

Sound Waves

Volume 27
Issue 12
December 2017

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MUSIC NOTES

“Running on Empty”

By Mark T. Gould

It's just an empty space now, but it really was so much more.

It was Ground Zero of my home entertainment center, the focal point (at least for me....) of our family room, the real rockin' corner of my musical universe, where my over 1,200 albums, 2,000-plus commercial compact discs and live concert shows, and probably close to equal amount of cassettes combined to bring me the joy of

music in our humble abode for over 25 years.

And, now it's gone.

And, remarkably, while I'm a wee bit nostalgic, I really don't feel that badly. The times, like the man, said, they are a-changin'.

Truth be told, most of my nostalgic yearning undoubtedly comes from the fact that this was the very first (and, as I will discuss below, probably the only) stereo system that I bought on my own.

When I was a kid, and was just starting my life-long love affair of listening to music coupled with a crazed obsession of collecting said music, I cobbled together a workable turntable; a second-hand, yet pretty serviceable, amplifier; and a reasonably decent, and certainly functional, pair of bookshelf speakers, a motley crew that served me well for a very long time.

This system, though, was the whole enchilada. It was just after I'd gotten home from three years at law school on the Left (ok, West...) Coast, and I wanted something really good for listening to music in my new apartment near my first legal job, in New Haven.

My best friend, God rest him, was even more of a music and stereo junkie than I was, or for that matter, ever will be. So, I reached out to him for advice, and he recommended that we go down to one of the tacky yet funky little electronics stores that, in those days, lined the Post Road in Orange and Milford (this was, trust me, literally decades before anyone ever heard of “Best Buy” and its big-box brethren, but the idea was the same).

We walked in, and, being of sound and wise legal mind, I decided to let him take over. It was sort of like that intro to the old TV show “Bosom Buddies,” where one guy was tossing the products he selected over his shoulder to the other pretty much stupefied, bewildered guy behind him. Following suit, I lingered in the background, and let my buddy do the figurative and literal heavy lifting.

Immediately upon our entry to the store, he dispatched the hyper-active sales fellow, and walked around, pointing to this and that. Slowly, in that way, we built my system.

First, he picked out an ADC Sound Sleeper model SS-11Y-EX stereo equalizer and spatial expander. I figured, having made it through college and law school with their attendant distractions, my spatial was already expanded and equalized enough, but he said we had to have it. They go for **4 SOUND WAVES**

around \$200 on eBay and Craig's List now. Mine set me back around \$75.

Next, it was a Toshiba direct-drive automatic turntable. I wasn't sure why it had to be automatic, having become accustomed to pushing and straining myself out of many a seated, leaning, lying or sloping position over the years to lift off a tone arm off a record's run-out groove.

No, he said, it had to be automatic. OK. They go for about \$150 today. Mine was about another \$75.

Then, he said I needed an amplifier. I guess this was to enhance the expanded and equalized stereo. I nodded. Voila. He picked out a Pioneer A-77X. You can pick one up for about \$110 these days. I probably paid another \$75 for it.

Then, we needed speakers. I don't know about you, but I always wanted BIG FLOOR SPEAKERS (emphasis, I think, added...). So, that was an area I knew pretty well.

We picked out a couple of JBL beauties that were so big they looked like they were refugees from the Grateful Dead sound system (in an ironic twist of fate, I almost sold them to a Deadhead a few years ago, but I guess he couldn't stop dancing around the maypole long enough to make a good enough offer for me to part with them ...).

The sales guy said the speakers had really good subwoofers, which really impressed my friend. At the time, although I know much better now, I thought that meant they had trapped a couple of yippy Bichon Frise in them. You could get them for around \$400 now, and were about \$250 then.

Now, I can see you chuckling if you've done the math. Those four essential pieces (well, three, if you don't count the spatial whatever....) ran me about a little under \$500.

Hey, gang, a little perspective, please. This was the mid-80s. Things were cheaper. The gas to get to the stereo store was less than 90 cents a gallon. I was getting paid probably about a third of what the person who does a bang-up job cleaning my chambers gets now.

The point is, the time, while it was a-changin', was definitely less expensive.

Look, If it makes you feel any better, we also bought a nifty, three-level cabinet to hold all the components (with a special spot for the spatial one....), for another \$100 or so. And, a few years later, we added a Philips dual audio CD recorder and player, to the tune of another \$200.

Nonetheless, the whole shebang was great at any price. I was able to crank the tunes, have crystal-clear sound at any volume (probably due to, yep, the spatial whatever...), and had, frankly, a very braggable stereo system.

In those days, like today, size, not to mention sound, meant everything.

It was so cool that my wife, who designed our home, actually cut out

and built in the jagged corner (that's it in the picture herein) to fit all the stuff, and we carefully laid the wires to the speakers underneath the family room carpet (yes, before it was laid down....) to the corners of the room, keeping clutter and mess to a relative minimum.

It was a really cool fit for a very long time, but, then, like I said, the times were a-changin'.

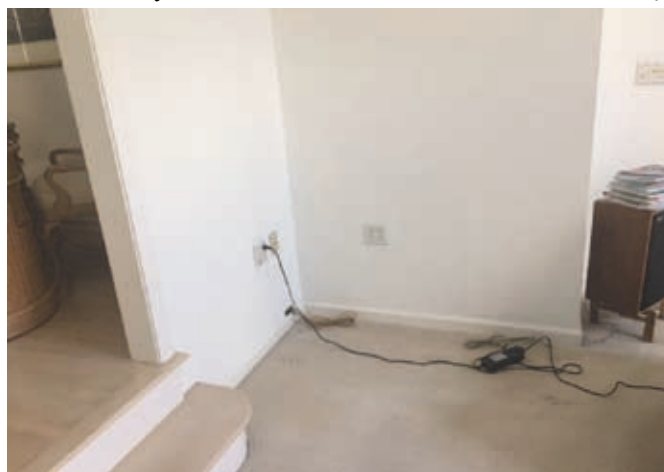
What happened, you ask?

It was beautiful, not to mention functional, for its time, but, frankly, as I got older, it just wasn't fitting my lifestyle any more.

These days, I spent most of my music-listening time either in my car or in my court chambers. Since I am driving an older model car, I

have not evolved to the lofty, rarified level of Sirius XM yet, so I pretty much survive on a personally-selected six-pack (that's all I can load at one time) of stacked CDs, usually revolving around some sort of musical theme that would be currently tickling my auditory nerves (as I write this, I'm on

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a Joni Mitchell jones that, as most of us know, only she can provide).

Similarly, in my chambers, where I have music playing in the background when I am writing a decision or reviewing documents to prepare for a trial, I am working on a laptop that has your basic DVD/CD drive, so I stick other discs in there.

It may be stubbornness due to age (may be?...), but I just am not comfortable with any kind of streaming service, so you will not catch Spotify, Pandora or any of its brethren anywhere near me.

Yeah, I know, I gotta get out more....

Surprisingly, breaking down my music system after two and half decades was a lot easier than I ever thought it would be, particularly in this day and age.

You see, before the advent of cell phone cameras, if I was moving or replacing any equipment, I'd have to make a diagram and notes of what colored wires went where (sort of like plugging in and powering up a present-day modem, for you millennials out there....) before I would take anything apart.

Inevitably, when I went back to those drawings and chicken scratches a few years later, perhaps after swapping out a wire or part, they resembled something created with bear skins and knives by an obviously inebriated cave dweller from the pre-Neanderthal period.

This time? Not so much. I simply swung around the aforementioned cabinet (on wheels, natch!) that housed everything, although I have to admit it was a challenge not to sneeze and thereby choke on the insane amount of dust that had collected behind and within the components, while simultaneously attempting a bizarre Jack LaLanne (google him....) imitation of squeezing behind the contraption, balancing myself on one leg and foot amongst a plethora of wires, all the while snapping madly away with my cell phone camera at a set-up that clearly rivaled anything even attempted by NASA.

Of course, my laughable attempt at taking pics of that maze of wires and plug-ins is most likely all for naught. At this point, I don't really see us going back to that kind of stereo component layout, and, even if I wanted to, a beautiful media armoire has been hauled in from my sister-in-law's house and is now occupying what had been the empty space.

So, what's next? Will I be dragged, kicking and screaming, into the 21st century ambiance of downloading music services? Will I create a cell phone docking station to stream Sirius XM (see, kids, I can talk the current lingo....) around the house?

I mean, we still have speakers in our dining room ceiling, the family room corners and hanging above our outdoor deck, so it would be a shame not to use them, right?

After all, it is a media armoire that has taken over the space.

Put it this way: while the method may have changed, the music has always, and still always, will be played, grooved to and enjoyed, somewhere and anywhere.

It just won't be on that system and layout that paved the way for 25 years.

Because the times are still a-changin'



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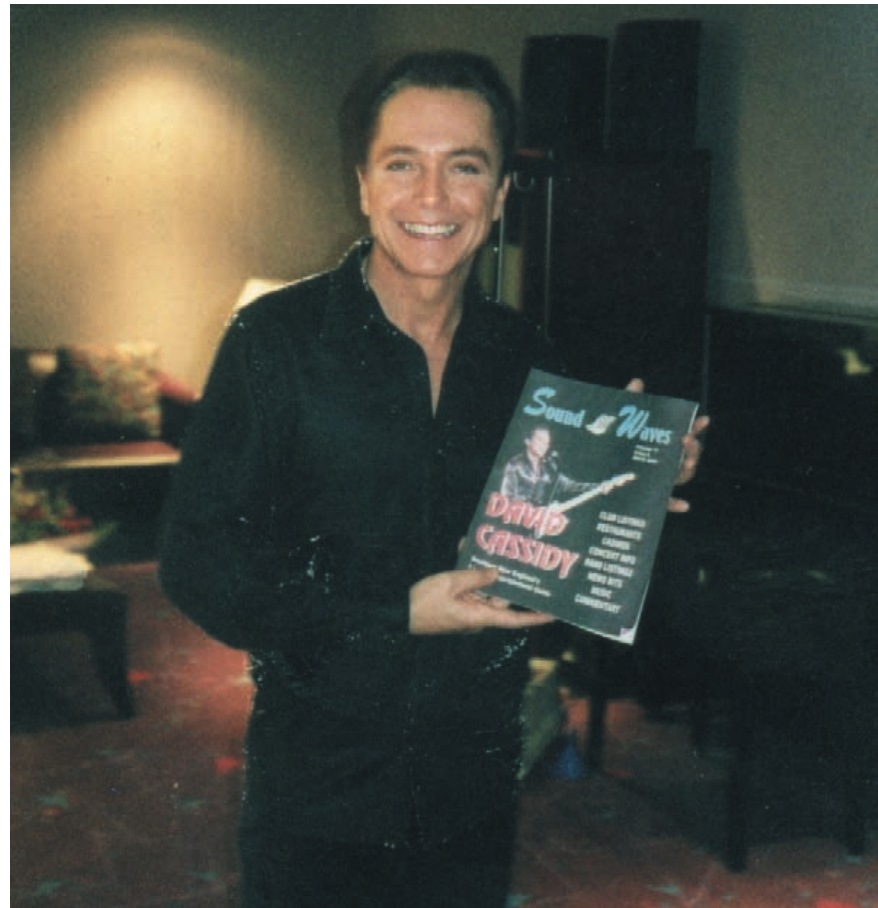
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David Cassidy

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All The World's a Stage



"Holiday Muffin Pondering"

By Sue Menhart

I woke this morning to an overwhelming sense of optimism. My pre-programmed cynicism toward the impending gluttony of the holiday season and all things doom and gloom had vanished without a trace.

Sounds crazy I know with everything that's going on in our world, but if you look back through history, has anything ever been completely right in this world? Individually, it's all how you look at it. Today, all of a sudden it's clear to me, that I think we all do what we can to make the world a better place. If we stay generally positive, get pissed off when we have to, work for change when we see something awfully wrong and do our best with whatever talents we have been given, our little worlds can be personally rewarding which as a whole, makes the world a better place.

So this morning I decided that no matter what, I was going to make chocolate banana toffee muffins even though I have a hundred other things to do: columns to submit; set lists to prepare; promo packages to drop off; gigs to get; melodies and lyrics to get out of my head; strings to change; equipment to unload; trying to find last year's winter coat; changing some men's old-fashioned attitudes toward women; that sort of thing. But by golly, something had to be done about the brown bananas! I simply will not waste a brown banana!

I prepared the mixture, got flour all over the place and popped the little beauties into the oven. While they baked I pondered further about my little world. How long should I wait to put up the Christmas decorations? How many parties should I attend? Who should I splurge on? What do I do for my Jewish friends? What do I do for my Atheist friends? If I give something to the garbage collector, will he just be insulted? How broke should I go?

Although my back was already aching from all the hams and turkeys and cookies and dishes I had slaved over through Thanksgiving, I was determined to bake these muffins even if it killed me! I loaded up a second batch.

That's the power of the human spirit you see. Sometimes you gotta just say screw it and forge ahead.

While the muffin aroma filled my yet to be decorated home, my mind wondered again. Should I perform Joni Mitchell's "The River" at holiday gigs or is it too depressing? Is "Run Run Rudolph" simply ridiculous or do people like it? Should we just incorporate the sound track from the movie "Elf" and call it a day? When John Lennon's "This is Christmas (War is Over)" is playing do you really just want the SONG to be over? Should I wear a Santa hat or elf ears on stage? Should I literally arrive with bells on so I jingle with every strum? Do people really WANT to rock around a Christmas tree?

In a musician's world, these are very important issues to resolve. Yes, yes there are many other things to contend with and we often wonder: can

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music change the world and does it have to; are we making a difference in the lives of others in any way; or in my case, can baking chocolate banana toffee muffins make my world a little more grand?

We'll see how long this strange but lovely optimism lasts and if I ever come to any conclusions worth telling you about. I'll keep you posted, and see you at the shows! By the way, most people didn't even like the muffins. But I did. Happy Holidays everybody.

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



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COOKING WITH THE BLUES



By Jack Chaplin

Had a great Thanksgiving, just a few of us but still a major effort and clean-up. I say it should be a two day holiday and not just on Thursday's, but rotate like Christmas and New Years! Why does it always have to be on a Thursday, did the Pilgrims have it on a Thursday? I went back to work on Friday a little late, got in at 3:00 pm. Steve, The Wood Fired Pizza Maestro, was already heating up the soup and a few sauces and it was heating up in the kitchen. I said to Steve to kick on the Vent A Hood. Viola, no Vent A Hood! Sometimes people mess with a switch out back in the alley and we go out and flip it back on, always a cross your fingers moment. As I listened, no Vent

noise, and it was like Oh S@#\$ when Steve came back in! A brief wave of panic, what to do? Reservations already made, can't contact them, with no phone numbers written down. What to do about the staff, some coming in an hour? I call my daughter Rachel, tell the waitstaff we're going to have to close but be on call. I call a few others, to some good news, others bad news. Here it is the 3:00 on a Friday after Thanksgiving, probably the supply houses are closed for a long weekend and to find someone to look at it and fix it in time to open, next to a miracle! I called my friend Ritchie from, Rich's Heating and Air, he had just got home and was finishing up his paperwork for the week and doing payroll. I explained the situation and He was over at the restaurant within 15 minutes and had the Hood running within the hour, a true miracle! Another miracle was that we were able to open by 5:00 right on time! What I love most about the restaurant business is the close interpersonal relationships like mine with Ritchie. They last a lifetime over many ups and downs. We hang out and drink some beers, a few shots of Crown, have a lot of laughs but when it's a situation your true friends drop everything and come through for you! I am and will forever be grateful for these relationships.

Last week on our usual Thursday night out LaKisha and I went over to the Ancient Mariner, I had wanted to check them out for a while. I had heard that Bobby Sader was working there on Thursday's when he wasn't over at A.J.'s. I look at Bobby as one of the best chef's in this area. He has trained a lot of cooks that have gone on to become accomplished chefs. I don't know Bobby well but I know he trained in the classics and that being from Mystic knew his seafood. We sat at the bar and ordered drinks. I felt like a Bloody Mary and they make a good one, didn't need any doctoring up, LaKisha ordered a glass of Red. Dan Watson was playing solo guitar, singing, and it set the mood just right. The menu looked real nice, just the right amount of Starter and Main Entree options. If You don't see something that catches your eye you better get some glasses or go home and eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, not that that sounds bad. Actually sounds good right about now or how about a Fluffernutter? We started off with a half dz.

raw Littlenecks and a few Jumbo Shrimp Cocktail. The clams were opened right, not hacked up or cut through the belly. The shrimp were jumbo but had little flavor, a bit waterlogged. Maybe keep them in the cooled Court Bouillon they were cooked in? The Cocktail Sauce was jellied, maybe from being made in advance and refrigerated, a minor point. Next up, the Seared Scallops w/ Cheese Grits. To be honest I've never made grits, these were fantastic and the scallops were well seasoned and cooked just right. I could have ordered a second plate! Next on order was the Tuna Tartare w/ Avocado. The presentation was nice but not well seasoned and I believe they used frozen tuna which I can understand, the fresh season has mostly passed. Still good though! Up next a stellar Onion Soup, LaKisha's favorite. The onions were stewed down with most of the jus evaporated or absorbed into the onions which had a nice herb, red wine, hearty beef stock flavor. I would prefer a bit more of the broth but I like that it wasn't a soggy bread laden bowl like most restaurants serve. It had nice melted and browned Swiss Cheese on top like it should. Last at bat was the Steak and Frites, a classic bistro standard. I think it was a Top Sirloin but not sure since it was served sliced with a salad and fresh cut fries all on one plate. If I had a choice the steak would have been served warm and not sliced with an herb or maitre'd butter melting on top. Believe it or not we ordered two desserts, a fine Tiramisu and a Crippling Fudge Brownie Sundae that had two scoops of ice cream, whipped cream, and topped with hot fudge sauce. The Ancient Mariner had a decent crowd for an off season Monday night. I met Phillip Pavone from A/Z Pawn shop in Norwich who does so much finding motorized wheelchairs for those in need who can't afford one on their own. Truly, He is one of Gods Angels! Dan sounded really good and the bar manager held it down with no one waiting for a refill. The service was seamless and we will be back very soon, maybe we can catch Bobby back on the burners. By the way they open from 11am to 11pm and have an excellent Happy Hour, just ask our fearless leader Dave Pottie.

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Black Friday, Cyber Monday, who thinks up these new meanings of the beginnings of the Christmas season. Christmas ads even before the Thanksgiving dinner is cold and congealed on the kitchen counter and you're in a holiday food stupor nodding out before half time of the Dallas Cowboy game. Then you and your loved ones head over to Best Buy with your pup tent and thermos full of black coffee laced with Jack Daniels waiting for the doors to open 8 hours later to save \$300 on a new 100 inch LG Smart TV. Really, how ridiculous have we become as a society. The best Christmas I've had have been the least materialistic. If people think that material giving creates well being I would beg to differ, I think it creates the opposite. Let's be thankful for each other, for the things we already have, not wish for the things we don't. A few years back we de-retailed Christmas. Light stocking stuffers, a nice breakfast, a late lunch well prepared with friends and loved ones. Give to someone who needs and would appreciate a helping hand. I wish You all Merry Christmas full of joy and laughter, good music, good cheer!

Peace and Happiness, Jack





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BAND DATES

ANDY & BETHANY

1,16 - Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7-10
12 - Rathskeller, Charlestown, RI 8-11
15,30 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT 7-10
21,28 - The Irons, Mystic, CT 5-8
22 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6-9
29 - Breachway Grill, Charlestown, RI 7-10

ANDY CHANEY

3 - Ridge Vineyard, Preston, CT 12pm
6 - Mystic Pizza 2, Stonington, CT 7:30pm
14 - Friar Tucks, Mystic, CT 8pm
18,23 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT

AZALEA DRIVE

1 - Harbor House, Mystic, CT 7-10
8 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7-10
16 - On The Waterfront, New London, CT 7-10
22 - Black Sheep, Niantic, CT

BEBOBALOUBOB

31 - Toyo, Colchester, CT

THE CARTELLS

6 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
10 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm
13 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI 7:30pm
14,21,28 - Norwich Inn, Norwich, CT 6:30pm
15,29 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm
22 - Pazzo Cafe, Rocky Hill, CT 7pm
23 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 7:30pm
24 - Wolf Den, Uncasville, CT 7pm
31 - Point Inn, Old Saybrook, CT 7:30pm

CUCUMBER JONES

17 - Ancient Mariner, Mystic, CT

DAN STEVENS

1 - Public Library, Old Lyme, CT 7pm
2 - Kinsmen Brewing Co., Milldale, CT 7pm
3 - First Baptist, Essex, CT 4pm
5,12,19 - www.icrvradio.com 4pm
5,12,19,20 - Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT 6pm
7 - Crown & Hammer, Collinsville, CT 5:30pm
8 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
9 - Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT, 7pm

10 SOUND WAVES

10 - Leif Nilsson, Chester, CT 4pm
13 - Bee & Thistle, Old Lyme, CT 5pm
14 - Public House, Old Lyme, CT 6pm
15 - Chateau Le Gari, Marlborough, CT 7pm
16 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI
17 - Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT 5pm
21 - Note Kitchen, Bethel, CT 8pm
23 - Happy Valley Co., Lemont, PA
27 - Crittendon, Coudersport, PA 6pm
28 - Bullfrog Brewery, Williamsport, PA 8pm
29 - Fort Hill Brewery, Easthampton, MA 5pm
30 - Canal, Worcester, MA 7pm

DAN WATSON

1,23 - Harp n Hound, Mystic, CT
3 - Aquarium, Mystic, CT
5 - Friar Tucks, Mystic, CT
6 - Tipping Chair, Southington, CT
8 - Dog Watch, Stonington, CT
12,22,26 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
13 - Mystic Pizza II, N. Stonington, CT
14,28,31 - Ancient Mariner, Mystic, CT
15 - Lansdowne Pub, Uncasville, CT
16 - Black Sheep, Niantic, CT
19 - Angie's Pier 27, Mystic, CT
20 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT
27 - Cleats, Westerly, RI

DARIK & THE FUNBAGS

2 - Arch St Tavern, Hartford, CT
8 - Blackstone, Southington, CT
16 - Brown Derby, Uncasville, CT
29 - Shamrock, Waterbury, CT
31 - Hardrock, Foxwoods, CT

FAKE EXPERIENCE DUO

2 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
8 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6-9pm

F & BLUES BAND

7 - Atrium, Mashentucket, CT 8:30-12:30

FOUR BARREL BILLY

3 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 3:30pm
7 - Sneekers Cafe, Groton, CT 7:30pm
8 - Doc's, Clinton, CT 8pm
9 - Tommy Sullivan's, Branford, CT
10 - Donahue's, Madison, CT 4:30pm
15 - La Vita Gustosa, E. Haddam, CT 8pm
17 - Blue Crab, Old Saybrook, CT 4pm
22 - Winchester, Portland, CT 8pm
31 - Bill's Seafood, Old Saybrook, CT 7:30

FRANKENPHIL

8 - McBrides, Providence, RI 7pm
9,16 - Sons Of Liberty, Wakefield, RI 5:30pm
14 - Dans Place, W. Greenwich, RI 7:30pm
23,29 - Penny Lane, Old Saybrook, CT 7:30pm
30 - Sonoma Bistro, N. Kingstown, RI 8pm

GREEN TEA LIGHT

2 - Wood River Inn, Richmond, RI
7 - Tap Room, Westerly, RI 8pm

JAMES HARRIS

1 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm
2 - Tuscany, Uncasville, CT
5,12,19,26 - Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT 8pm
6,9,13,20,23,27 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
7 - Iron's, Mystic, CT 5pm
8,22 - Pizzetta, Mystic, CT
16,17,23 - Aquarium, Mystic, CT 11-2pm
16,30 - Friar Tuck's, Mystic, CT 10pm
28 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI

KEEP IT ROLLING BAND

2 - Hideaway Café, Colchester, CT

MATT n DEAN

14 - Hardrock, Foxwoods, CT

NAKED SUNDAY

9 - Landsdowne Pub, Uncasville, CT

NICK BOSSE

1 - Two Brothers Pub, Voluntown, CT 8-11pm
7,14,21,28 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT 5:30-8:30pm
8 - Brown Derby, Uncasville, CT 5-8pm
9 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT 8-11pm
10 - Two Brothers Pub, Voluntown, CT 2-4pm
16 - Mystic Pizza II, N. Stonington, CT 8-11pm
29 - Music Lady, Central Village, CT 8-11pm
30 - The Irons, Mystic, CT 8-11pm

NICK BOSSE & THE NORTHERN ROOTS

9 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT 8-11pm

PIRATES FOR PEACE

1 - Tamarack Lodge, Voluntown, CT
13 - Sneekers, Groton, CT

POSITIVE NRG

9 - Yantic River Inn, Norwich, CT

RIVERGODS

23 - Daddy Jack's, New London, CT

SUE MENHART DUO

2 - Village Gazebo, Mystic, CT 11am

27 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm

SUGAR

31 - Marriott, Providence, RI

SUNDAY GRAVY

8 - Sneekers, Groton, CT

2 CAT ZOO

29 - The Irons, Mystic, CT

VINCE THOMPSON & THE NEXT FUN THING

2 - Mystick Village, Mystic, CT 11am-1pm
2 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 7-10pm
10 - Woodbury Brewing, Woodbury, CT 3-6pm
21 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7-10pm
28 - Thunder Rd., Somerville, MA 6:30-9pm

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CONCERT DATES

The Blind Boys Of Alabama

2 - Shubert Theater, New Haven, CT

Blood Sweat & Tears

9 - Infinity Hall, Hartford, CT

Criss Angel

14-17 - Fox Theater, Mashentucket, CT

The Duke Robillard Band

31 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI

Hayley Jane & The Primates

30 - Fete Music Hall, Providence, RI

Keiko Matsui

2 - John Lyman Center, New Haven, CT

Kenny Rogers

15 - Oakdale Theatre, Wallingford, CT

Mannheim Steamroller

3 - Foxwoods, Mashentucket, CT

Marc Anthony

1 - Grand Theater, Mashentucket, CT

Melissa Etheridge

2 - Center for the Arts, Cranston, RI
15 - Garde Arts, New London, CT

Natalie MacMaster

9 - Jorgensen Ctr., Storrs, CT

Reverend Horton Heat

14 - Bridge St., New Haven, CT

Robin Thicke

31 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

Samantha Fish

15 - Kate Center, Old Saybrook, CT

Straight No Chaser

21 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

Terry Sylvester

15 - Center Of The Arts, W. Kingston, RI



SOUND WAVES 11

HAYLEY JANE



Photo Credit:
JMS Art & Photo

By Tom Matthew

Hayley Jane and the Primates have become a staple of the festival scene here in New England. Standing powerfully front and center of this group is the dynamic Hayley Jane, who leads this stylish blend of Americana, Rock and Soul. They're on tour now promoting their fresh full-length release "We're Here Now". I had the pleasure of speaking with Hayley Jane on a variety of topics that she's passionate about.

Tom Matthew: Your new album "We're Here Now" is very diverse. What did you have in mind when you put it together?

Hayley Jane: We didn't write all of those songs at the same time. Some of those songs were written years apart. I think that definitely lends itself to the diversity of the tunes. We chose to use different methods of writing. Some of those songs were written by me and me alone, like "To the Moon" I wrote by myself. A few of these were written by me and my guitarist, Justin. We would write them on an acoustic guitar, like our song "Creatures" or "Madeline". We'd write them on an acoustic guitar and then bring them to the group once it was done, and then add everything else. A handful of tunes were written by all of us together in a room.

On "I Can Do it", we lovingly call it Poo Jam, it was something that grew organically in the studio just from a bassline. I think a lot of the different feels have to do with who started writing the song and where it came from,
12 SOUND WAVES

because we all come from extremely different musical backgrounds.

TM: Some of the new songs even get a little trance feel to them with some interesting electronic stuff going on.

HJ: It's definitely outside the box for us. Our producer, Craig Brodhead from the band Turkuaz had a huge hand in a lot of the electronic stuff and the expansion into the electronic sound. He did all of the synth that you hear playing. It was pretty neat to have all these songs written and done and then have that added to it once we went through it in the studio.

I think it adds a lot in songs like "Cosmic Katrina" where we always imagined it having that outer spacey electronic sound, but you can only do so much with guitars, and we don't have a keyboard player. So it's really cool to get to add that stuff in the studio. And eventually we will have a keys player. My dream is to be able to play these songs the way you hear them on the album.

TM: I know you play a lot of festivals. Some of the new stuff almost has a late-night festival kind of feel, which is pretty cool.

HJ: Oh my gosh, I hope you're right! That makes me really happy because I've never viewed us in that way. Because I come from singer/songwriter and musical theater I always wanted, in the back of my mind, to be
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able to hold our own as a late night entity, to be able to keep people dancing. But sometimes I like the ups and downs. I like slow songs and I like to take people on kind of a roller-coaster. My concern there is that late night people don't really want that, but so far I've found that people don't mind it so much.

That makes me so happy that you think that, because songs like "Too Tired" or "Make It Alright" are definitely more jam-based and we can take them for a ride. I'm not just singing the whole time, I let the boys spread their wings. Not let them...

TM: (laughs)

HJ: I'm in charge! (laughs). The other thing is to balance out the confidence of being a band leader with the fear of being bossy.

TM: It's a hard line to walk.

HJ: It really is! I'm teetering, gracefully.

TM: You've got a real lively stage show with all the dancers and everything.

HJ: Yeah, It's been such a great addition. I've always wanted that. I've always wanted to bridge - I don't know that there's much of a gap anymore because there's rock musicals and there's very theatrical rock concerts, but I suppose in my own mind they were very separate things. For me, I come from musical theatre and showmanship, where it's about not just the audible, it's about the visual, and I love lights. You can do so much with a good lighting guy.

But I wanted to use human bodies as well. I wanted to take everything that I've learned from dance, like modern dance, lyrical dance, everything I learned from musical theater, telling a story, and then take it and smash it into everything I've learned in the folk scene, the rock scene, the jam scene, the reggae scene - all these different scenes I've had the pleasure of immersing myself in. I just want to take it and roll it all together into this big mess of an explosion.

That's who I am, and I'm starting to realize it's not so much trying to fit and conform to one genre, which I think I tried to do a few times. I realize that nobody wants to do that, not even the listeners. I don't think there are a lot of listeners that just grab onto one genre anymore. Everybody's proud to say, "I listen to all sorts of stuff." So I just want to say, "I play all sorts of stuff" and put on an amazing visual show as well as a pretty-sounding show.

TM: When you look at some of the greatest acts in music, they usually have a great stage show as part of their whole mystique.

HJ: I wish I had more time to go see them. A friend of mine sent me a video from a Lady Gaga show, and I was like "I want to do that!" I remember seeing Diana Ross play the halftime show for whatever Superbowl was going on, back when I was really little. I remember her changing her outfit five times, and I loved that. It made so much sense to me because it went with what she was doing.

I think there's so much cohesiveness between the movement on stage, the lighting, what you're wearing - all these things. There's a reason a woman and even some men will change five times before they go out. I haven't put a lot of emphasis on fashion, and I really am beginning to understand that it's a huge part of the visual aspect.

We used to all play in our t-shirts and jeans, and that's fine. But once I started to bring my theater experience, where I came from, I said "I miss getting dressed up, I miss adding that aspect to the performance". Now there are all these different elements that you can bring into a stage show, and it's so much fun adding dancers.

I can't wait to get a lighting guy. Once we have a lighting guy that really

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knows our music and can put a spot on certain things, go gold when I'm singing about the color gold, or go red when I'm singing about passion, or fire or love. There's so many different ways that you can pull on people's emotional strings through visual and audio.

I would love to get into like smell-a-vision and pumping cool smells into a theater, and have a fully immersive experience, feed them cool food while we're performing to go along with it. You know what I mean? There's a level where you can start tapping into every sense receptor in the brain. I'm so curious.

Seeing a bunch of women move together in unison is so powerful for other women to see. Especially right now. And that's something I'm really dedicated to. It's like a pride of lionesses, they all go hunting together and they work together. I think it's a really big message for me right now in what I'm doing. It's important to me that little girls and women see women not in competition, but working together as a group to create.

Not just art, but in politics, in every aspect of our community. Women working together, people working together. I am unashamed to admit that I am focused mainly on women. I think females need one more big push. We still need one more big push into equality, and I think that would be good.

TM: That ties in nicely with your new video, "More Interesting". You've got a tribe of women in costumes and face paint – what's the story behind the content here?

HJ: It's so interesting to me, the collective consciousness, the one brain of humanity, because I find it so fascinating that after I put out this video – you've heard of hash-tag #metoo?

TM: Yes, it has become very visible.

HJ: I've posted it. I've been subject to abuse and harassment as have most of my female friends. In this music video, you'll notice that my band is tied up to trees.

TM: Yeah, I noticed that.

HJ: I never want to come out as man-hating. My band, they're all wonderful, respectful, loving beautiful men, but I used them and they were happy to be symbols in this music video. And it was my way of tying up the males and the male persona so they will not be able to harm or hurt or be aggressive, and it's symbolism. It's just asking them to put their hands down for a moment and see the harm that has happened.

It's about rebirth. You'll notice that a woman, my very good friend comes and gets me out of the bed, and I'm in white – it's about this innocence. It's taken away from you sometimes. It naturally can evolve into womanhood and maturity, and that's what's supposed to happen. You're not supposed to have it stolen from you. You're supposed to grow into womanhood and have it evolve into this bravery and confidence.

So that's really what that is. It's about an older woman taking a younger woman, and helping her, supporting her and showing her. At the end of the video I come in and I help my very good friend's little daughter Luna out of the bed. It symbolizes the trinity or the three goddesses. There's a lot in there, there's a lot to unpack.

I'm so happy, it makes me feel so connected to what's going on. That music video came out at the same time as this movement, because it just feels like everybody's on the same page here. We don't hate men, we are just tired of even the little things like telling a girl to smile. When a man says "Hey, you should smile", and I don't think they realize that even with the best intentions, they don't realize the discomfort or the damage that they're doing. There's little things like that all around.

I've heard discussions, and people are so frustrated with it, men will say that everything you do now is sexual harassment. And I said "No, we just want respect." I really don't think a lot of men understand the extent. I al-

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ways say, "Would you say that to your male friend?" "Well of course not, he's a guy."

I get it that we're different, and we want to be different. We want to be treated with equality, but I don't want to go as far as like – I used to think dresses were bad, that I needed to wear pants, because I needed to show men that I was strong. This whole idea that anything feminine became bad in my mind because I didn't want men to think I was weak. Now that's awful. And I love wearing dresses. They're the most comfortable things in the world. Men should wear dresses, they're the best.

I hit this huge extreme, and then I realized "You know what? I love getting dressed up in a pretty dress, and dancing around." And that doesn't make me look weak, and shouldn't make me look weak either. Now I'm dedicated to embracing my feminine energy, embracing my femininity and who I am as a woman, and translating it and showing that it equates to strength. That's my mission. And I feel like that's been my calling.

I also like to work with girls with body dysmorphia, anorexia, bulimia, because I think that's a really big thing society has pushed on women – to be very thin. When I was back working in Los Angeles, I definitely had eating problems and things like that. There's just so much, and I feel like I have this great opportunity and responsibility to just be a beacon of health. I'm trying really hard to stay healthy and be a representative of what I hope. I want to be a woman that inspires people. And that's what I'm trying to do.

But I have to live it. That's the thing, I can't just go out and pretend, I have to really live it. Be healthy, be strong, be confident, be brave. And I'm just like everyone else, I have struggles, I have insecurities, I have all those things. It's kind of nice because I feel like I'm right there, and if I can succeed then anyone can succeed. And so I'd like to show women that it's very possible, to work in an industry where it is male dominated and to be successful, and to not have to do anything that sacrifices your morals or beliefs to get there.

TM: Yeah, you couldn't have picked a better time to be vocal with this message, with so many women emboldened to come out and speak about how they've suffered from abuse.

HJ: It's very real. I think the big ones like rape of course, those are the biggest things to be addressed. But I'm also very passionate about the little things, because I do feel that it's the little things that lead to the big things. And I don't think people realize how tiny – I've done it. I'm guilty of it.

I'm guilty, as a female, of walking up to a girl that's loading in gear and being like, "Which one's your boyfriend?" just assuming that she's not in the band. I've done it. And she's like "I play bass." That was years ago, but still you realize that it's in all of us. Little tiny misconceptions and assumptions can do extreme damage.

So I guess all I'm asking is that people try and be aware. Look alive. Be aware. Really think about what you're saying before you say it and also don't be afraid to call somebody out. I think especially with men, they're so afraid to look uncool or whatever if they call out one of their friends or something. But I think if we all just say it – if you see somebody doing something, and they probably don't even know they're doing it – some of my favorite people, including myself, say and do things that are perpetuating sexism and stereotypes and all this ugly shit that just needs to be stopped.

That's all. Most people have the best intentions and they don't realize certain things are negative and are affecting society negatively. I worked for Disney, and I love Disney, and they're doing great things now like Moana, and empowering female protagonists, you know? Because back when I was working there I was like, "Man, every single story is about this woman needing to be saved by a man." We're making strides, it's happening. I'd like it to happen faster I suppose.

TM: Well, you're just talking about evolution, that's all. Evolution of music, evolution of our social structures. It's like a slow moving ship.

HJ: That's why we're Hayley Jane and the Primates. I'm all about evolution.

TM: So what do you have coming up, you guys are on tour supporting the new album?

HJ: Yeah, we just extended it too. We just added our first Colorado dates, going to New Mexico for the first time, shooting down to Virginia – it's great. There are a couple things that are so exciting. We're opening up for Umphrey's McGee, which is one of our favorite bands as a group. We couldn't be more excited for that happening. We're doing a Phish pre-party. We're doing this great thing for New Year's, we're doing "A Party of Five, a Tribute to the Nineties". We're going to be doing all sorts of alternative rock like Nirvana and Alanis, and we're going to dig deep into that for our New Year's run, so that's going to be fun.

I'm also going to be doing some recording out in the Northampton area at Spirit House working with Danny Bernini. I have a project called "Yes Darling" with Ryan Montbleau. It's a newer thing. We're recording our first album. We're hoping to release it on Valentine's Day. It's a kind of June Carter and Johnny Cash meets Tenacious D thing.

It's comedic, but it's like we're a couple and we dress all forties / fifties and we go on stage and sing about trying to be in an open relationship and arguing. It's a little more realistic of what it's like to be in a long-term relationship. But then there are love songs too, and it's really fun.

We opened up for Everyone Orchestra for a few shows, and we're going to be doing a bunch of shows next year, so once we drop the album on Valentine's Day we're going to be touring with a bunch of shows to back that album as well.

TM: It sounds like you have a lot to look forward to. Thanks for spending the time with me today.

HJ: Thank you so much. Have a great day.



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HEARING AID



Sue Menhart Band "Love Ain't Hard"

CDBaby.com

OK, first the disclaimer. Sue Menhart is a colleague of mine here at Sound Waves. As such, I happen to think her "first person" column about performing and songwriting is appointment reading each month.

I've also compared her gritty, soulful, emotional music and live performances to being the "Bruce Springsteen of southeastern Connecticut."

While there may be some hype to that, her new album, "Love Ain't Hard" is pretty much, as I tend to say in my day job, the best evidence of that opinion. Equal parts of influence from Bonnie Raitt, Melissa Etheridge, Mavis Staples and yes, Springsteen, embody this very strong body of work. Menhart's got one of those real, tough, strong, down to Earth yet reaching for the Heavens voices that makes a listener sit up and take notice. Add to that the backing of one of the strongest bands in the area (special kudos to sax man extraordinaire Don Packer), and you've pretty much got a combination for success that can't be beaten.

From the power of "All of You" and "Here You Are" to the soul of "Moving On;" the emotion of the title track, "Love Ain't Hard;" the rockin, award-winning (google it) "Can't Feel the Rain (in which her powerful voice damn near blows the roof off);" the jazz-influenced "Bet You'll Be Back;" the blues-drenched closer "Tell Me;" and the Brian Wilson-tribute "Party on the Beach," Menhart and her cohorts bring a titanic level of musicianship,

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songwriting and downright passion that will keep you craving this, and more, for a very long time.

And, for those who may find this review a conflict, if "Love Ain't Hard" wasn't this good, I've have just ignored it and not reviewed it.

But, it's so good that it needs special notice.

***** - Mark T. Gould



Samantha Fish "Belle of the West" Ruf Records

Samantha Fish is a rising blues singer-songwriter and guitarist who grew up in Kansas City, Missouri. Her fifth studio album "Belle of the West" stretches genre boundaries with its collection of largely acoustic, soulful and swampy folk blues. It features sparse instrumentation such as fife, violin, mandolin, upright bass, Fender Rhodes and guitars. The album was recorded at the famed Zebra Ranch Studios in Mississippi with producer Luther Dickinson of the North Mississippi Allstars. Helping out in the studio were Dickinson, Jack White associate Lillie Mae, Lightnin' Malcolm, Squirrel Nut Zippers founder Jimbo Mathus and solo artist Amy LaVere among others.

Fish admits she's not a traditional blues artist. "I'm never gonna do Muddy Waters better than Muddy Waters," she says. At the age of 28, she's already done quite a bit, her own way. Fish's March 2017 release "Chills & Fever" achieved Top 10 status in the Billboard Blues charts. Back in 2011 she released "Girls with Guitars" and in the same year "Runaway." This album

was named Best Artist Debut at the 2012 Blues Music Awards in Memphis. "Black Wind Howlin'" was released in 2013 and in 2015 "Wild Heart" reached the top slot on Billboard's blues chart.

Her voice is sweet, powerful and self-assured while her lyrics can at times convey aching vulnerability. All the tunes on "Belle of the West" have songwriting at its core, complemented by pleasing instrumentation and non-standard harmonies with an artsy feel. Fish sings the most passionately on "Don't Say You Love Me" and beautifully pulls off the title track, penned by Jimbo Mathus, a slow swinging ode to a "painted lady."

"Poor Black Mattie," a cover of the R.L. Burnside tune, features guest vocalist Lightnin' Malcolm and some synopated backwoods rhythms. A driving beat and call and response vocals with various ranges drives the laid back hangin' at a backyard fire "No Angels." Country singer Lillie Mae helping out on her own song "Nearing Home" is also a delight. The album closes with the slightly out of tune authentic "Gone for Good." This album is all about delivering songs in a true and heartfelt fashion - not flashy, not showy. Check out Samantha Fish's web site here: <http://www.samanthafish.com>

Upcoming Shows:

Dec. 13 - The Met, Providence, RI

Dec. 15 - The Kate, Old Saybrook, CT

- Sue Menhart



Hayley Jane & the Primates "We're Here Now" To The Moon LLC

This is my own personal observation but I've felt for the past couple of years that there's an opening in the jam scene for a young, hot female artist. There aren't as many as you might think in this male dominated genre of music. There is Grace Potter who is home right

now expecting her first child making it unlikely we'll see her in 2018. There is Susan Tedeschi, a tremendous singer and performer, who benefits by being married to the Michael Jordan of guitar players. After that is there a name that immediately comes to mind? Who is it? Well just maybe it's a rising star and native New Englander named Hayley Jane. Here is a woman who is so confident that she doesn't even need a last name!

Many of us first heard of Hayley Jane and the Primates when in 2014 they were the New England Music Award winners for the Roots/Americana Act of the Year. At that same time they also released their first record called "Gasoline." Since then they've become festival favorites slowly moving from the side stages to the main stages. Now, with the release of this new record, they're on the verge of becoming a nationally touring rock band.

The Primates are Justin Hancock and Greg Smith on guitars and backup vocals, Josh T. Carter on bass, and Bill Carbone on drums. They are a talented and tight quartet and they really know how to step on it when it's time to jam. However, all are content to let Hayley Jane, who is as silly as she is sexy, be the star of the show. Besides being a great singer, she is so theatrical and charismatic on stage that you wonder why she isn't a movie star. You just can't take your eyes off of her.

Their new disc, "We're Here Now," is a generous and fun set of thirteen original songs that kick off with an infectious rocker called "More Interesting." After that there's a wonderfully wacky song called "Cosmic Katrina." Wacky or goofy or dorky usually works in the jam scene. Just ask anyone who is into Phish!

Some other highlights include a trippy tune called "Madeline," and a weird tribute to Charlie Parker, or as Hayley Jane calls him, the Yardbird Charlie Parker. There's also a bouncy little song called "Too Tired," along with a great vehicle for jamming called "You Gotta Move." The band gets bluesy with "Lose you," and acoustic with "Mama." The penultimate cut, which includes a guest horn section, called "Make it Alright" shows just how funky this band can get.

Also worth mentioning is the hard rocking, autobiographical tune "Hurricane Jane." On this cut Hayley Jane channels her inner Janis Joplin. Once again this is my own observation, but if some movie producer wanted to make a bio film on Janis and put out a nation-

wide casting call, I would put the odds at even money that Hayley Jane would land the role. If you've seen her then you know what I'm talking about.

In conclusion I would like to point out that one of the guest musicians on this record is Ryan Montbleau, who contributes some backup vocals along with a whistle solo. I mention Ryan because Hayley Jane has partnered up with him on a glorious side project called Yes Darling. Look for their first record together in 2018!

Things are happening for Hayley Jane and the Primates. Their audience is growing, the venues they play at are getting bigger, and they have a future superstar fronting them. I wouldn't be surprised to see her on the cover of a music magazine one of these days!

- Bill Harriman



Ken Serio "SoJourn" CDBaby.com

The greatest music is all birthed out of collaboration, which is a concept that drummer Ken Serio has taken to heart in his career, and especially on his new album "SoJourn".

The seasoned musician's seventh CD is the musical equivalent to a Jackson Pollak Painting: a chaotic and unpredictable blending of colors and ideas,

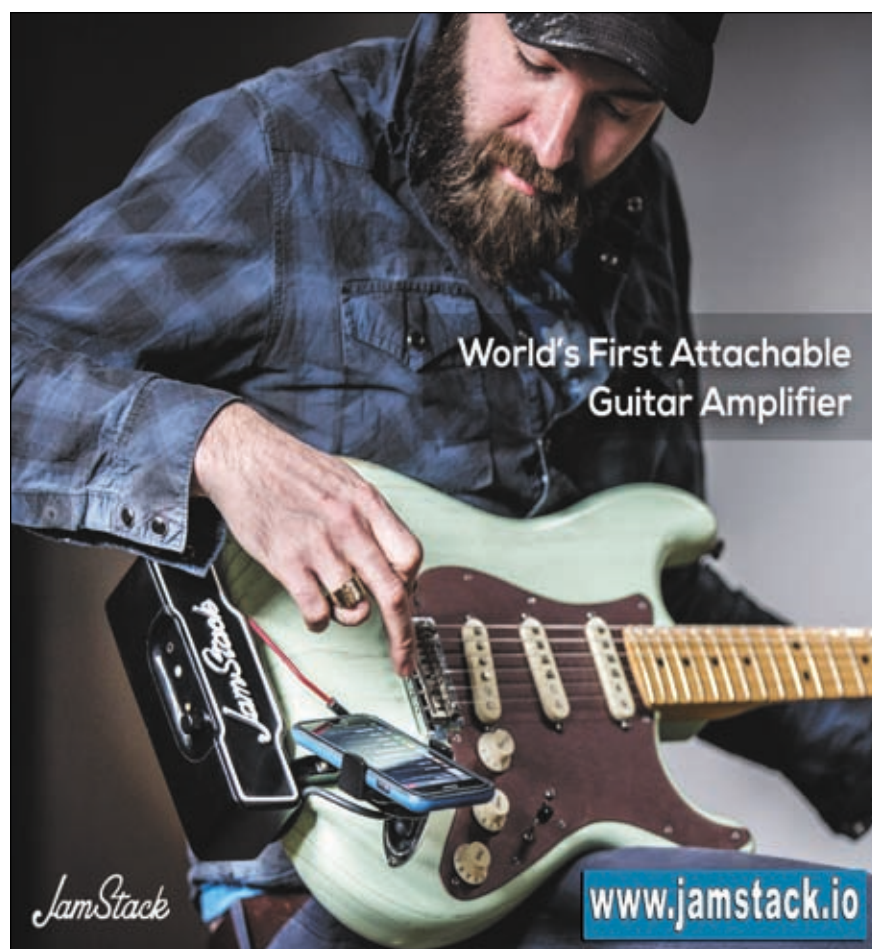
coming together to form a beautiful emulation of human emotion. That is not to say that the album is rough or aggressive; quite the opposite, the majority of the stylistic flavorings featured on the CD are lush or melodically pleasing. Still, the diverse nature of the album continues to leave the listener on their toes, unable to guess what to expect next.

The one consistency in a sea of variables is Serio's phenomenal performances as a drummer. Each track not only features complex and ever-changing drum patterns, but extremely meticulous mixing as well, making the powerful instrument immersive and compelling. The musician's experience gained over the past few decades of performance have groomed him into a player that can easily adapt to any style while seamlessly mixing in his own twist.

But Serio isn't the only talented musician on the project, each of his guests brings their own special flair to the record as well. A great example is the album's opener, "Home Is Where The Hatred Is", which features the show-stopping vocals of Faye Green, as well as charming keys from Chris Geith. Another stand out is the album's title track, in which Pete McCann captivates the listener as he plays a hypnotizingly emotional guitar line overtop of Serio's gentle drumming. Yes, these moments of collaboration really help tie the album together through a consistently high bar of quality, taking it from a mediocre project, to something great.

All in all Ken Serio's seventh album proves its worth time and time again. Despite having a huge contrast in direction between a lot of the songs, all of the music is charming and captivating. No matter what stylings of music you traditionally enjoy, this melting pot of sound is sure to contain something to get your ear on the hook.

- Niles Wilson



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