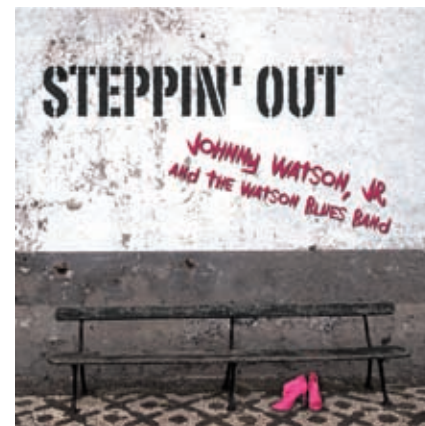
“Tungs” proves to be the bands most commercially appealing song. Packed with romantic sentiments, the song chimes with groovy beats and catchy lyrics. Sounding like the band took a page from The Growlers, “Tungs” shows the other side of SoCal music by harnessing beachy tunes. “Have you seen my shoes? ‘Cause they’ve been ripped to shit from walking the world for you,” sings Carnevale as he showcases his vocal prowess.

The album comes to its zenith with the power-punk title track. Starting off with a riff that is eerily similar to that of My Chemical Romance’s “Na Na Na,” “You Are Going to Hate This” blasts its straightforward lyrics and strong, driving drums through your speakers. The words sound like a mixture of Weezer’s blue album and Pinkerton, especially Carnevale’s rockabilly crooning a third of the way through the song. The song adopts a whatever, nevermind attitude as it spews youthful indifference into the final track. The album smoothly exits with “Of Age,” a soft song that

makes sure to explore the different plights of the modern youth. From losing friends and regretting decisions to headaches and heartbreaks, “Of Age” marks a beautiful end to the album.

Full of highs and a ton of lows, The Frights’ “You Are Going to Hate This,” captures a sound that goes across generations from the 70s punk scene to 50s rockabilly to today’s Beach Goth rock and roll.

- Nic Hall



Johnny Watson, Jr. and The Watson Blues Band “Steppin’ Out” Indie

This band consists of some of this area’s finest musicians and is lead by seasoned blues vocalist/songwriter, Johnny Watson, Jr., who has been in the business about forty-five years. He has been legally blind most of his life and crippled with cerebral palsy since birth never got in his way. Even being confined to a wheel chair for the last fifteen years hasn’t stopped him! Johnny Watson, Jr, guitarist Jim Corwin, bassist Tommy Reed, drummer Jack Moore, keyboardist Mark Taber and backing vocalist and London, England born harmonica player Chris Turner are the six members of this eight piece band who reside in various parts of Rhode Island, and the remaining two members reside in Connecticut. Saxophonist, Al Dziedzic and washboard player, Winnie Lambrecht both live in The Nutmeg State but Lambrecht is reluctant to let Ocean Stater’s know that. She doesn’t want to frighten them, lol!

“STEPPIN’ OUT” is a collection of well chosen blues cover tunes and one original* and won first place in the Connecticut Blues Society’s CD competition and went on to Memphis, TN.

www.Swaves.com

for the International Blues Society's CD competition. Though it didn't win, it made the trip, which is more than many other releases, did!

This disc begins with the first of two Sonny Boy Williamson tunes on this disc. Taber cuts loose on the keys in the first solo, followed by Dziedzic soloing on sax on "Eyesight To The Blind." Track two, "Dust My Broom" is the first of three Elmore James tunes covered. Corwin and Turner work in tandem on the hook riff. Taber and Turner fill the solo slots. The third cut, "If I Had A Penny" is a more obscure blues tune, and was penned by Ray Irving and somewhat of a mystery. Turner does an outstanding blues harp intro to this tune and is joined by guitarist Corwin in the solo section. This tune was a real treat to listen to on earphones. Watson has room to stretch out vocally on this slow blues and Taber plays all these sweet little accents in the background. Track four, "Standin' At The Crossroads" is the second James tune on this disc. Turner plays a chromatic harmonica in his solo followed once again by Corwin on guitar. The fifth cut, "Baby What You Want Me To Do" was penned by Jimmy Reed and is not just another blues staple; it's been rather a signature tune for Watson and his band...and for good reason. All the parts are firmly in their place!

Track six, "The Sky Is Cryin," is more famously known as a Stevie Ray Vaughn tune, but was actually written by Elmore James. The Watson band performs this tune with respect! Dziedzic launches the solos on sax and Corwin follows. The next cut, "Cotton Crop Blues" was written by James Cotton and appropriately opens with Turner and blues harp. Taber plays a lively solo on keys and Corwin picks out the blues! On track eight, Watson and Turner split the vocal duty, trading off on verses. Taber starts the solo section with an electric piano sound in his fervent solo. Corwin follows up delivering a searing guitar solo in this minor key blues. The final cut, "But I'm A Poor Boy" was written by Watson and recorded in 1993 with his band at that time, Johnny Watson, Jr. and The New Decade. This one lively swing/blues tune; dug up from Watson's archives. I did a little digging and found out that the keyboard player from The New Decade Band was none other than Ray Irving, the author of "If I Had A Penny"...mystery solved! You can purchase this recording on CD Baby.

- Ms Marci



Jay Willie Blues Band

"Johnny's Juke Joint"

ZOHO Roots

The Jay Willie Blues Band hails from Newtown, CT. Along with the four band members, Bobby T Torello, Bob Callahan, Steve Clarke and of course, Jay Willie pictured on the cover of this CD, this disc also features their new featured vocalist, Malorie Leogrande and Jason Ricci for the third consecutive release on harmonica. Jay Willie is the author of the two original tunes on this disc.

When you think of a blues band, you don't generally think of a cover tune like "Woody Bully," but that is where Jay Willie and his band begin this twelve tune CD; with a very unlikely cover tune. They do put their own spin on it (pardon the pun) with Malorie Leogrande singing lead vocals and some powerful harmonica from Jason Ricci. The second cut, "You Got Me Dizzy" again features Leogrande on vocals. Ricci's harmonica adds authenticity to this Jimmy Reed blues staple. Track three is a Muddy Waters cover sung by guitarist, Bob Callahan, though you wouldn't recognize this band's rendition of "One More Mile" with its funky twist, in contrast to the Waters slow blues styling. They pulled it off quite well. The fourth cut, "Up Side of The Ground" is a Jay Willie original once again featuring Leogrande on vocals. This tune has a unique style to it; definitely blues, but not your standard twelve-bar blues. I was impressed with the uniqueness of the chord progressions. To paraphrase the lyrics, life may not be grand right now, but, hey, "I'm on the upside of the ground!" The fifth cut, "Barefootin'" will have you steppin' lively, largely fueled by Willie's lead and rhythm guitar riffin'! Callahan is featured on vocals.

Matt Andersen coming to New London

By Ali Kaufman

On Tuesday March 15th, Matt Andersen will take the stage in the Oasis Room at the Garde Arts Center in New London. For those of you that caught him when he stopped by last year, or perhaps caught some of his other jaw dropping performances at either the Rhythm and Roots Festival or the Knickerbocker, come on back!

I spoke with Matt on the same day he released his brand new album "Honest Man" on True North Records and he sounds to me like a musician with a fresh shot of enthusiasm for the new music and tour ahead of him. Matt feels lucky to love what he does and it is evident every time he steps to the microphone. This is good because he does about 250 shows a year and will be hitting 64 of them between now



and mid May. The show at the Oasis Room will be an intimate one but the audience will absolutely be getting the same full experience that Matt brings to the larger venues on his route. The new songs on the set list are both personal and a tad bit political, no surprise during this election year.

Joining Matt for this leg of the tour is Lee Harvey Osmond, whom some might know from bands like Junk House which he had been a member of. Matt had this to say about Lee, "He is going to blow away people that have not seen him yet, he has quite a presence on stage for sure". Andersen went on to elaborate about how important it is to be on tour with someone that you are comfortable with and it seems to me that this is a good fit on stage and off. Others stops in the tour will include shows with the incredible Beth Hart. One of the most underrated musicians out today, in my humble opinion....in Matt's opinion, "She is one of the most powerful voices I've ever been around, every night she gives 200% and could not be more of a sweetheart off stage. Her band family is just as terrific to be around."

You can listen in to the brand new offering "Honest Man" at Matt's website <http://www.stubbyfingers.ca/> and find all the details about the show at the Garde by going to <http://www.gardearts.org/>

This promises to be a terrific night of music, Honestly it does.



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COOKING WITH THE BLUES



By Luci & Jack Chaplin

We are all creatures of habit and stick to our daily routines, follow the same routes and pass by buildings and businesses with a fleeting glance and think someday I'd like to check that place out one day but never do. The Northern Indian Restaurant, 150 State Street, is one that I had had my eye on for years but had never stopped, on the corner of State St. and Green St. right in my own backyard! I ask my delivery man, Tom from Falvey Linen, what's going on around town, who has good food and who are good people, he always spoke highly of The Northern Indian Restaurant. They always offer him a meal, something to drink and he had said the food was fresh and tasty. We decided to stop in one day and to stop procrastinating! Upon entering you see how clean and neat the restaurant is, everything in place and well kept. Upon entry the smell of curry and spice hits you like an uppercut and whets the appetite immediately! We sat down and the waiter, crisp and sharp, came right over with ice water and we got busy with the buffet. There were 7 or 8 chaffing dishes lined up, offering up nicely spiced indian staples such as warm naan bread, mutton stew, shrimp curry, chicken masala, tandoori chicken and a variety of vegetarian options such as an okra stew, chickpea curry, rice pilaf and salad with simple homemade dressings. I had one which was of a chutney consistency made with onions and tomatoes, another was a mint dressing with a vibrant green hue. We opted for water but noticed the \$2 beer selection - Blue Moon, Heineken, Amstel Light, Corona, Sam Adams and Mystic Bridge, come on now, that is almost at cost, what a bargain!! They had a 22 oz. Imported jobber for \$5.00. Wine was also unbelievably reasonable at \$3 a glass. We highly recommend The Northern Indian Restaurant and will definitely make it one of our local staples. We hung out for a few hours even after the third pass of the buffet! It is like a fish bowl with windows on the side and in the front, awesome people watching and to watch the local scene unfold before your eyes!

My friend Gaspar had been telling me about the best grinder in town right down the road on Bank Street next to his namesake restaurant. Again I had driven past this spot a million and one times thinking nothing about venturing in. It is the old Paddy's Grinder Shop and I guess the seller had schooled the new owners and they have kept up the stellar reputation for a great sandwich. On my way to the New London docks to pick up a 40 #

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box of fresh fluke from Rob, the Captain of the Mystic Way, I stopped by the Bank Street Market, 377 Bank Street, to pick up a few grinders for the crew and of course one for my lonesome! It is now a full service grocery store, I stepped up to the counter and ordered a Large Genoa and a Large Hot Capicola. I was surprised when I saw the quality of the meats and that they use Norwich's own Voctura's Bakery grinder rolls. You can tell when someone takes pride in what they do, Rodger really took his time preparing the grinders, like watching Picasso! I'm afraid to tell you all about them, they may not want so much business or may not be able to handle it. It took about 20 minutes start to finish but it was well worth the wait!! I'd would say it's one of the best grinders in town for the quality, the price, and it was a Masterpiece!! (\$6.50 and \$7.50 respectively) I've had lesser grinders for a whole lot more dough, no pun intended, and I'll tell You they Don't Skimp on the Groceries!!!

We have had some unbelievably great music this past month and more great bands coming in March. Brand Taylor started an All Star Blues Jam on Wednesdays with invited guests each week, we are featuring pizza and Berkshire Breweries Beer draft specials! Peter Moore and The Sidewinders brought it, laid down some old school funky blues, I think I even heard a Slim Harpo number!! They will be back soon! The Piece D Resistance for the month was The River Gods this past Saturday night to round out the month. Rich Koster from the Day gave us and the Gods a great mention in the Thursday Night and Day section "Of gods and Pie" and we can't thank him enough! Rick is one of the biggest supporters in this area for live music, He should win The Best Of in The Day!! My Pal Edward Lamoureux introduced me to The Gods, they packed the house and brought the house down!! Ben and Nancy Parent and the band are well polished and one of the five bands nominated as "The Best Of" in the Day, show them some Love! Live music is a partnership between bands and venues, it doesn't always work but when a band does their own promotion and has such a strong following it's a win win! I am also one of five chefs nominated in The Best Of in The Day, I am honored to be in the running. I am blessed and grateful to have landed in an area so filled with artists and talent!

St. Patrick's Day is coming, I'll be doing My Irish Eggs Benedict and Bangers and Mashed among other food and drink specials, we are going to have some live music for sure, come check us out! In the mean time be good to yourself and others, spring is around the corner and soak up the sunshine and fresh air, Jack and Luci



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Hearing Aid Continued

The sixth track is the other Jay Willie original on this recording. The hook, "Hold On To Watcha Got" in this rockin' blues tune more than likely has the audience singing along! Drummer Torello does vocal duty. Track seven has Jay's brother Tod Willie featured on vocals in Curtis Mayfield classic "People Get Ready." Soothing guitar riffs fill the passages between the verses and the solos. Track eight again features Leogrande on vocals on this Johnny Winter composition. Her voice adds a sensuality that the original doesn't possess. Torello hits the vocal mic again on track nine in, "I Got A Stomach Ache"...a funky Junior Wells cover. A real dance number! The tenth cut is a lesser known cover, by comparison, but the Dee Clark classic R&B tune "Nobody But You" is sung by Leogrande. She takes the original version and embellishes on it artfully. Track eleven, "Succotash", is an instrumental that gives Jay Willie an open door to shine on guitar! This CD ends with, "Me And The Devil"...a very traditional blues penned by the ultra traditional Robert Johnson. This version is stripped down, literally, to the roots! Willie, on guitar and vocals, and Ricci on harmonica, carefully carry this tune with the reverence it deserves. Bravo!

The band; Jay Willie, guitar, slide guitar, vocals
Bob Callahan, guitar, vocals
Ted Yakush,
Steve Clarke, bass
Bobby T Torello, drums, vocals
Malorie Leogrande, lead vocals

- Ms. Marci



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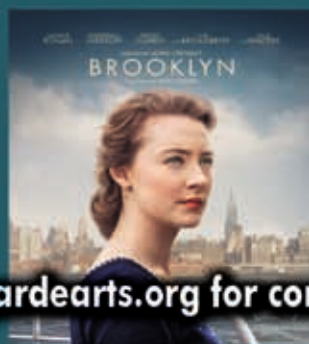
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