

Sound



Waves

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March 2017

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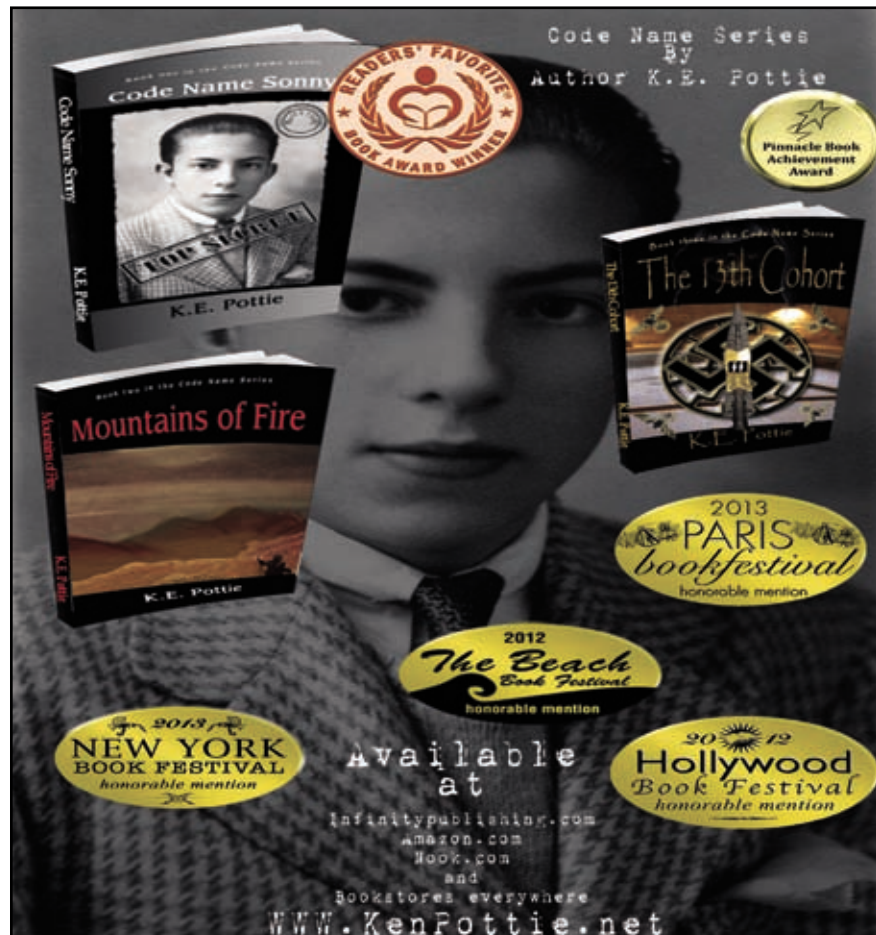
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MUSIC NOTES

"The Rhodes Scholar Janitor"

By Mark T. Gould

He fiddled with his guitar strap, tuned his acoustic a bit, and gazed ruefully out at his audience.

"You know," he growled, "these songs mean ever more to me as I get older."

That was 34 years ago, at a packed Toad's Place in New Haven. The speaker, and performer, was the, even then, seemingly ageless Kris Kristofferson, and his comments appear even more valid today, as he continues to perform, write, and, well, get older, at



the tender age of 80.

It's been an amazingly long, qualitative run for Kristofferson, whose songwriting prowess, for some unknown reason, never seems to get mentioned in the same sentence as his contemporaries like Bob Dylan, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, and others.

But, I'd stack up his litany against any of them, including Dylan. "Me and Bobby McGee." "For The Good Times." "Sunday Morning Comin' Down." "Help Me Make It Through the Night." "Lovin' Her Was Easier (Than Anything I'll Ever Do Again)." "Please Don't Tell Me How the Story Ends." "They Killed Him." And, perhaps most beguiling for a man with still a vital career at his age, "Feeling Mortal."

Kristofferson's remarkable career is now underscored with the release of "The Complete Monument & Columbia Album Collection," a staggering 16-CD box set from Sony Legacy that combines 11 studio albums from his earliest days at Monument and Columbia Records, covering 1970 through 1981. In addition, there's also a treasure trove of five bonus discs of unreleased live and studio recordings, three concert recordings, and two discs of rare, hard-to-find non-lp singles, studio outtakes and other goodies.

Taken together, this massive, somewhat overdue, release is the perfect showcase for an astonishing career.

Kristofferson, who was born in Brownsville, Texas, was a military brat whose father was an Air Force major general. He was pushed toward a career in the armed forces, but, as an aspiring writer, he enrolled in college. He graduated summa cum laude, and earned a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford University, where he began to write songs.

Still under pressure from his family, he joined the Army after graduation, and became a helicopter pilot. He was then given an assignment to teach English literature at West Point, but he left the Army to pursue songwriting. His family was, not surprisingly, displeased, and essentially disowned him.

Kristofferson moved to Nashville, where he worked at a variety of odd jobs, including sweeping floors as a janitor at Columbia Recording Studios. It was there that he met June Carter, who was married to Johnny Cash. He reportedly asked her to give Cash a tape of his songs. He heard nothing, so, a few weeks later, seeking to make an impression on Cash, the military veteran borrowed and landed a helicopter in Cash's front yard.

There is some debate as to Cash being home at the time, but the stunt clearly got his attention. The country music icon decided to record Kristof-

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fer's "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down," which led to the latter winning Songwriter of the Year honors at the Country Music Awards.

As a result, Kristofferson was offered his own recording career at Monument, the results of which are contained in the current box set, and also had his early songs recorded by Ray Price, Gladys Knight & The Pips, Waylon Jennings, and Bobby Bare, among many others.

In 1971, while he was recording his second album for Monument, Janis Joplin hit number one with her version of "Me and Bobby McGee." At the same time, his second Monument album, "The Silver Tongued Devil and I," became a hit, leading to his inclusion, along with Nelson and Jennings, as a leader of the so-called "outlaw country" movement.

At the same time, Kristofferson began what has been a parallel, solid movie career, appearing in "Pat Garrett and Billy Kid (along with Dylan)," "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore," and "A Star is Born," the last of which he won a Golden Globe award for best actor.

After concentrating on his acting career for a few years, Kristofferson's musical calling reignited when he met singer Rita Coolidge. They married in 1973, and released an album titled "Full Moon," leading to hit singles and Grammy nominations. However, subsequent releases did not make the charts, and the combination of his rough, weary voice and anti-pop sound kept further commercial success at bay.

Other artists continued to record his songs, though, and, in 1979, Nelson's "Willie Sings Kristofferson" was a platinum hit. Nelson and Kristofferson continued their partnership, and added Waylon Jennings and Johnny Cash to form the super group "The Highwaymen."

Although the Highwaymen continued to successfully record and tour, Kristofferson turned to acting again, appearing in "Lone Star," "Blade," "A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries," "Fire Down Below," Tim Burton's remake of "Planet of the Apes," and others.

But, no one ever forgot his songwriting genius. He was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1977, and the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1985, and, in 2004, the Country Music Hall of Fame. In 2006, he received the Johnny Mercer Award from the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

In April 2007, he came full circle, bestowed with the CMT "Johnny Cash Visionary Award." The award was named after the man on whose lawn Kristofferson famously landed that helicopter, and after the first artist to record one of his songs, which opened the door to his Hall of Fame career.

In accepting the award, Kristofferson said "John was my hero before he was my friend, and anything with his name on it is really an honor in my eyes. I was thinking back to when I first met him, and if I ever thought that I'd be getting an award with his name on it, it would have carried me through a lot of hard times."

As the songwriting giant moves into his ninth decade, Kristofferson has said that he would like the first three lines of Leonard Cohen's "Bird on the Wire" on his tombstone:

"Like a bird on the wire

Like a drunk in a midnight choir

I have tried in my way to be free."

That's a perfect description of a Rhodes Scholar janitor.

Kris Kristofferson will be at the Garde Arts Center, Saturday May 6th



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All The World's a Stage



“Get Outa Town!”

By Sue Menhart

When you get nice and comfortable with your musical act and have a substantial fan base filling up the bar stools at your gigs, you mistakenly believe that these fans will be your fans forever. Here's how it works when you're a “bar” musician. Single people go out to meet people and

maybe by chance your band is playing where people go to meet people. But once single people meet another single person they'd rather hang out with doing other things, they eventually stop going to bars. Two empty bar stools. Couples you manage to get and keep as fans eventually get married, have kids, and can't get babysitters, so they don't come anymore either. Two more empty bar stools. Even if Bruce Springsteen was playing in my town every weekend I still wouldn't want to go see him every weekend. I could be out of money, or sick, or taking care of someone who's sick, or sick of his songs. So, your fan base is always changing, in other words, is always diminishing. I believe the solution to this unavoidable calamity is to get yourself outa town in order to reach out to new people who a) have never seen you before so you're kind of like a novelty, b) they haven't hooked up with anybody yet so they actually still go to bars and c) to keep your sanity and belief in what you are doing. Playing in new towns is like getting a new Barbie camper – with so many new landscapes to explore. I can re-use my outfits and meet so many new Barbies and Kens.

One of my favorite regions to play is down South in Georgia and South Carolina. I take an earned vacation from my day job and use it as an excuse to play gigs down there. What's cool about down South is, they think because I'm from the North, that I must be some cool New Yorker with a cool accent, when in actuality, I'm just a bored New Englander who really just needed to get outa town because the bar stools are empty at my gigs.

I played this bar in Lexington, South Carolina which is the only bar for 50 miles. You would think on a Tuesday night that the crowds would be rather light. Not so! The owner asked me to start early, and play later. Ya'll dig? The owner said, “Ya'll let me know when you're gonna be 'round these parts agin, ya hear?” Easy money right there.

I played a bar in Georgia where it was all about the tip jar. Because I was from the North, people thought I drove all the way down there just to play that bar, so they were quite generous. We called it the “Love Bucket,” and man oh man, did they fill it. Two nights in a row I made enough money in that jar to pay for the whole trip. One elderly gentleman in a worn-out cowboy hat said, “I'll done give ya one hundred dollers if you play me some Johnny Cash.” I happily obliged.

I went on vacation one year to Madeira, Portugal and met some nice musical people who even invited me up on stage to jam. It was disconcerting that they could sing in English and I couldn't sing in Portuguese or do any of that Fado stuff, but they seemed to be OK with it. Through Facebook, we arranged an actual gig together for the following year when I would return to Madeira.

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The night arrived, I was in town, and I was drinking heavily with my friends. The island of Madeira is an ancient, secluded place where kings and diplomats and sheiks hang out to let loose. Nestled in the North Atlantic near the Canary Islands, it rises up like one big mountain like something out of Jurassic Park. There's a Pizza Hut on the island that gives out free samples of Madeira wine, which is more like a port, and potent as heck. Actually, this magical port is served everywhere, and if you don't watch yourself, you can really get trashed, in about 20 minutes. There's also this crazy drink called a poncha, which is more than a drink. It's an event. People get together down back alleys and side roads and have a poncha. They eat peanuts and drink and drink and drink this concoction of fire water (really potent alcohol), honey, sugar, lemon rind and fruit juice. It's like a scorpion bowl on crack. Yes I had one, or two.

On the island, there are also Irish bars, English pubs and Italian restaurants, all competing for the tourist dollar. We were happy to oblige. We tipped outrageously, which they thought was just hilarious. “Americanos – wasting their Euros again!” There was one local bar where all the cops hung out. They smoked weed right at their table, and passed the stuff around like it was completely legal or something. (I think it is.)

The gig time arrived, I walked up the steep cobblestoned incline to the venue (every road is uphill in this place!) and huffed and puffed right on past. I was plastered! I'm sure they did just fine without me. We're still friends on Facebook.

But my very favorite place to play in the whole world is on my brother's veranda in a cute little town in Georgia, which is also the hometown of Gregg Allman. Everybody in town knows Gregg Allman, and has guitars or pictures signed by Gregg Allman. When you play guitar on a veranda in Georgia, everybody comes over and it's a p-ar-ar-tay. The pay isn't good, but it's good for the soul. Time to pack the camper!

Peruse more cautionary tales, rants and raves over on my blog “Menhart Musings” at www.suemenhart.wordpress.com.

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LOCAL BEAT



From Funk, Punk to Techno-rock at the Hygenic Arts Weekend Show in New London, CT

By Andrew Kerbs

Twas a swell weekend at various venues in New London CT, from rustic record store Telegraph to the elegant Crocker Ballroom and Hygenic Arts Arena. CT and RI residents always look forward to this

creative and musical time of year to thaw the winter chill.

Straight to VHS could be seen jamming away at the Telegraph Music Store with the punkish and bouncy brand of pop music. Equally as exciting was Fatal Film whose dissonant lyrics and washy 2-chord guitar sounds (not to mention 2 syllable chorus shouts) are a reminder of oi and such classic alternative rock band Sonic Youth. Songs included a Strokes cover and Mike Winslow's drums were pattery (with deft fills and off beats on the "tom" drums during shifts in the songs). There were familiar old faces in the crowd . . . goth legend Dorian and renowned punk-rock DJ Marko (of WCNI radio) as well as lots of younger millennials. Guitarist Matt Potter scraped frenetically on his guitar between cymbal and drum splashes, culminating in a bash of a finish (in which drummer Mike wiped his face off with a towel).

Equally as exciting was Hugh Birdsall, who played a rockabilly number about a Dead Man featuring great walking bass in the Crocker Ballroom. More fun tunes include "Whaling City Girls" with its ringy jangley guitar sounds and the 1-2-1-2 didley-dadley guitar licks on some unusually happy and swingy song about suicide. Other numbers included the carefree "No Car No Job No Money" and the fast political and acoustic R&B shuffles with juicy electric guitar solos. Hugh's sweet vibrato-laden tenor needs no introduction for those familiar with his sonorous work with country-influenced artist Anne Castellano or the sweet sounding songs in the Reducers catalog.

The Hygenic Arena also featured a weird but cool electrodance event Blacklight Garden conjured and masterminded by Amy Hannum. The installation included glow-in-the dark hula-hoop acrobats and a plastic wrap maze (with a strategically placed, plush makeout chair in the middle of the maze). DJs included Benjamin, Mayo noise and Mital. Their staccato keyb-hooks and deep dance grooves were infectious and reminiscent of cult-favorite band Depeche Mode. This fact made the prospect of dance and undulation damn near impossible for visitors drawn to it's sexy beat (all that was missing was Dave Gahan's gothic Elvis-like baritone).

The second to final band was a souljazz-rock band Franklin Brothers (at the Crocker House Ballroom) that was pretty sexy too, with fast trumpet blasts and trombone sliding back and forth. The bassline was what held this band together, with bass solos occasionally punctuating the funk . . . yet the bassist remained behind the subdued sounds of the piano which was mixed low. The guitar sound was choppy, and this band played such cool songs as "The Chicken."

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Fans of the New London music scene are never disappointed when this festive and artistic time of year arrives. More festivities to come as the summer draws near . . .

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BAR FLY JOURNALS



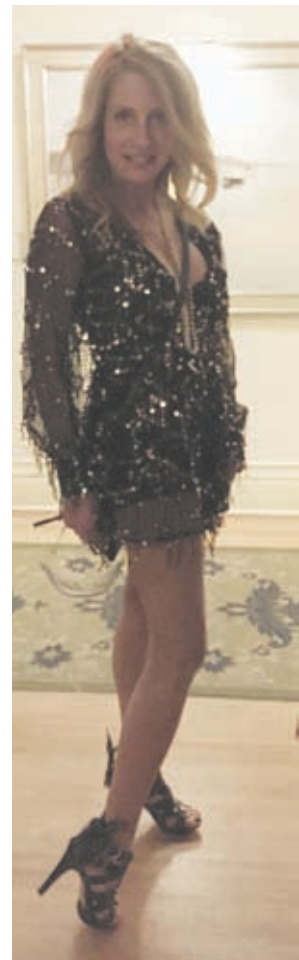
By Stephanie Shawn

Hello My Sweet Bar Flies..... it's my birthday, it's my birthday!! Holy Crapoli! Another year has slipped right by. This year, I have some Big, Big Plans! These plans involve a bus, a stripper pole, lotsa girls and just a teensy bit of our favorite beverages, poured into teeny, tiny cups and no, I don't mean hello cups.. lol!! My homage to the Irish will be small cups.

Getting a Lot of info and press releases from the people running the RHYTHM AND ROOTS FESTIVAL this year. It seems weekly that new artists are added to the Line-Up. So get your tickets early, grab your tie dye t, your hand rolled

“cigs”, long flowing caftans, or short miniskirts, INDULGE!!

What a beautiful, elegant evening at the MASQUERADE held at THE OCEAN HOUSE recently. Masks were encouraged, so I slid mine onto my face, hopped into my ride and headed to MISS CARR'S. Calling her as I drove, I told her her Ass had better be dressed and ready when I arrived. She started to argue, but I hung up, she was not gonna be late this time!! Got to hang with the In Crowd.



I get to her house, gingerly trudge through twenty feet of snow and sludge in my peacock embellished heels, open her door, scare Maria, climb 300 stairs (seemed like that many) and dramatically open her door, step through and she looks at me and says...” you know it doesn't start til 7, right?” It's 5:15.

Obviously, I thought it started at 6.

I had wanted to meet BARBARA for a cocktail, but she was hanging with STEPHAN at DOGWATCH. Speaking of BARBARA, she and GERI opened INDULGE COFFEE & SANDWICH CO. in Stonington Boro across from the library. Stop by, say hi, have a coffee and order from their unique menu!

But I digress, now I'm realizing I'm all dressed up with an hour and a half to kill watching Wendy try on shoes. Guess it's time for a cocktail! Throw myself on her bed, rip off the damn sweaty mask and watch Miss WENDY'S fashion show. O, and then DANI shows up..more cocktails, more hair up or hair down? Mask on or off? This shoe or that one? I love being a girl!!

Thankfully, we arrived on timeish. A stop at

SKYBAR at VENICE, then a 20minute wait in valet line and we were in! O, what a night! Everyone looked amazing. JUVY and TED SHERMAN, JULIE and ROB HOLLAND, DAN STANAVAGE, JON LALLO, MIA, BRUCE MORROW, JAMIE and MARYANNE ALUZZO, KIRSTEN and TORI, ANGIE and ART SMITH, MILLIE DONOVAN, LISA KONICKI and so many more! Everyone stunning!



Well, it's looking like Miss VICKI WALBRIDGE has had a good year! From a dramatic weight loss, comedic spins at PISTOL PETE'S in Norwich and a possible show in NYC!? You go, girl! Keep 'em guessing! Congratulations to BILL THIBEAULT, AARON DANIELS, JASON WALLACE and the Crew at STRANGE BREW PUB on 2 years of BILL'S GARAGE ALL-STAR JAM NIGHT! Awesome!

And it's wonderful to see NOAH FELDMAN and BRENDAN JAMES FOX have now become the FELDMAN & FOX DUO! Hire them for a party, at a bar or go support these talented young guys at an upcoming show. Find 'em on FaceBook!!

Romper Stomper Bumper Boo....I see DON DAGGETT, NINA MCCARTHY, JASON GUILBEAULT, STEVE BIGELOW, RJ POST, SUE DONOVAN, ED CHIBURIS, MIKE OFLE, MICHAEL PACHECO, JOE GORFINKLE, BRUCE BRUNELLE, BOB DAYON, BILL BALLATO, DEEDEE ALFONSO, GARY THIBEAULT, RON GUY, DEREK PALMERONE, JERRY LONGOLUCCO, JUDY TROMBINO OLIVER, KERRI LAMB, AMY JO MAGGS, SUE SCHLAIS, ARNOLD BELLAMY, DADE NUNEZ, KEENY DONOHUE, DARREN FIORE, MARCUS PULLAN, GEOFF HAUSMAN, DARLA VEILLEUX, TODD CAMBIO, CAROLYN O'BRIEN, VICKI WALBRIDGE, JAY DEMPSEY, CHERYL CENTER, DENISE BEDELL DEROSIER, KIM SCOTT, ERIC PRACHNIAK, AMY PALMER BABCOCK, TINA PAGLIUSI, STACIE MARIE,



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Thank you in advance for any Birthday Wishes you may give me. I'll try to make you proud! DIRTY DEEDS on March 18 at the BROWN DERBY! BE THERE! I will also be riding in my 1st Annual MYSTIC IRISH DAY PARADE on the 19th. Rut Ro ...anyways, My car will be covered in green glitter! Can't wait!!! And Congratulations to New Bartender STEVE ROBINSON for surviving an afternoon of Day Drinking with Betsy and ME! You're on the Roster!

And thank you to WENDY..Again! Fabulous Fundraiser at AMIGO'S for the CHARIHO BAND BOOSTERS and she also slipped in a CHOCOLATE MARCH throughout Westerly which raised money for the JONNY-CAKE CENTER OF WESTERLY. That Girl Is On Fire!!



Love seeing all of my sweet, sweet flies...RICK BROWN, CLYDESDALES ROSE, SWEET SUE, DAWN TOSTI, AL DRUIN, JEANNETTE MORRONE VERTENTES, DAN WATSON, HEATHER SOARES, JOEL REID, BRUCE MEARNES, LARRY GAVITT, MISS KIMMY and JULIE, KATE WICKLUND, JANINE and JOEY, PAMELA ROSETTA, MATT and BARBARA LINCOLN, BILL

STERNBERG, JOE MOLINARO, RICK from DAVIS STANDARD, ANDY and LUCAS and my wonderful SHAWN-WEINKE Crew! Love you long time, my Sweet Flies!



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AC/JD

9 - Voodoo Grill, Mystic, CT 6-9

ANDY & BETHANY

7 - Angie's Pier 27, Mystic, CT 5-8
8 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7-10
10,24 - The Irons, Mystic, CT 8-11
11 - Breachway, Charlestown, RI 6:30-10

ANDY CHANEY

6 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT

ANDY CHANEY & MARCY KELLEY

2,14,21 - Chapter 1, Mystic, CT 8-11

AZALEA DRIVE

3 - Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT
10 - On The Waterfront, New London, CT 7pm
17 - Brazen Hen, Westerly, RI 8pm
31 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm

BEBOBALOUBOB

3 - River Inn Yantic, CT
11 - Toyo Lounge, Colchester, CT
18 - Stash's Cafe, New London, CT
24 - Angies Pier 27, Mystic, CT

BRANDT TAYLOR

3 - Turnpike Cafe, Montville, CT 6pm
4 - Lindy's, Slatersville, RI
5 - Cady's, Chepachet, RI 3-7pm
9,23 - Daddy Jack's, New London, CT 7pm
10 - Latitude, Mystic, CT 7pm
15 - Bee & Thistle, Old Lyme, CT 6-8pm
17 - Apricots, Farmington, CT 7pm
18 - World of Beer, W. Hartford, CT
24 - Lucky's, Johnston, RI
29 - Black Eyed Sally's, Hartford, CT 7pm
31 - Tuscany Grill, Middletown, CT 7pm

CADILLAC HOTEL

5 - Sneekers, Groton, CT 4-7pm

THE CARTELLS

1 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
2,9,16,23,30 - Norwich Inn, Norwich, CT 6:30pm
3,24 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm
8 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI 7:30pm

10 SOUND WAVES

11 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 7:30pm
17 - Pazzo, Rocky Hill, CT 7pm
25 - Gala, Mohegan Sun, CT 6pm
31 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT

DAN STEVENS

1 - The Falcon, Marlboro, NY
2 - The Fez, Stamford, CT
7,14,21,28 - www.icrvradio.com 4pm
7,14,21,28 - Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT 6pm
10 - The Stand, Branford, CT
16 - Smokin' With Chris, Southington, CT
17 - Pizza Palace, Beacon Falls, CT
18 - Bing Theater, Springfield, MA
19 - Bee and Thistle, Old Lyme, CT
22 - Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, MA
24 - The Old Goat, Richmond, ME
25 - Bigelow Brewing, Skowhegan, ME
31 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT

DAN WATSON

2,5,9,26 - Ancient Mariner, Mystic, CT
4 - Dog Watch, Stonington, CT
8 - Mystic Pizza II, N. Stonington, CT
10,14,28 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
11 - Harbor House, Mystic, CT
12 - The Pub, Matunuck, RI
15,31 - Tipping Chair, Southington, CT
17 - Harp n Hound, Mystic, CT 2-5pm
18 - Breachway, Charlestown, RI
21 - Angie's Pier 27, Mystic, CT
24 - Lansdowne Pub, Uncasville, CT
25 - Mariner Grill, Narragansett, RI
30 - Voodoo Grill, Mystic, CT

DARIK & THE FUNBAGS

4 - American Pie, Seymour, CT
10 - Blackstone, Southington, CT
11 - Newport Blues, Newport, RI
17 - Off the Hook, Milford, CT
25 - Backroads, Manchester, CT
31 - Shamrock, Waterbury, CT

THE DRAWBRIDGE BAND

25 - Harbor House, Mystic, CT 8:30pm

EIGHT TO THE BAR

1 - Auditorium, Concord, NH 7:30-9:15
3 - Town Hall, W. Hartford, CT 8:30-11:30
10 - Infinity Hall, W. Norfolk CT 8-10:30
18 - Casa Mia, Berlin, CT 8:30-12:30
25 - The Office, Oxford, CT 8-12

FRANKENPHIL

3 - Son's Of Liberty, S. Kingston, RI 6pm
6 - Rathskeller, Charlestown, RI 7:30pm
8 - Ivory Rest., Deep River, CT 7pm
9 - Murphys, Providence, RI 5:30pm
10 - McBrides, Providence, RI 6:45pm
12 - Midtown, Newport, RI 4pm
16 - Dans Place, W. Greenwich, RI 8pm
18 - On The Waterfront, New London, CT 7pm
21 - Stomping Ground, Putnam, CT 8pm
25 - Penny Lane, Old Saybrook, CT 7:30pm

28 - Strange Brew, Norwich, CT 8:30pm

GREEN TEA

2 - Luxury Cinema, Mystic, CT
4 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI
17,29 - Strange Brew, Norwich, CT

GREEN TEA LIGHT

9,23 - The Irons, Mystic, CT 5:30-8:30
11 - Malted Barley, Westerly, RI
31 - Wood River Inn, Richmond, RI

HOPE ROAD

24 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI

HOPE VALLEY VOLUNTEERS

19 - Wood River Inn, Richmond, RI 6pm

JAMES HARRIS

1,4,8,15,18,22,29 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
3 - Latitude 41, Mystic, CT 7pm
7,14,21,28 - Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT 8pm
9 - Perk & Corks, Westerly, RI
10,31 - Pizzetta, Mystic, CT
16,30 - Iron's, Mystic, CT 5:30pm
17 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm
23 - Steak loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
24 - Venice, Westerly, RI 7pm
25 - Tuscany, Mohegan, CT
26 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm

JAY DEMPSEY BAND

4 - Sneekers Cafe, Groton, CT
9 - Atrium, Foxwoods, CT
29 - Steak loft, Mystic, CT 7pm

JOSI DAVIS

11 - The Social, New London, CT

JUNKYARD HEARTSTRINGS

3 - Angelico's, E. Hampton, CT 6-10pm
10 - Pub 32, Storrs, CT
17,31 - Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7-10pm
18 - KBC Brewery, Webster, MA 7-10pm
24 - Tuscany Grill, Middletown, CT 7:30-11:30pm
25 - Crossings Pub, Putnam, CT 8-11pm
28 - Stomping Ground, Putnam, CT 8pm

KALA FARNHAM

JOHN VAN NESS DUO

25 - On the Waterfront, New London, CT 7-10pm

KEEP IT ROLLING BAND

4 - Backroads, Manchester, CT

KEN SERIO JAZZ TRIO

5 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI

LORNA BLACK BAND

4 - Supreme Pizza, Westerly, RI

17 - Cleats, Westerly, RI
25 - Wood River Inn, Wyoming, RI

THE LOCOMOTIVES

3 - The Stand, Branford, CT
4 - Angelicos, E. Hampton, CT
10 - Adams Mill, Manchester, CT
11 - Red House, Deep River, CT
25 - Toyos, Colchester
31 - Lavita, E. Haddam, CT

MATT n DEAN

9 - Hardrock, Foxwoods, CT

STYFF KITTY

17 - Cleats, Westerly, RI
31 - Sneekers, Groton, CT

SUE MENHART BAND

3 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm

SUNDAY GRAVY

3 - Strange Brew, Norwich, CT
10 - Sneekers Café, Groton, CT
18 - Wood River Inn, Richmond, RI
25 - Hot Rods, New London, CT

2 CAT ZOO

3 - The Irons, Mystic, CT
17 - Black Sheep, Niantic, CT 8-11pm

THREE2TANGO

17 - 99 Restaurant, Norwich, CT

TONY MARSHALL JOHN VAN NESS DUO

3 - On the Waterfront, New London, CT 7pm

WOOLY MAMMOTH

2 - Village Cinema, Mystic, CT 7-11pm
17 - Daniel Packer Inn, Mystic, CT

ZOE LEWIS

24 - All Souls, New London, CT
25 - Packing House, Willington, CT
31 - Roots Healing Arts, Natick, MA

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12 - Foxwoods, Mashantucket, CT

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23 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

Curtis Salgado

10 - Kate Center, Old Saybrook, CT

Dawes

12 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

Florida Georgia Line

10,11 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

Lucky Peterson

4 - Black-Eyed Sally's, Hartford, CT

Luke Bryan

4 - Dunkin' Center, Providence, RI

The Lumineers

16 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

Moe.

31 - College St Hall, New Haven, CT

Popa Chubby

31 - Black-Eyed Sally's, Hartford, CT

Rhiannon Giddens

5 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

Shemekia Copeland

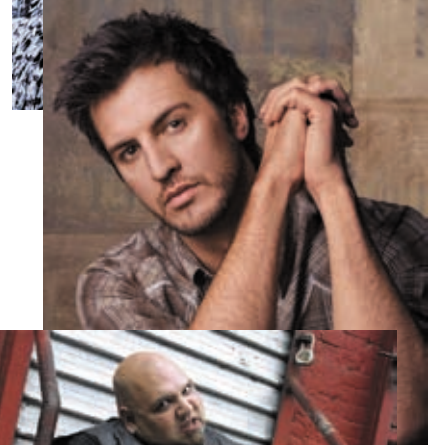
16 - Wolf Den, Uncasville, CT

Sting

9 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

Walk Off The Earth

25 - Foxwoods, Mashantucket, CT



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BACK ISSUES

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By Tom Matthew

Music and art are all about breaking new creative ground and exploring new territory. Dawes continues to expand from their California roots and grow in new directions. They're often described as carrying on the Laurel Canyon tradition of bands like The Byrds, Crosby Stills & Nash and others, but songwriter Taylor Goldsmith wants to blaze new ground with Dawes.

The Dawes tour takes them through New England in March with shows in New York City, Boston, Hartford and Northampton. I spoke with Taylor Goldsmith about Dawes' inspiration, direction and finding a sense of originality in a saturated music scene.

Tom Matthew: Your new album "We're All Gonna Die" takes a little bit of a departure from Dawes history and carves a path into indie-rock territory. Tell me about the inspiration behind the new music.

Taylor Goldsmith: I think we've always been a band that follows whatever comes naturally to us. I realize there are some artists that take a more conscious and deliberate approach to their subsequent albums, but us, it's always been the music revealing itself to us.

Like anybody else in 2017 we listen to all sorts of stuff. Any high point of music history has been the culmination of the 15 years before it. Right now there's a lot of R&B records, hip hop records we continue to get back into, Tom Petty records, Bruce Springsteen records.

I think that we didn't really think about trying to be different, trying to

incorporate other sounds, it was really just let's chase that high that we're always chasing on every record, feeling like we've accomplished something that we hadn't yet. So I think that's been the biggest goal of ours.

These songs were born out of the same place in terms of me writing them, on piano or acoustic guitar or something, and we just kind of fill them out as a band in the studio. And I think when the people see the show live, it's really clear that these songs fit in the catalog.

We knew it had its own identity and own personality in relation to the other albums, but we by no means thought this was different for the sake of being different. This is what got us excited, this made us feel like it's something we hadn't done before, and it feels like we're being true to ourselves.

TM: So it's just a natural evolution of your music.

TG: Yeah, and I think that goes for any band. The worst direction a band could possibly take is saying, "Well that worked for us before, let's do it again." I think that goes for a person that thinks consciously about the fact that they want to grow and learn and just be a better person, and be more well-rounded or more cultured, or whatever word you want. To continue on some sort of journey as an individual.

I think in that sense, a band is as much of a living breathing thing. If we were to stop at any point, and not continue that trip of figuring out who else we are, what are some other sides of who we are, then we would just stagnate and die.

TM: I understand your old friend Blake Mills came in as producer on “We’re All Gonna Die”. What influence did he bring to the album?

TG: He has a very original mind, extremely musical. But most importantly I feel he has a really healthy way of never being referential, never taking an idea because it sounds like something else.

And that’s something that even we would be guilty of. There’s a certain moment with a certain riff for an outro that me and the keyboardist Lee were working on because we thought it sounded like Thriller or something, and that made us really happy. Blake was like, maybe that’s exactly why we shouldn’t do it. Maybe that’s exactly why we should look for something else.

I don’t think it’s a conscious thing with Blake, but I think he’s so good at always making sure the music that he’s hearing back at him, whether it’s through the production or the arrangement of parts or whatever, that it’s something that none of us have ever heard before.

When I would go back and listen to songs like “We’re All Gonna Die” or “One of Us”, while it felt like singularly us, it also felt like music we hadn’t heard, and we didn’t know how to classify it as easily. I attribute that to Blake’s never ending quest to surprise himself and those that he’s working with.

TM: In the past Dawes had been consistently labeled as carrying on the Laurel Canyon sound. How do you feel about that comparison?

TG: I think that any band, the dream is to get to the point where you’re the reference. The dream is for a younger band someday to say “You sound like Dawes” the way people say “You sound like the Grateful Dead” or “You sound like the Rolling Stones, or Bob Dylan.” When you become the reference, that’s every band’s dream. Anything short of that is always uncomfortable, because you don’t know what to make of it.

When people were telling Loudon Wainwright or much later Conor Oberst, “So people say you’re the new Bob Dylan, what do you think?” I don’t think they knew how to react to that, because it’s not who they are. They’re Conor and Loudon, and that’s how they want to be perceived, and eventually over time that is how they are perceived.

So I guess it’s the same. If people are saying Laurel Canyon sound in relation to Dawes, on one hand I’m honored people are talking about our band. If they’re looking for catch phrases that means they’re trying to communicate who we are, which is a good thing. But on the other hand, if someone was asking me “Do you think you’re a Laurel Canyon sounding band?” I’d say I don’t know exactly what that means.

In my own head I don’t think so, because I look at songs like “Most People” or “When My Time Comes” or “Things Happen”, none of those songs to me sound like a Laurel Canyon thing. And definitely nothing on “We’re All Gonna Die” as well.

At the same time I do understand the fact that we have acoustic guitars, a lot of lyrics, guitar solos, and harmonies. That stuff could be pretty associative. So I understand. But I also feel like, and I feel this way for any artist, is that to put the impression they leave musically into words is near impossible, and requires a lot more work than a few phrases.

TM: Art is always about breaking new ground, yet people trying to relate to it do so by comparing it to things they already understand. So it’s kind of a mash-up.

TG: Yeah, I get it totally. It’s part of the trip, I do it too. People ask me “What does that band sound like”, and I try to explain it too, so I don’t begrudge anybody in those efforts. But it’s an impossible task when you really get to the heart of it. If I asked you “Explain to me the subtle differences between Tom Petty and Bruce Springsteen”, you could say a couple things but at the end of the day, you have to tell someone to just listen to it.

TM: Who are some of the modern bands that you look up to or admire these days?

TG: There’s a lot of stuff with hip-hop and R&B that really blow us away in terms of how forward thinking they are, in terms of the sound that they get. Something like the Anderson Paak record or even the new Childish Gambino.

You can draw a lot of links to older soul music but at the same time they seem to be so good at throwing genre out the window and not being concerned with maintaining some hip-hop identity or R&B identity. Their intentions seem to be “Let’s fuck people up, let’s create something no one has heard.” So that’s something that’s always exciting.

There are younger songwriters that we truly love, like Cass McCombs, which our keyboardist actually played on that record, or Bonnie Prince Billy or Bill Callahan. They’re getting older now, but they still feel relevant now to me.

TM: You have a reputation as a talented lyricist. What kind of themes do you focus on with your writing?

TG: I try to keep it interesting in terms of not going back to some same place that I have before. As a guidepost for me if I’m going to feel like writing it, I have to feel like it does something for me. I have to feel like that there’s some sort of catharsis in there for me, putting something in a perspective that I haven’t been able to talk about until that point, and then being able to look at it and say that makes me feel better about the situation.

Whether it’s something to do with love, or looking at our culture today, or death, or whatever it is.

I think there are so many songs that have this sense of announcement where they can pick up a guitar and say “She left me and I’m lonely, and I’m sad”, and a lot of people are going to be moved by that, including me. But then there’s something to be said for the kind of song that is able to say those things but then take it to the next place, and offer some version of how the narrator is dealing with it and how to put it into perspective, and some sense of carrying on or responsibility.

That kind of stuff is what makes for the greatest songs, the songs that all of the sudden don’t feel simply manipulative or bad, but actually feel like I can take this and apply it to what I’m going through and it can help. I’m not saying I achieve that very often, but that’s definitely the brass ring.

TM: It sounds like a really personal perspective.

TG: What the opposite of that would be in this day and age would be trying to have a more social perspective or public perspective, and I feel like that’s a harder thing to do. I don’t know if it’s simply the times that we’re in. If anybody stood on a street corner right now and got up on a soap box and said “Hey everybody, everything’s gonna be okay”, I think a lot of people would say “Fuck you! This doesn’t help with anything.”

I think if there is any opportunity for us to share experiences and find them edifying and find them hopeful, it is by tapping into those deeper and more personal currents, and talk about what’s going on at a personal level, on a base level, just what’s going through someone’s mind.

I’d love to write the more broadly appealing socially conscious songs, but I feel like to do that and for it to mean anything other than you getting to pat yourself on the back is a lot harder in 2017 than it was in the past. It’s a trick thing, and I find that the stuff that can shift how I look at the world, whether that’s my own relationship with myself or someone else, or even my political opinions.

Sometimes it will be through the most personal and impressionistic songs from someone like Leonard Cohen who probably doesn’t even have that agenda, but his sense of peace and calm is enough to fuck me up and make me rethink some things.

TM: If you could give one piece of advice to someone trying to make it in the music business, what piece of advice could you give?

TG: My advice is always to try to get it going in your hometown, first and foremost. I think a lot of people, they talk about needing to get on tour, and sometimes they're even able to book that tour for themselves, and they have like 20 dates, but then they end up playing these clubs to virtually nobody. But when you hear these stories where a local group can play to 300 and then 400 and then 500, then all of the sudden even if you've never left town, people are knocking on doors and asking who you are.

I'm pretty sure something similar to that happened to Dave Matthews Band, and I think it's the case more often than not, where if you can get something going where you're from, people will come to you, people will notice.

So I think when people always ask me should we book a tour, that's actually not where it's at. It is eventually, but people look at that as the next step sometimes a few steps too early.

TM: What's the best way for fans to stay in touch with Dawes?

TG: We're as available as anybody else, Twitter and Instagram more than anything else. We're not on Facebook all that much, but sometimes we are. We're not the most tech-savvy bunch of dudes. I wish we were. It would probably do our band some favors, but those are the best ways of communicating with us folks, Twitter and Instagram.

TM: Thanks so much for your time. I look forward to seeing you at Infinity Hall in Hartford on March 12!

TG: Right on, man! Thank you.





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HEARING AID



The Riverdogs "State of the Union" Good Sponge Records

Southeastern Connecticut's popular original folk/roots/rock band The Riverdogs are known around here for fusing political activism, community involvement, intelligence and good old-fashioned rock-n-roll into their musical offerings for our enjoyment and reflection. They are a multi award-winning ensemble with husband and wife songwriters Ben and Nancy Parent leading the charge. Through many personnel changes over the past 20 years, real-life parenthood, a changing independent music landscape, and an ever evolving political climate, they keep forging ahead as a band, and they are as relevant and entertaining as ever.

Their sixth release, "State of the Union," couldn't be more time-appropriate. It is a 12-song collection of beautifully crafted and thought-provoking pieces with precision state-of-the-art production. Recorded at PWOP Studios in New London with award-winning producer Carl Franklin serving as producer/engineer, The Riverdogs are: Ben Parent on vocals, electric and acoustic guitars, harmonica and whistling; his wife Nancy Parent on vocals, pedal steel, acoustic guitar, tambourine, whistling; Bill Groth on piano, organ, glockenspiel, backing vocals; Chris De-Biasi on drums, shaker; Dana Takaki on violin; Mark Gehret on bass; and Tom Brown on trumpet and piccolo trumpet. All songs were written by Ben Parent except for one track's music written by songwriter Steve Elci.

Care is taken with each instrument and
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every note while Ben's vocals let loose genuine impassioned grit and growl. Care is also taken with every lyric. The purposefulness and drive to get their message across is clear and direct.

What we've come to expect from these seasoned songwriters and talented musicians is prevalent here, but what is unexpected is the decidedly commercial flare to the songs - full of radio-ready hooky licks and memorable melody lines. I can hear many of these songs in a movie soundtrack today as you hum, and even whistle, along.

The CD kicks off with the upbeat "Jubilee" full of dirty rockin' guitars coupled with sweet violin and pedal steel. The 60s Motown flare in "New Emperors" is a joy with some haunting fiddle, tinkling piano and one cool bass line. A political activism marching song, "It's Up To You," is sure to get their audiences riled up in these challenging political times complete with whistling and trumpet. It's a fun one! The waltz-like "Churches" will have 'em dancing in the aisles and is complete with a choir-like break in the middle.

Groth's piano takes center stage on the poppy "Angel's Face" and is sure to be a crowd favorite as well. Nancy takes over lead vocals beautifully on "Station Down The Line" with its gentle, pleasing and pleading melody reminiscent of Neil Young. It's got a fabulous guitar solo too - restrained and tasteful. "Early Birds" is magical and majestic with a country flare and a layered production sound ready for radio. The gods get out the funk on "Ratchet" as Ben whips up some hip harmonica. "Dress Like a Poet" is classic Riverdogs with a driving rhythm and a super fancy cascading harmony instrumental melody lick that is very unique and very cool. The potent lyrics like "It's not how you look, it's how you look at things" are just brilliant! "Lost on You" is a minor key driving number while "New Traditional" is a hoppin' all-American song with perfect husband and wife harmonies.

The title track, "State of the Union" pulls the album together nicely with psychedelic dirty electric guitar and a twinge of anger so fitting in these challenging times. Ben self-assuredly projects with all this stuff going on, what you'll continue to get from The Riverdogs, is just good music. It's got a BIG

ENDING which leaves the listener, of course, WANTING MORE!

At what will surely be a packed house, you can catch The Riverdogs live and pick up this latest album at their CD Release Party to be held at All Souls Hall, 19 Jay St. in New London, CT at 7:30 pm. I'm always amazed how many truly great musicians and songwriters the universe has never heard of, and yet they're right here in our own backyard.

Links:

<http://www.theriverdogs.com>

<http://theriverdogs.bandcamp.com/album/state-of-the-union>

<http://www.facebook.com/theriverdogs>
Upcoming Shows:

Mar 3 - All Souls Hall, New London, CT ("State of the Union" CD Release Party)

Mar 16 - Knickerbocker Tap Room, Westerly, RI (Ben & Nancy acoustic)

- Sue Menhart



Frank Bang & The Cook County Kings "The Blues Don't Care" Blue Hoss Records

Frank Bang (Blinkal) was born and raised in Chicago and has been playing guitar for twenty-five years. He was the leader of a blues-rock band, "Frank Bang & the Secret Stash" and later, played guitar with Buddy Guy for five years. This CD, "The Blues Don't Care" is Frank Bang's first truly blues recording. He was quoted as saying, "I have been waiting to make this record, "Frank Bang & the Cook County Kings" my whole life." As I listened, it wasn't hard to believe that years of blues experience were employed on this recording! Blinkal reports about the recording of this disc, "We recorded all 10 tracks in one day! That wasn't the plan, it's just how it happened!" explains Blinkal. This is one well assem-

bled blues band and features some of Chicago's finest blues players, including drummer Brian "BJ" Jones who recorded with blues legends Junior Wells, James Cotton, Otis Rush and Magic Slim and The Teardrops along with Andre Howard on bass. On piano is Donnie Nichilo, another band member who played with Buddy Guy and Junior Wells. Finally, few authentic Chicago blues bands would be complete without a well versed harmonica player. Russ Green filled the bill!

"The Blues Don't Care" contains ten well chosen tunes, three of which are penned by Blinkal. This CD begins with the title track, an R.D. Johnson composition, "The Blues Don't Care," an up-tempo shuffle. One thing that stood out right away was the tone of Bang's vocals. He sings through a bullet mic, which is usually reserved exclusively for harmonica. This vocal styling literally set the tone for this disc. The title track was a good choice because it speaks the truth, the blues don't discriminate! Track two is a twelve bar; bump 'n' grind slow blues of "unknown" origin titled "The Dream." This song opens with Green on bona fide blues harmonica. Bang's blues guitar solo is searing! Bang opens track three, followed by Green on "Million Miles Away." This is one of Bang's original; a slinky, minor key, moderate tempo tune. Almost three minutes into the song, Bang surprises us with breaks that sound like they could be the end of the song, then comes back in with a wailing harmonica solo, and back into a vocal verse. Bang tops it off with a powerful guitar solo followed by B.J. fading out on drums! The fourth cut, "Till The Day I Die," is another Bang original, and also collaboration with two of his sons, ages twelve and sixteen. This song's lyrics are marriage vows, a la blues and with a twist! The fifth track, "Come On In This House (Mercy, Mercy)" is a "Hoochie-Coochie Man" style slow blues with a character that is all its own! Bang's vocals and guitar, supported by this authoritative rhythm section, damn near spontaneously combust! Bang struts his slide stuff on track six; another original written with his sons. "Can't Find My Way Back Home" (part 1 & 2) starts with Bang on slide guitar and vocals, accompanied by Green on harmonica. When part one is over, all bets are off. Bang and the band break wide open. Cameo solos abide!

The seventh cut, "Possum In My Tree" penned by M. Holt, is a strong,

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COOKING WITH THE BLUES

By Jack Chaplin

Sometimes it's nice to get out of town when I get a night off, to see different faces and soak up a different culture even if it's only just a few miles from New London. One of my favorite destinations is West-erly and Pawcatuck. I had read in that the CarLeans were playing at the Tap Room, the newly opened spot next to the Knickerbocker. I trust Rick Koster's picks and I had heard a few cuts off their newly released C.D. here in Sound Waves and Dave Pottie is hot on the band!

It was a cold night and we decided to pregame at C.C.O'Brien's. I had heard about the Thursday Night's only French Dip Sandwich from My friend Steve Lamb who had said

how great it was going way back, he also use to talk about the Prime Rib night at Rachonni's. It was a quiet night, we parked and went in the front, the regulars use the back entrance. We were warmly greeted by the owner Sean and the bartender. We sat at the bar, 28 beers on tap including a nice selection of craft, domestic, and imports. I was there to eat but LaKisha ordered up a good Ol' 'Gansett, that's Narraganset for you out of town-ers, their slogan was "Hi, Neighbor, Have A 'Gansett" made famous by Kurt Gowdy when he was the announcer for the Red Sox. I had a craving for some hot wings with Super Bowl just a few days away so I ordered up some medium hot, a small house salad,(a real deal @ \$2.95 and went well with the wings) some onion rings. The soup of the day also caught my eye so I ordered up a bowl of the Chicken Tortellini which had a chowder consistency, really good! I may have to knock that one off! The rings came out hot from the fryer as did the wings which were also hot from the hot sauce just like they are designed. Complementary chilled celery sticks and a real tasty blue cheese dressing were perfect. I packed up half the wings in a To go box and continued on with an order of the foot long hot dog with mustard, relish, and chips. It's really hard to find a good dog and this one fit the bill. I again put half in the box for Dave Pottie to finish off who was on his way. At that point it sunk in that I needed to try the French Dip so I ordered one up. It came out on a nice toasted roll with a generous amount of rare roast beef and a flavorful au jus to dip away. It had been years since I served or ate a french dip, this was perfect because the bread was well toasted and didn't soggy out! Again I saved half for Dave who had already eaten but made room for the Dip.

It was great to be in a bar that has such a long history for great food, great local music, (usually on Saturday's with no cover) owned by an owner that is present day to day and genuinely likes what he's doing. The place was spotlessly clean, the bathrooms newly updated, I even poked my head in the kitchen and said hi to the chef. Sometimes you walk into a neighbor-

hood bar and you get looks like you have three heads, At C.C.'s you feel like home.

I write this month's column from Sunny New Orleans, decided to beat the cold for a few days and just my luck the weather back east has been unseasonably warm, reaching almost 60! Here the weather has been nice, in the high 60's but humid, I even got to take a dip in the roof top pool which was heated and had a beautiful view of the city. N.O. is so rich in history and has a culture all it's own. The first night we caught a cab down to the French Quarter and got caught up in the parade traffic for about a half hour before the driver said it may be better to walk it in! We ended up at the first bar we saw, The Blacksmith's which looked like a real dive bar, Perfect! The

band had just taken a break and we ordered a drink, no cover but one drink minimum per set. I ordered a Bloody Mary which had the kick of a mule, hot and spicy and the bartender wasn't shy on the pour. LaKisha settled for a good old Heineken and waited for the band to come on. Not expecting much

we were blown away by this local five piece brass band, an old timer on piano, trombone, sax drums, and even a tuba of course, this in New Orleans!. It was a real treat and we felt like we had hit the jackpot right off the bat until the police shut down all the streets to vehicles and we couldn't get a ride back to the hotel. We made the best of it, ordered up a few more drinks, ate at the Gumbo Shop and tried to rendezvous with an Uber driver. To no avail we had to hoof it! Not really knowing where we were headed we hailed down a pedicab, after begging and pleading she agreed to get us back to our hotel, bobbing and weaving through blocked off streets, around barricades, through trash and litter rived only by Sailfest! \$50.00 later but well worth it we made it back safe and sound. We were exhausted after a thirteen hour travel day and two hours of sleep! The rest of our trip we used Uber which is an amazing thing. Put in the address and a car would



show up within a few minutes, everywhere downtown was \$6.32. Some nice cars showed up, even a Mercedes SUV!

We ate and drank our way through the next few days, some of the best food and drink anywhere! The highlight for me was eating at Dookey Chase's, this historic soul food restaurant has been in the 7th Ward since 1941! They took a major

hit when Katrina struck having to close for a long period to repair but they are back with a vengeance! They serve a lunch buffet Tue. through Fri. and dinner on Friday's. My kind of hours! I had heard about and wanted to eat there for many years. We got there when they opened a little after 11:00, the buffet was loaded up in chaffing dishes steaming hot, the smell of that home cooking hit you like a brick, immediately making your stomach growl, your tongue drool and your mouth water! Meatloaf, Greens, Red Beans and Rice, Lyonnaise Potatoes, Spicy Creole Sausages, and a huge dish of Southern Fried Chicken! Leah Chase is known to make the best fried chicken in NO rived only by Willie Mae's, a rivalry like Pepe's, Sally's, and Modern Pizza in New Haven. My only disappointments were that we had Beignets and Coffee earlier at Cafe Du Monde. I could only make one pass at the buffet and Leah Chase wasn't in, she had a doctors appointment. We were told that she cooks everyday, amazing at 93!

Le Bonton Rouille! Happy Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday, and get tuned and

primed for St. Patrick's Day. Check out the parades and get you some Corned Beef, You can pass on the green beer, can't be good for You. I'm hoping we're out of the woods weather wise with spring right around the corner but I have a feeling that we better not put away the snow shovels, f@%\$ that ground hog!

Thinking of my Dad the original Daddy Jack who passed away in 79, he would have been 96 on the 12th, I miss him everyday! Give someone you love a call, give a hug and get a hug, look at the glass half full, and count your blessing that you have another day on this earth.

~ Jack





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raw, moderately slow blues. Green's harmonica dominates in the best possible way, but make no mistake about it; Bang ain't in the back seat! Between the cutting vocals and wah-wah pedal guitar riffs, he's all in! Track eight, "Repo Man" gets funky with it. There's a sweet bass solo, complete with popping, joined by Nichilo on piano. The intensity builds as Green steps in on harmonica and B.J.'s drumming aggresses, topped off by Bang on rhythm guitar reminiscent of some old school James Brown. Climax!

Track nine, "Still Called The Blues" written by J. Taylor, carries a little of the funky feeling from the previous tune, but as title suggests, it's still the blues! Much like the title track's sentiments, it declares that life is filled with the blues, be they positive or negative. The final cut, "Can't Go On This Way" is light spirited twelve bar shuffle with stops. This song was penned by Buddy Guy alum; the late, great A.C. Reed! He pleads for his lover to "come back home...I can't go on this way!" This disc is a must for Chicago blues fans!

- Ms Marci



Plywood Cowboy "Channel 33" Independent

"Plywood Cowboy" is a brand new Americana band located in the Connecticut River Valley with a brand new debut EP. The CD is polished, steeped in tradition, with lyrics full of longing, truth and heart. Just getting their feet wet, the band has appeared on iCRV Radio, WESU 88.1FM's 'Voice of the City,' The Day Paper's "Live Lunch Break," and they've played some not so easy to get into venues like Infinity Hall and The Kate. They've also performed at some regional festivals such as the Monadnock Pumpkin Festival in New Hampshire, Puckett's in Tennessee, the Middletown Music Festival, the Glas-

tonbury Apple Harvest Festival, and the ICRaVE Music Fest. They're doing something right.

What they're getting right is a nostalgic presentation of old time country and roots, paired with modern lyrics around narrative storytelling (the kind of thing that never gets old). Throw in some fabulous musicianship, likable and pleasing lead vocals and an expert recording, and we've got a winner. Produced by Grammy-nominated artist Ira Sakolsky and recorded in East Haddam, the sound quality is crisp and clear with songs that are well-written and just make you smile. Songwriter, pianist, guitar and lap steel player and lead vocalist Steve Dedman leads the band in an unpretentious and humble way.

Providing support on the EP are Shane Tanner on bass, Henry Yorzinski, Joe Leonardi and Ira Sakolsky on drums and percussion, Austin Gray on electric guitar and vocals, Emily Marcello on violin and vocals, and Ed Iarusso on pedal steel. Jason Apostoleris is credited on drums in some publications as well.

The CD kicks off with the delightful drinking song "Pour Me Another" which features a prevalent bass line, tasteful guitars, out front vocals and some distant and haunting pedal steel. "Two Hours Past" is a super well-written calm and assured ballad with sweet violin. "Heartbreak Ready to Fall" picks things up a bit and includes some B3 organ and electric guitar with catchy hooks and tells the story of an open mic romance, so fitting in today's live music world. Acoustic arpeggio guitars swirl around the touching "My, My" which reminds me of the easy listening mega hits of the 1970s. It's full of longing and the lyrics come straight from the heart. Dedman is dead on (pardon the pun!) Some toe-tappin' and finger snappin' follow in the churchy "Redbone Religion" which has some thought-provoking lyrics like "go get myself some god" paired with some barroom piano. "Steps Back To You" plays out like a mini-movie with storytelling at its finest.

The EP "Channel 33" is a nice introduction to this new band and I'm hoping to hear more and to catch them live soon. Upcoming dates are listed below.

Links:

<http://www.plywoodcowboy.com>
<http://plywoodcowboy.bandcamp.com>
<http://www.facebook.com/plywood-cowboy>

Upcoming Shows:

Mar 1 – Stomping Ground, Putman, CT

Mar 26 – Bread Box Theater, Windham, CT

Apr 7 – Bridge Street Live, Collinsville, CT

- Sue Menhart



In Flames "Battles" 11-7 Music

For many bands creating something fresh becomes very difficult after the first few albums, but for Swedish metal group In Flames this has never been a challenge. "Battles" is the band's 12th album, and it could very well be their best yet. For this album the group welcomed producer Howard Benson (who you might now as the producer behind My Chemical Romance and Papa Roach) to help them unlock their hidden potential, and man did it pay off.

The album starts somewhat ominously with "Drained", which sets the tone with immersive synths and chilling guitar melodies, leading into an intense musical declaration that sets a high standard of experimentation and superior songwriting that continues throughout the album.

Though each song features much of the same guitars and vocal styles, the diversity in melodies and atmospheres from track to track is stunning, always leaving the listener wondering what is coming next. This air of versatility is also exemplified in the band's use synths and electronic production, which tastefully adds to each song like a fine spice.

One of the most striking things that the band has mastered with this album is a dichotomy of soft and heavy music. While every song's musical peaks are intense experiences of passion, that same passion can be felt in the more calming valleys. Songs such as "Like

Sand" utilize these moments of near silence to really help the listener connect with the band and their all too human emotions of fear and inner struggle, causing the high energy parts to make more sense, and hit even harder.

With an album this well rounded and polished it is hard to imagine what the band could possibly do to top it, but with passion and chemistry like they so clearly have, it's hard to not expect even greater things in their future. With their past 12 albums In Flames has worked out their kinks, and defined themselves as a one of a kind band with a vision unlike any other. The only question is: where do they go from here?

- Niles Wilson



Merle Perkins "The Perkulator" MP Records

It's always a joy to showcase musicians who would normally come in under the radar. This is usually the case with drummers. Drummers who also are featured vocalists are even more rare! As a teenager, Merle Perkins played in the Spirit of St. Louis Drum & Bugle Corp. He said that was where it all started for him. "If it was not for drum corp., I would not be a drummer today. I owe it all to drum corp.," said Perkins. He moved to Chicago from St. Louis, MO. and in the 70s and had his first gig as a drummer with Buddy Guy & Jr. Wells. He recorded and toured with Buddy Guy & Jr. Wells, James Cotton, Lonnie Brooks, Freddy King, Albert King, Charlie Musselwhite, Magic Slim & The Teardrops, Eddy Clearwater, Willie Kent & The Gents, Son Seals, and Eddie Shaw among others.

In 1990, he started his own band, Merle Perkins & The Perkulators. As the leader of his band, he found he was able to express myself more freely on the drums. This is his first CD on his own where he is not just playing behind

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a major artist. He also sings when he does his own shows.

Although Perkins is a Chicago “Blues Hall of Famer” this disc also features his talent for fusion, particularly funk/jazz stylings. This becomes evident on the first two tracks, “Perkolating” and “Funk The Blues” The latter being an original. “Perkolating” is an instrumental that features George Milton “Mozak” on sax (over-dubbing all the parts) and guitarist Benjamin Franklin Noel, (aka, “Pistol Pete.”) This track also offers up a couple of short but sweet solos from bassist, Herman Applewhite and another from Perkins on drums. Perkins’ original, “Funk The Blues” comes on strong with powerful funky rhythm provided largely by Perkins and Bridget Lockett on keyboard bass (sic) and joined by Andy Waldo on guitar. In this mostly instrumental tune, Perkins tosses in this track’s title, along with other funk related spoken phrases.

The third cut is, “Tina Nina Nu”...a LOLA classic! Perkins adds his own, again funky, interpretation! He does vocal duty, dubbing in the harmonies, as well as playing drums. Mozak and Pistol Pete are the featured soloists. Track four features a Chi-town classic, “Sweet Home Chicago.” Perkins sings the lead and harmony with his own style. Once again, Perkins adds his own twist on this tune. The fourth cut is another classic, “Kansas City” and is recorded live, proving that Perkins can indeed sing and play drums, a fete not often seen or heard! Trombone player, B.J. joins in, soloing on this track.

The sixth and final track features Perkins returns to his personal roots, soloing “drum corps style” live on drums and timbales. The double kick drums really get a rise out of the crowd at this live performance!

My first exposure to this CD, “Funk The Blues,” drew me in. The remainder of “Perkolating” kept me listening! You can find more information on Meryl Perkins on Facebook, Sound cloud, Bandmix, Reverbnation, Youtube, Daily Motion, and Google, under Meryl Perkins.

- Ms Marci

Unmentioned, but worth recognition;
Ricky Nelson- #5

Lead guitar- #5



Thievery Corporation

“The Temple of I & I”

ESL Music

Thievery Corporation has been blending world music with electronica for over two decades. This Washington D.C. outfit is always keeping it fresh while incorporating groovy elements from the past. The new album “The Temple of I & I” mixes together lots of styles and has a very fun vibe.

This album draws a lot from hip-hop. Critique of government and a desire to fight for a more conscious world comes through in a lot of the songs. “Letter to the Editor” is a hip, fast and lyrical rap jam with an infectious chorus and some cool atmospheric effects.

“Ghetto Matrix” is another fierce hip-hop track with some hard hitting lyrics from Mr. Lif. The chorus has a cool hook and repeats “It’s on you/ It’s your mind/ It’s a complex plan to keep you confined”. Social awareness runs prevalent throughout the album.

I was surprised to find so many straight-up roots reggae tracks on here. “Strike the Root” has that classic keyboard skank and a sweet horn section punctuating the breaks. The feel is super groovy and the vocals are a spot on island sound.

“True Sons of Zion” is another sweet reggae track with a mid-tempo feel, some nice delay on the vocals, and an impassioned chorus singing in unison with a lone trumpet. The lyrics are straight up Rasta and delivered beautifully.

There are also a few electronic / trance / dubstep jams on here too. The album-title song “The Temple of I & I” is one. Thievery Corporation does an awesome job using modern technology to create interesting and catchy riffs. I love hearing people who are on the cutting edge of new music, pushing the line into

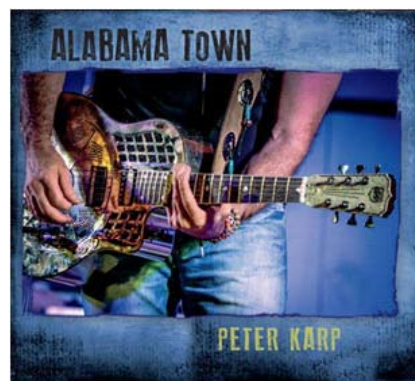
fresh territory.

Some slower atmospheric stuff emerges in the middle of the album. French lyrics abound in “Time & Space”. The next track “Love Has No Heart” is another downtempo song with emotional vocals and sensual lyrics. Despite being a little more relaxed, these songs have steady rhythm and interesting sound effects fill the space in the sparse arrangements.

“The Temple of I & I” is an album that keeps rolling strong from front to back. After the chill section, it kicks into second gear with some very cool tunes. There are a few more reggae tunes and some really catchy hooks all the way through.

It’s pretty cool to hear an album that covers so many styles, yet blends them seamlessly together without forcing it. The songs all seem like members of a family and give the album a very cohesive feel. I’m going to be listening to this one for a while. Highly recommended.

- Tom Matthew
Two Ton Music



Peter Karp

“Alabama Town”

Rose Cottage Records

Peter Karp is a poet and a bluesman, a guitarist and pianist. His eighth album features 13 new original songs and was produced by himself and multi Grammy Award winning producer Dae Bennett (Tony Bennett.) The songs were inspired by the music he heard growing up in Enterprise, Alabama. It’s a complete musical joyride with a focus on intelligent and clever lyrics that really make you think. Special guests on the album include Mick Taylor (Rolling Stones), Garth Hudson (The Band), Paul Carbonara (Blondie), Todd Wolfe (Sheryl Crow), his son James Otis Karp and harmonic player Dennis Gruenling.

Right away you can hear the 60s Mo-

town influences on the title track “Alabama Town” with its familiar backing rhythm, chord progression and lyrics and the tone of his vocals, which reminds me of Delbert McClinton. His observations of trailer park living are vivid as the full backing sound complete with B3, piano, and not too showy guitar drive the song through a world of long ago. “Till You Get Home” is a feel-good piano heavy, radio-ready and catchy Motown-infused number with lyrical phrasing that is just brilliant. I dare you not to tap your feet. The bluesy and hilarious word slinging in “That’s How I Like It,” with Gruenling’s fat and on-point harmonica solo, leaves you quite satisfied. “Blues in Mind” is a hand-clappin’ swingin’ blues call and response number you long to hear when having beers with your friends at the local bar. Clean, smooth electric guitar from Mick Taylor on the slow torch song “I’m Not Giving Up” builds and builds as Peter’s vocals get stronger and stronger. This is songwriting and performance at its best. “Her and My Blues” reminds me of the band Little Feat and we finally get to hear some slide work.

The swampy, resonator guitar work on “The Prophet” is just superb and is paired with lots of Bob Dylan-ish talk-singing. The style reminds me of Lyle Lovett as well. This instrumentation style continues with “Kiss The Bride” as vocalist Leanne Westover sings along in perfect harmony with the addition of some pretty fancy mandolin. Complete with sound effects, the jazzy pool hall tune “Nobody Really Knows” has a bass line that slowly thumps in your chest. The Cajun-like “Lost Highway” has more talk-singing with insightful revelations in the lyrics that really make you chuckle while “Ya’ll Be Lookin’” picks things back up in a driving shuffle.

Self-reflection abounds in the sparse “I Walk Alone” which features just resonator and accordion. The album’s final track is a simple and true old-time acoustic blues number, with just guitar and harmonica.

From swamp to folk, from blues to R&B, this album’s got it all and is worth the musical journey. Peter is currently on a world-wide tour with stops in Italy, Germany and the U.S. Some New Jersey shows are listed below.

- Sue Menhart



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- 22 - Top 10 Hits
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"Arthur's Theme (Best That
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"Never Be The Same"

"Think Of Laura"
"All Right"
"Say You'll Be Mine"
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Saturday, March 11, 2017 | 7:30 pm

The Garde Arts Center and Eastern Connecticut Ballet present Stars of American Ballet, highlighting all American music and featuring breath-taking performances by stunning and talented principals from New York City Ballet. The program reflects the brilliance of legendary choreographer George Balanchine and New York City Ballet Artistic Director Peter Martins.



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Sunday, March 26, 2017 | 5:00 pm

Experience the new Irish dance phenomenon featuring 20 of the world's most skilled Irish dancers and musicians, in an epic that will capture the imagination of the entire family and transport them to a mystical time and place of heroes and redemption. "A New Kind of Irish".... "Mesmerizing!"



THE MUSICAL BOX:

SELLING ENGLAND BY THE POUND (THE BLACK SHOW)

Friday, April 7, 2017 | 8:00 pm

The Musical Box, internationally acclaimed for its historical re-enactment of early Genesis' works, is coming to the Garde Arts Center to perform the Black Show, the emblematic 1974 performance that made Genesis and Peter Gabriel attain rock star status, enjoying to this day a cult following from nostalgic and young music lovers alike.



ANNIE BROADWAY AT THE GARDE

Sunday, April 23, 2017 | 5:00 pm

Leapin' Lizards! The world's best-loved musical returns in time-honored form. Directed by original lyricist and director Martin Charnin and choreographed by Liza Gennaro, this production of ANNIE will be a brand new incarnation of the iconic original. Sponsored by Olde Mistick Village, Simply Majestic & CT Family



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON

Saturday, May 6, 2017 | 8:00 pm

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Saturday, June 3, 2017 | 8:00 pm

This season celebrates the 50th anniversary of DONOVAN's hit single "SUNSHINE SUPERMAN" when it reached #1 on The Billboard Charts. The album of the same name is considered a classic masterpiece, described during DONOVAN's induction into The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2012: "Donovan single-handedly initiated the Psychedelic Revolution with Sunshine Superman."

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