

Sound

Magazine

Waves

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Volume 30
Issue 9
September 2020

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- Veronica Lewis
- Cindy Blackman Santana
- A Band Called Sam
- Turkuaz
- Evangeline Gentle
- Bette Smith

An
Interview
with

**CHRIS
THOMAS
KING**

**A Southern New England
Entertainment & Dining Guide Since 1990**



NEW LONDON COUNTY - MYSTIC - WESTERLY - RHODE ISLAND

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Dear Readers,

Another month of being just online. With this pandemic, everyone is unsure what will be happening. So many advertisers are not spending the monies to advertise during these stressful time. I really can't blame them. Things could change next week. We just don't know. But we will eventually be back in print. Even though we get an average of 20,000 readers online, I like to hold the magazine and read it. Call me old fashion.

On a different note. This country is getting insane. There has been grave injustice to people and they aren't taking it anymore. They took a knee and everyone complained. Now they march and protest and everyone is in an uproar. Recently a 17 year old killed 3 protesters. One was shot in the back. Now I know some of the protesting has turned violent, but reports from the FBI and other sources are saying this was caused by outside agitators. Whoever it is, the protesters have to start to self police their movement. Destruction of private property is unacceptable. Though what is happening reminds me of the March on Washington during the Vietnam war. Big headlines said "Peace March Turns Violent!". Then when Nixon resigned, there was a big article of what he was doing. There was a small paragraph buried in the article. "Nixon sent people into the peace march to instigate the rioting and make the movement look bad". Just saying folks...you decide. Read up on the Reichstag.

One of the biggest problems today are people's prejudices. They judge people by their color or what country they were from. But think about this. You ever see or hear of a blind person being prejudice on his own or out-right? It is taught to us by example. We are not born with it. This country has become divided like never before in the last 3 1/2 years. It's time we come together and become Americans again. A country made great because of it diversification. Vote this November!

Peace,

David Pottie ~ Publisher

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Sound Waves

September 2020
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4:00 pm ~ \$25



~Sunday, September 20th ~

Adam Ezra Group
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~Sunday, September 27th ~

Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem
The New Alternative
4:00 pm ~ \$25



~ Sunday, October 4th ~

Kerri Powers
Ramblin' Dan Stevens
4:00 pm ~ \$20

~Sunday, October 11th~

The James Montgomery Band
Jake Kulak & The Lowdown
4:00 pm~ \$25



~Sunday, October 18th~

Christine Ohlman &
Rebel Montez
4:00 pm~ \$25



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BIG NEWS from the BREAD BOX

We will be presenting a Fall Series on the SHA-BOO STAGE in Jillson Park 600 Main Street Willimantic. We will conduct our shows in a Drive-in format every Sunday from September 13th -October 18th. Showtime 4:00 pm

September 13th:

MAD AGNES/ Hugh Blumenfeld & Faithful Sky
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September 20th

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September 27th

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October 4th

Kerri Powers/ Ramblin' Dan Stevens
Tickets \$20

October 11th

The James Montgomery Band/ Jake Kulak & the Lowdowns
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October 18th

Christine Ohlman & Rebel Montez (the Beehive Queen)
Tickets \$30

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MUSIC NOTES

"The Janitor Did It"

By Mark T. Gould

It was a great idea, perhaps a bit of a gamble, and thanks to an enterprising janitor, we have auditory proof that the high school kid actually pulled it off.

It was 1968, shortly after the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, and racial tensions were understandably high all across America.

It was no different in Palo Alto, California, where an enterprising high school junior named Danny Scher had an idea.

In an effort to bring about racial unity in his community, Scher, a big music fan who would, ultimately, go on to great success in the business, had an idea: a concert headlined by the pianist and innovator Thelonious Monk, which, he thought, might help soothe the tensions.



use of switched key releases, silence, and hesitations.

Although his style was not universally appreciated, Monk was renowned for a distinctive look which included suits, hats, and sunglasses, on stage and off. He was also noted for an idiosyncratic habit during performances: while his other musicians continued playing, Monk would stop, stand up, and dance for a few moments before returning to the piano.

Yet, he definitely touched a chord. Over two dozen tribute albums to him have been released since his death in 1982, and his influence in both jazz, and music in general, cannot be overstated.

No matter who it was going to be on the stage, though, this wasn't going to be Scher's first rodeo. By the time he dreamed up the idea for this gig, he had already presented performances at his school by pianist/composer Vince Guaraldi, of "Charlie Brown" fame; vocalist Jon Hendricks, formerly of the jazz vocal trio Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, and vibraphonist/bandleader Cal Tjader.

And, despite his young age, Scher had some semi-inside help from two persons he considered mentors, the late Herb Wong, jazz scholar/educa-

tor/producer and a longtime Menlo Park resident, and Darlene Chan, founder and inaugural director of the Berkeley Jazz Festival.

Not bad company for a high school kid, huh?

Scher told Palo Alto online, "And I said to one of them, 'you know, my two idols are Monk and Duke (Ellington),' and they said, 'Why don't you call Monk? He's coming to town.'"

So, Scher contacted Monk's manager, and, after some back and forth, they agreed on an afternoon concert at Palo Alto High School, while the bandleader was in San Francisco for a date at the Jazz Workshop club in North Beach.

Tickets were priced at \$2 for general admission and \$1.50 for students (hey, c'mon, it was '68, after all). In addition, Scher did all the promotion, created a program, sold advertising, and designed and hung posters advertising the show.

And, it might all be just an interesting, albeit minor, footnote to Sixties music history, if it were not for the aforementioned school janitor.

His name is now lost in the Bay Area fog, but he reportedly offered to record the concert for Scher in exchange for the honor of tuning the piano Monk would be playing.

An agreement was reached, and after the gig, the janitor gave his cassette tape to the young promoter, who later had it digitally mastered. He then began negotiating with Monk's estate, and they reached a

deal that culminated in the release last month of the historic show, titled, simply, "Monk Palo Alto."

God bless the janitor, whomever and wherever he is, because the performance is sublime.

Monk had a reputation throughout his career of being a mercurial, moody performer, but not on that afternoon in Palo Alto. The music, performed by Monk, tenor saxophonist Charlie Rouse, double bassist Larry Gales and drummer Ben Riley, is magical.

The recording, which, despite the primitive recording equipment of the time, sounds pristine and modern, lasts a little over 45 minutes, and, judging by the sound of it, the musicians seemed to have had a really good time.

Monk could be fun and playful if the mood struck, and it seems he was that way that day, and his attitude permeates the band, which runs seamlessly through classic Monk pieces such as "Ruby, My Dear," "Well, You Needn't," "Epistrophy," and a 14-minute tour de force of his musically autobiographical "Blue Monk."

Scher, as a vice president of Bill Graham Presents, has gone on to produce literally thousands of Bay Area concerts, but this presentation of Monk in a difficult time may be his biggest project of all.

And, all thanks to the janitor, we have the recorded proof of a great idea that became a magical concert.

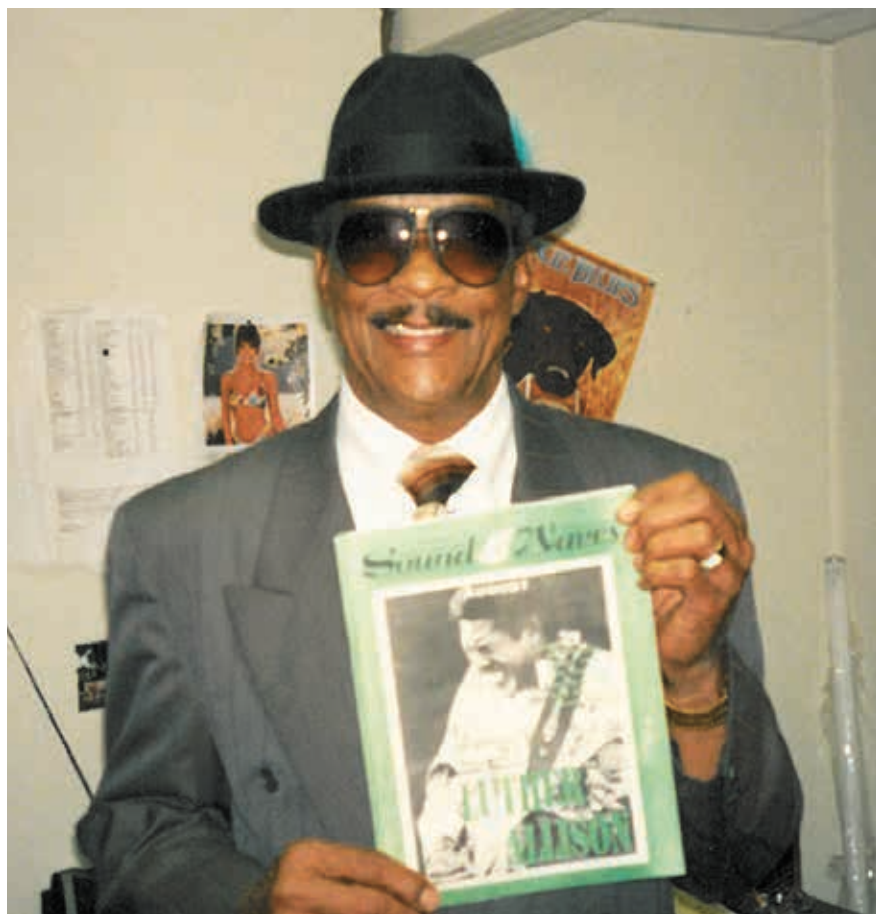


The choice was an auspicious one. Monk, who in the process of becoming the second most recorded jazz composer after Duke Ellington, was a true iconoclast. His compositions and improvisations featured dissonances and angular melodic twists that were consistent with his unorthodox approach to the piano, which combined a highly percussive attack with abrupt, dramatic

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All The World's a Stage

"Retail Therapy"

By Sue Menhart

We've all had to do what we had to do during COVID-19. Some of us have taken this time to reflect and really focus on what's important. Some of us explored new creative outlets and found out there's more to us than we thought. Some of us focused on family. And some of us just went nuts on Amazon. Like buying nutty ridiculous things such as two kinds of wire whisks in different colors, new dust pans and tons of forks and knives. (Guilty!) But on the plus side, all that kind of balanced out. Here's a list of things I DID NOT buy over my summer pandemic vacation:



- Guitar strings, guitar picks, 9-volt batteries, those little dime-sized batteries for Snark tuners, new guitars, amps, speakers, instrument and speaker cables or mixing boards

- Oodles of snack for band practice

- Pints of Blackberry Brandy to hide in my purse for getting through shows

- Gas for the gig van, oil changes for the gig van

- Shiny rock star outfits for gigs, a nice salon haircut and color

- Lunches and dinners trying to track down booking agents, drinks and appetizers consumed while enjoying other musicians' shows, drinks for long lost buddies who showed up to my shows, late night breakfasts

- Concert tickets, new music

When you do the math, which I'm hesitant to do, was I better off? I really do like my new Amazon king-

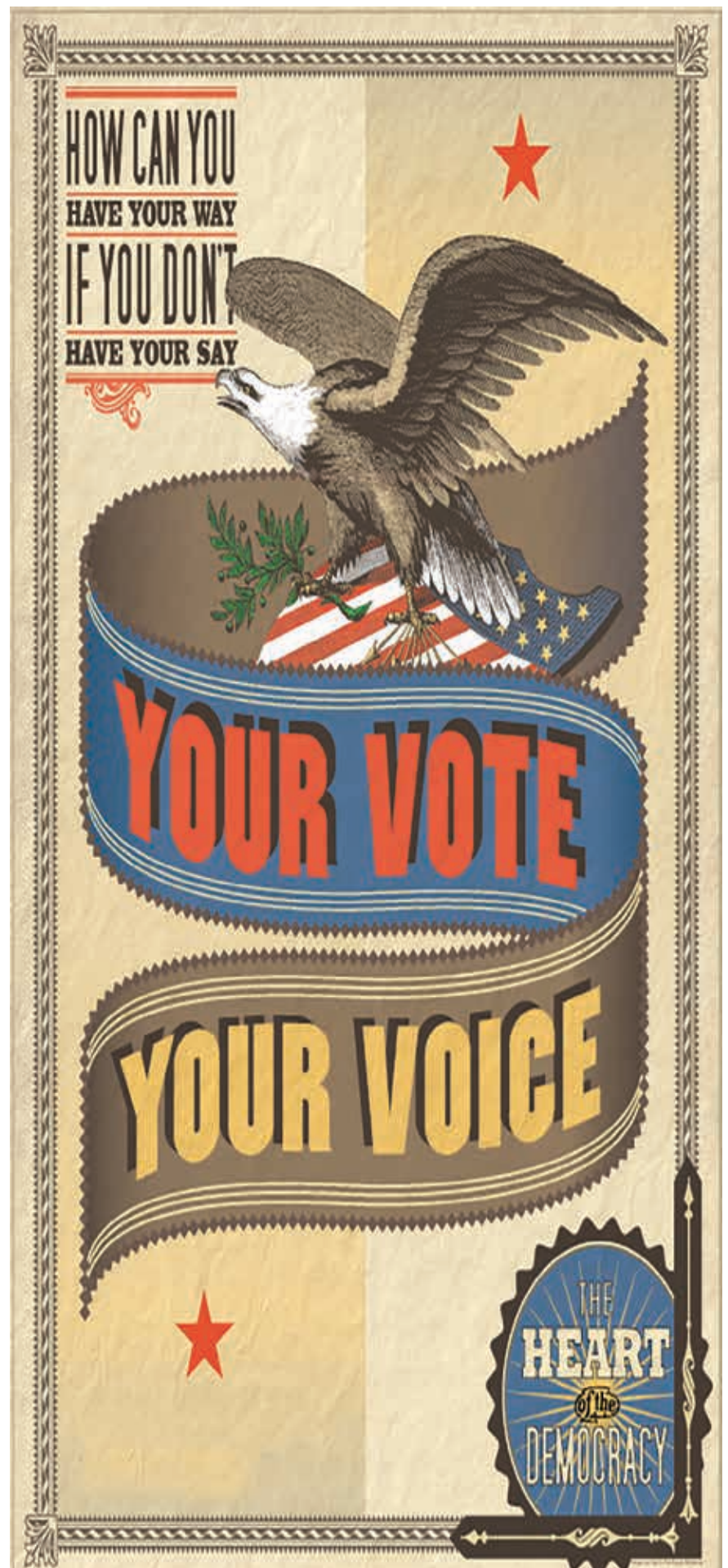
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size sheets. On reflection though, I think I've had enough of Amazon. As my favorite season approaches, and uncertainty still looms, I'm thinking about my own apple trees... Oh wait, I forgot about L.L. Bean!



Peruse more cautionary tales, rants and raves over on my blog "Menhart Musings" at www.suemenhart.wordpress.com. Get my latest book over on Amazon at https://www.amazon.com/They-Made-Me-Play-Polka/dp/1725534584/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=



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LOCAL BEAT

"CT Artist Jes Farnsworth Rocks the Blues On EP" "Bring It Home"

By Andrew Kerbs

Jes Farnsworth plays great blues rock with punky vocals on his new CT mini-album release *Bring It Home*. The EP features Pete Detmold (of 3-pack and Reducers' fame) playing rhythm guitar and well-grounded rhythm section Tom Trombley on drums and Roger Reale on bass. The album is about the highs and lows of life living with a girl and all the confusion that entails.

The album starts off with "Time Ain't Been Kind" in which Jes cries a catchy chorus of "Tiy-iy-ime"



while his guitar whines and Peter plays ascending bar chords. He sings of days, months and eventually years flying by as he navigates the ups and downs of relationship life like a wave as he searches in vain for a way to ground himself.

"Long Gone" starts with Tom and Roger's thumpy rhythmic beat as Jes sings about the nervous antici-

pation of a relationship failure: "Say (or change) one thing to another and I won't twist your arm. You can stick around if you want but I'll be long gone." The same ambiguous communication can be heard in the song "Too Many Lies" in which Jes wonders which of this girl's faces is real as her tongue slips and her stories change when contradicting herself. Farnsworth plays a high-pitched riff which crescendos into a playful solo as bridges get burnt, the emotional dam breaks, and his girl runs and hides. She changes her tune (and heart) so often her man can't take any comfort in a consistent relationship.

"Cryin Like a Baby" (when she says she don't love me anymore) is another she- done-me-wrong song. Roger plucks infectious bass grooves into this slow blues about tempers flaring in a relationship as the boyfriend tries to "lay down the law." The singer laments all the relationship drama in listeners who tire of their lovers rolling their eyes can empathize with because they never see eye to eye. You wake up

after 10 years only to find yourself under another person's thumb who plays you just often enough to keep you in the relationship despite all the emotional static.

"You Don't Need to Know" (what's on my mind) has a catchy descending lead guitar riff. The "first cut is the deepest but I don't mind the scars" Jes sings about a guy who refuses to apologize for asserting himself and speaking his mind in his relationship because "his mind isn't a crime (and soon he'll be gone)." Communication is good but vulnerability isn't always comfortable and sometimes its safer to armor oneself by recoiling narcissistically backwards into oneself from out of relationship and back into solitude. His vocals are gruff as if he speaks from experience and his singing pays tribute to Detmold's vocal style.

Fans of the blues or listeners going through a divorce or just a rough spot in their relationship should enjoy this tasty piece of CT based blues rock. Be sure to buy it at your local music store.

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27 - The Farm, Marlborough, CT 3-7pm

F & BLUES BAND

4 - Tamarack, Voluntown CT 6 - 9pm

KEN SERIO JAZZ TRIO

12 - Open Trails Fest., E. Haddam CT 2pm

NICK BOSSE

3 - Pizzetta, Mystic, CT 6-9

5 - Tamarack, Voluntown, CT 6:30

11 - Phoenix, Pawcatuck, CT 8-11

17 - Shunock Brewery, N. Stonington, CT 5:30-8:30

19 - Smoke, Richmond, RI 8-11pm

25 - Yacht Club, Westerly, RI 7:30 - 10:30

26 - Woods Tavern, W. Greenwich, RI 7:30-10:30

NICK BOSSE

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11 - Phoenix, Pawcatuck, CT 8-11pm

25 - Yacht Club, Westerly, RI 7:30 - 10:30



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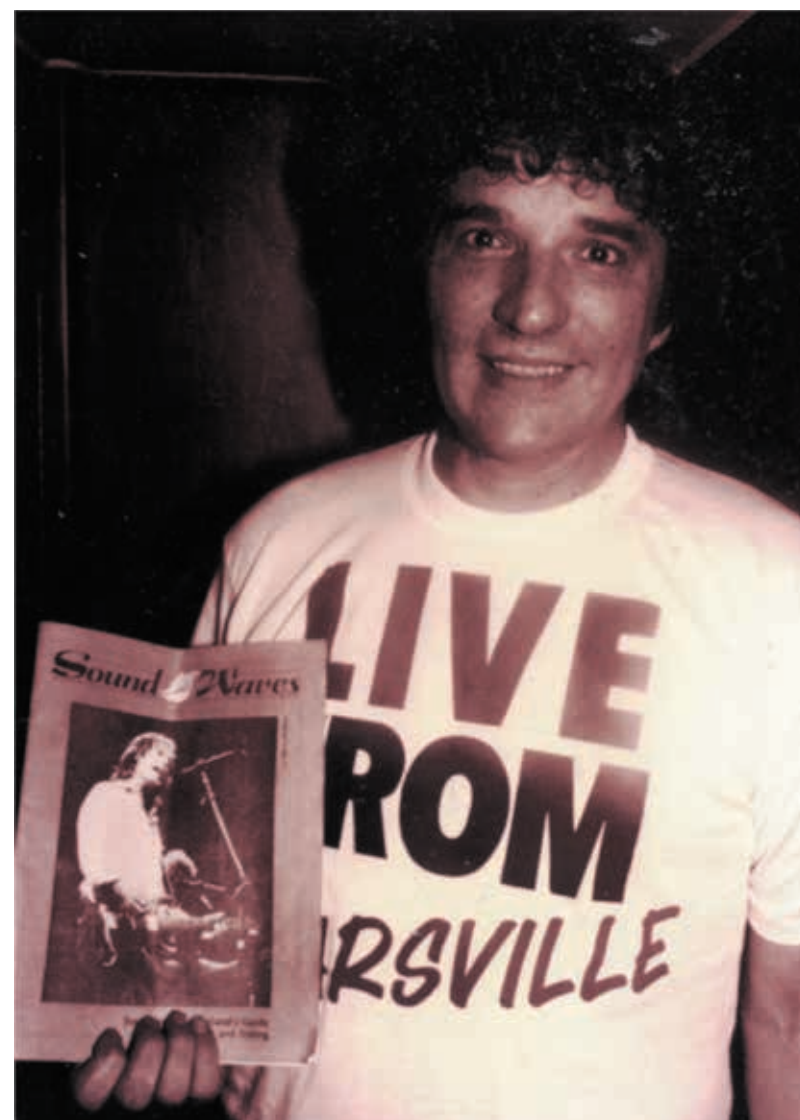
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CHRIS THOMAS KING

By Bill Harriman

Chris Thomas King is a Grammy winning musician who has appeared in Oscar winning movies. How many musicians can you say that about? Better still, how many blues musicians can you say that about? He played a bluesman in his two most famous roles portraying Tommy Johnson in the Coen Brothers wildly successful film “Oh Brother Where Art Thou?” and then being cast as Lowell Fulson in Taylor Hackford’s biopic “Ray,” where Jamie Foxx won the best actor Oscar for his star making turn as the great Ray Charles. In addition, Chris played the role of a detective in the 2008 film “Kill Switch” where he co-starred with Steven Seagal. He has also appeared in several documentaries including his own self-produced “Juke Joint: You Can Never Go Home Again.”

As a musician Chris has been perhaps the most interesting, talented, and controversial bluesmen of his generation. He’s an exceptional singer who also happens to be a great songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and producer. He was the first bluesman to fuse the blues with hip-hop damn near creating a new genre of music. He can be acoustic and he can be electric. He’s comfortable covering songs by singers as diverse as Adele and Bob Dylan. Watch a video of him from the early nineties singing “Kickin’ True Blue,” and then listen to him sing the Louis Armstrong classic “What a Wonderful World.” His range is amazing.

Before the pandemic hit, Chris was the musical accompanist in Ruben Santiago Hudson’s autobiographical play called “Lackawanna Blues.” The pair had a successful run in Los Angeles before booking dozens of shows in the northeast that, of course, had to be cancelled. The play, like everything else, will resume when the pandemic is over. Chris has also written a book that will be out next year called “The Blues: The Authentic Narrative of my Music and Culture.” If you want to get an inkling as to what this book is about, listen to his 2017 album called “Hotel Voodoo.” Side A is called the Baron Samedi Suite and side B is the Jelly Roll Suite. The record is a masterpiece in the different styles of New Orleans blues. Listen to “Les Bleus Was Born in Louisiana.” That about says it all. Or better yet, go to his website where you can read excerpts from the book.

This phone interview took place back on July 16th. At the time Chris had just finished yet another album that will be called “Angola.” The songs were inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement and the murder of George Floyd. The music is fierce and edgy. Chris doesn’t hold back on the message he want to

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get across. The end result is yet another brilliant piece of music by this extraordinary musician.

BH – On May 17th the blues world lost Lucky Peterson. He was a great friend to many of us here in Connecticut. Did you know him and would you like to say a few words about him?

CTK - “First of all it was very tragic that he passed away. He had so much life left ahead of him. So much music as well, and it was really unfortunate. I first met Lucky in Austin, Texas back when I was living there in the mid-eighties. He and I were working with Clifford Antoine at Antoine’s blues club. And Antoine’s was branching out doing his first record label, Antoine’s Records, and he was kind of grooming Lucky and me to be his first artists that he would work with. So I saw a lot of him at that time. He was hanging around; he has a nice B3 in the club. Clifford was the type of guy who would bring Hubert Sumlin or whoever his favorite musicians were, he just liked to keep them around. And even if they weren’t billed for gigs at the club, he would just put you up and want you to just come out and play, just jam and hang out. So Lucky was there sometimes for weeks at a time. And I was living there at the time. He was one of the most talented blues musicians that I’ve ever met. For one reason or another I think a lot of the promise that he had as a child prodigy, I think he leaves us wanting. Who knows what he has in his archives somewhere. You know how these things go, when you have someone so talented and so brilliant just because he’s passed away doesn’t mean that his music won’t be with us for a while.”

BH – Was your new record “Angola” written after the murder of George Floyd?

CTK - “The majority of the album was written just in the last couple of weeks.”

BH – I think the song “Drenched in our Blood” with the music being played over the spoken words of civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer (1917-1977) is especially powerful.

CTK - “Her spirit and the thing that she has to say, a lot of times when you think about Mississippi and the Mississippi delta blues and you talk about some of the bygone musicians like Son House or R.L. Burnside, they’re not the most articulate without the guitar, but she had that fiery spirit and she could articulate the pain, the soul, and the aspirations of the people in the delta. So really, I don’t feel like I wrote that song. It’s her voice, it’s her poetry and I just tried to compliment it with some music. We’re dealing right now with some copyrighting and putting everything together. And I just see that as a song that at the very least I co-wrote with her.”

BH – I’m sure “The Flag” will get a lot of attention. Your deconstructed version of the National Anthem will remind people of the famous Hendrix version. I love how it was played over the sound of people protesting.

CTK - “One thing about these songs is that I wasn’t trying to be pretty and I wasn’t striving for perfection. I wasn’t trying to be on audio file in producing it. I was trying to be as raw and edgy as the protests were. The performances I tried to keep it loose and didn’t try to overthink it. And I like that because, you’re right, Jimi Hendrix has the famous anthem tune and this one here has the protest under it or just woven into it. And I think that’s the definition of the blues because I see the blues as a subversive music and as a subversive art form and an enlightened art form. And with Colin Kaepernick, I was thinking about him. Even though he wasn’t disrespecting the flag, people had all this controversy about flags. And even the rebel flag being taken down in Mississippi, I thought I’d never live to see that happen. So the flag and what it means and all of that and with a little sample of Fannie’s voice in there saying ‘it’s drenched with our blood.’ It can’t be more poignant than that.”

BH – Of course there’s the song simply titled “George Floyd (say my name).” Your guitar riff seems to be in the same key as the protesters chanting his name.

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CTK - “That song is going to lead off the album when it’s sequenced. I didn’t see the protests on television because I don’t have cable in my home. So I mostly listened to the protests on social media especially the people on their cell phones who were filming while they were out there protesting. So I felt like I was a part of it. And with a few of the websites, a lot of the protestors had their films on running live. So that’s the way that I saw it. I don’t think I’ve seen Fox news for eight or nine years and I don’t have television to watch CNN. But I do listen to the news and I do listen to things. I kind of see with my ears. I think sometimes I see a little bit clearer with my ears and the way I heard the protests, I felt I wanted to be involved with it. If I was marching right out there with them, yeah I would have played that guitar while they were chanting ‘George Floyd’ and been riffing right along with them.”

BH – “Jena Louisiana” is another standout track. I know the song is fictional but you make a shoe reference in it. I’m assuming that is your way to bring attention back to the Jena six case? (In 2006 in Jena Louisiana, six black teenagers stood trial for an assault on a white teenager. One of them, Mychal Bell, was accused of aggravated second degree battery which by definition is assault with a deadly weapon. His weapon was a tennis shoe. Mychal was convicted by an all-white jury.)

CTK - “Jena Louisiana is about Mychal Bell. And Al Sharpton did come down. I know he’s a controversial figure but a lot of times he goes and does the work and goes to the prisons and you know, you got to call somebody. And there aren’t that many people that are going to come when you’re in that kind of position. So yeah, you’re right. That’s what that song is referencing. It’s absurd, they got riot gear on, they got military weapons, and he has tennis shoes.”

BH – What do you think about the popularity of books such as “White Fragility” by Robin D’Angelo, “How to be an Anti-Racist” by Ibram X. Kendi, “The New Jim Crow” by Michelle Alexander and several others like these?

CTK - “I was pessimistic in the beginning because I was thinking I’ve seen this before and I’ve read about it and know the history. Sometimes our white fellow citizens they’ll get involved but they only get involved for a weekend saying ‘I did my bid, my little charity and now I can sleep a little better about things.’ But this is on another level. I can’t recall anything like it. I mean again Mississippi took down the rebel flag! I know they took it down because one college football player from Mississippi State said he wasn’t going to play unless they bring that flag down and that should tell you something about college football here in the south and what kind of political power these kids have if they only knew how powerful they are. Because I can assure you that if these Black kids and their parents boycotted the football season until the president resigns, he would be out tonight. One football player tells them to bring it down or I’m not going to play, it was down within days. He could have told the governor, ‘I want you to leave the country’ and they would have put him on a boat and sent him on his way. They just don’t even understand how much power they have at these universities these college football players. But about those books, I’m familiar with ‘White Fragility’ but I haven’t read it and I’m familiar with Ibram X. I read his book and I’m re-reading ‘Stamped from the Beginning’ again. I am aware that a lot of these type of books, they can’t print them fast enough. And these people are being asked to come and speak like Robin D’Angelo, she is in such demand to speak at all these big corporations because this is not taught in our schools. There is no professor that they can pull aside even though people go to college and they graduate from Harvard University but they come out so ignorant or more indoctrinated about American history as opposed to really being understanding the reality and what’s real and what’s not. Sometimes people can’t figure out what’s real about our history or about the American story as opposed to what is mythology and fairy tales and outright lies. I’m well aware of that because

I had to do a deep dive and I've read so many books and come across so much information that changed my outlook and have changed the way that I see America and see my place in it."

BH – What's happening with your book? I understand that the new title is "The Blues: The Authentic Narrative of my Music and Culture."

CTK - "The book is complete except that it's going through its different stages of editing. Right now I've been working with the editor going back and forth doing a little bit of a revision. Like right now I just revised the introduction, taking some suggestions that she had said to me and I've got to get that back to her. And then it goes through a copy editor. It's like different layers but it's a finished manuscript. In music we would say it's in the mastering stages. As a matter of fact, today they sent me some book covers to choose from."

BH – When will it be out?

CTK - "I thought I would get it out in the first quarter of next year but they're trying to get it into their catalogue right now. So we're looking at the second quarter, but hopefully it will be out for the New Orleans jazz festival if they have it next year."

BH – Were you happy with the "Hotel Voodoo" CD?

CTK - "Oh yeah! I think I took longer to make that album than any I've ever made."

BH – Side A was the "Baron Samedi Suite" and Side B was the "Jelly Roll Suite." What side did you like better?

CTK - "I think side B a little bit more because it has the song 'Les Bleues was born in Louisiana,' which I think in time will become a very important refrain. Because the world doesn't realize that and that's what my book says. My book is going to be a very controversial book and it is going to challenge a lot of people. It's a book that could easily end my career really because sometimes when you speak the truth about a subject you step on a lot of powerful people because you have to tell the truth about how these people gain that power over this music genre and how they define it and how they define who are the heroes and heroines of that genre. Sometimes you have to call these people out. Sometimes you get a lot of backlash for that. But, now that we're in a new era it seems that people have had an awakening. I think people are ready for some enlightenment because they want to understand how we got here and what's going on. They really aren't learning this stuff in these classrooms. Like I said, I don't care if you go to Yale, Harvard, or Princeton. In my book I talk about how these colleges were formed. These schools were built by slave owners. And slave owners were the presidents of these schools for like seventy-five years. So they fol-

lowed the money. Before that it was the church that they got their money from, the church of England. When that money ran out after the American revolution, well who had all the money? Who were the Zuckerbergs of the 1800's? It was the slave owners to plan it. They had all the money. And so they built the schools and donated their land and these schools had to write all this crap about how great they were and honor them and put up these statues and all that foolish stuff. They go out to the Caribbean or they go out and do all this evil to their slaves and then they buy their way back into polite society with the blood money that they earned. And these institutions were built to bring them back to polite society and rewrite the narrative about how wonderful these people were and how they were great philanthropists and they built us a school of science and all this stuff. And what are they doing at that school of science at Harvard or wherever? You know what they're doing at that school of science? They're saying that African Americans are less human beings. It's pseudo-science. So that's kind of what we got from these institutions. So obviously when people are confused about George Floyd, about how Black people are at the bottom of every social or economic rung, whatever it is we're at the bottom of it. We suffer the most. For two reasons, either that science that they created in the 1800's, you know that these slave owners created through these institutions in the 1800's, either it's true that African Americans are not human beings or we're inferior in some way or it's all just propaganda and lies. It's institutional racism and white supremacy that has forced us into these ghettos or inner cities but now that they've gentrified it they don't call it the inner city or ghetto anymore. But whatever you want to call it, we're at the bottom. And we've had Syrians, Italians, Poles, Slavs, and Greeks come to America. Everybody who has come into America, migrated here, and made their way into the whiteness and made their way into first class citizens, even Hispanics. There's something called non-white Hispanics. I don't even know what that is. You've got Cubans and people who definitely aren't Anglo Saxon will come into American and eventually, if they play the game and uphold white supremacy, they're welcomed into the club. But African Americans have not been able to join that fraternity of whiteness. And let me just be clear to anybody who might read this, there is no such thing as a white race or a black race. I'm just using these words because I'm speaking English and I'm an American, this is how we talk. But the philosophy that we're following in the fictional ideology that we're following, this white supremacy, I'll be specific, it's an Anglo Saxon creation. So whether you're Italian, Greek, Slavic, Polish, or Jewish, or whatever you are you have to buy into that and if you don't buy into that then you're going to be ostracized. Or on the outside looking in. And the problem is too many people have bought into that. But I think with this George Floyd movement a lot of people, especially the younger generation, are wavering and saying wait a minute, this is not the world we want to live in. We can't continue in this way. Now I don't know which way they're going to go but right now just the fact that they're questioning where we are going as a country, and how we are going to deal with each other as a country, and so many white people are chanting in the streets 'Black Lives Matter,' that is so powerful! It triggered England. It triggered all through Europe and it caught fire all over the globe. I've never seen anything like it. I never thought I'd live to see anything like it. Of course I'm an artist and the best way that I can express protest, the best way that I know how to do it is with my guitar, my poetry, and my music. And I just want to give it a sound track or that emotional edge, musical melody, a beat or whatever. Give the drums or a second line to the movement. That's all I have to give and I am a lot more optimistic about the future today than I was when I first heard about George Floyd. I still haven't seen total video, the eight minutes and forty-three seconds, I've seen pieces of it but I haven't seen the whole thing. But I heard it's horrific."

BH – Tell me about the play "Lackawanna Blues" and how you hooked

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up with Ruben Santiago-Hudson and how you got the part.

CKT - "We can go into great detail about that but I don't know how many words you're able to use in your article. But I can tell you this, we had such a successful run in Los Angeles all last year and we were booked to be in Boston this year like tonight, I would have been on stage doing the play. But now, we're negotiating with a theater to bring us into Broadway either in January or starting in March. Not off Broadway, we're actually going to be on Broadway which is something that Rueben has done before. He's worked on Broadway, he's done a lot of things but this is his personal story and it means a lot to him. And for me to accompany him to Broadway and bring this play to Broadway which very few African American plays get there, it's something I'm really looking forward to. So hopefully Broadway will be open again early next year so we can do this. That's why we have two tentative holds. One in January and the second in March."

BH - Two years ago I finally got to see New Orleans. I met the great jazz clarinetist Dr. Michael White. His band played at a function I attended. We talked and your name came up in conversation. I gave him your phone number. I must say I was really excited to see that the two of you are working together.

CTK - "He told me that and he also said that he was on a plane with Rueben and they talked about me there. So there were a lot of things pushing him to get me that phone call. He came over to the house and we did some jamming and recording. I need to pull it out and see if any of it is good enough to release. But we were just talking about the blues and talking about how the clarinet was one of the great lead instruments in the blues. That's one of the things about the Jellyroll Suite where instead of the harmonica I wanted to reintroduce the clarinet and it threw a lot of people off because they think the clarinet is not a blues instrument. But it's one of the great blues instruments because there are three octaves and it can compete with a guitar as far as the range it can express. It's not that far from a clari-

net to a soprano, like a John Coltrane is a soprano in 'My Favorite Things.' Plus, that instrument is a great African instrument. It's one of the oldest African instruments that there is, the clarinet. And that's another thing about people being miseducated about the blues, thinking that the blues came from Mississippi. But the blues never came from Mississippi and of course this is a big part of my book. There were no Black people in the Mississippi delta to create any blues. There were never any Black slaves down in what we call the Mississippi delta where the blues supposedly came from. It was just a wilderness with just trees, bears, and panthers that lived in what we call the Mississippi delta until the early 1900's. Really until Stovall in 1895 bought that plantation. But it wasn't a plantation he bought, it was a wilderness. It took him several years to clear that wilderness. I've been to the house and I've met the Stovall family and it took him years to clear that forestry and fell that timber. Then he had to go out to Alabama and around the southern part of Mississippi, below Jackson, and recruit Black people to come up to the delta and work on his plantation. He had to go find people with pamphlets and flyers to try to get them up there. So this idea that Black people were in the Mississippi delta, and we were slaves, and we were working on plantations, that's just a fairy tale. It never happened. So we don't have to say what kind of blues they were playing on the Mississippi delta because nobody was there. And that brings us to New Orleans. Then you say what were they doing in New Orleans? Well they were playing the blues in New Orleans in 1895 and all through those years. We talked about the first song that was recorded, Mamie Smith (1891-1946) 'Crazy Blues.' When the song writers produced that song in 1920, she became the first female to sing the blues. Well I break that down too because Perry Bradford (1893-1970), who wrote that song, and produced that session that came out in 1920, he had an act with Jelly Roll Morton (1890 -1941). They used to go around and they had an act together. Not only that, he was in New Orleans around 1906 or 1908. He was listening to

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the blues in New Orleans. So this man spent time in New Orleans and got a feel for that music and then him and Jellyroll Morton had an act in Chicago together. So he was involved with Louisiana music way before he got a chance to make that recording in 1920. So when we hear the blues played with the so-called jazz hounds and all that kind of stuff, well what we have to understand is that the trumpet and the clarinet are African instruments and two of the oldest instruments in the world. The oldest trumpet we know comes out of Egypt. Two trumpets, the B Flat and the one if the key of C, they blend together. These are African instruments but the blues wasn't made in Africa. My book says that the blues is not an African creation. The ingredients come from Africa, the instruments. The guitar originated in Africa and then made it to Spain and then made it to Congo Square. So I researched all this stuff. It's like gumbo. The okra comes from Africa but gumbo is a Creole invention that African women created here in Louisiana. It's something that they created with those ingredients. Rice came from Africa and okra came from Africa but then they mix their gumbo with crabs and shrimp and things they found in the gulf and the rivers here. And they use that French rue sauce and they created something that wasn't an African creation even though they did it with African ingredients. It's the same thing with the blues. These instruments, the clarinet, the trumpet, the guitar, these things are African. But then in Louisiana, the Black Creoles created a whole new kind of musical philosophy that hadn't existed nowhere else in the world. I get arguments sometimes from black professors who get angry with me for saying that the blues is not an African creation and didn't come from Mississippi. They equate the blues with picking cotton and things like that. We were in Los Angeles and I had a little talk about the play Lackawanna Blues and about the music. And there was this older black gentleman that showed up with his family. He was very proud to be there. And so when we got to the Q&A he got up and was angry with me saying how dare you come here and tell these people the blues didn't come from Mississippi. I picked cotton he said. He went on and on and was really angry with me. But I respectfully had to tell him that picking cotton didn't have anything to do with music. Because if it did I'm sure these conservatories at Berkeley, they'd have a cotton field back there at Berkeley or the New York Philharmonic would probably have a cotton field for the musicians to go pick cotton. I mean where does picking cotton and picking a guitar or singing, it doesn't even equate with each other. Yet these folklorists like John Lomax and all these people somehow you're more authentic or you're a better guitar player if in your background you had picked cotton as opposed to Lonnie Johnson (1899 – 1970) who didn't pick cotton. So Lonnie Johnson got dispossessed from his natural place as one of the great early blues guitarists even though everybody sounds like Lonnie Johnson today. But who does he sound like? Nobody! Who came before him that he learned from? Nobody! What he did was transpose what he heard in New Orleans from the piano players and other people and transpose that to the guitar and that's it. There was nobody before Lonnie Johnson. He laid the ground work for the people in the Mississippi delta. Once they heard those phonograph records, five or six years after that man started recording, he recorded a hundred songs before 1928 when the first delta people started making records. The delta people didn't know nothing about this music at all. They learned it from phonograph records that they bought at the Stovall commissary store. That's where Charley Patton (1891- 1934) heard the music. That's where all the delta pickers, they'll tell you, they heard it on records. And I'll say this, the folk people are like me. I

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learned music from my father. They say that's authentic when folk music is passed down by the oral tradition. Not from records or books in a learned type of way. But the delta musicians all learned from the phonograph records. Charley Patton learned from records he heard of Lonnie Johnson and some of his earliest songs. He copied some of Lonnie Johnson's lyrics. So did Robert Johnson (1911-1938). So did everybody. But more than that, the great man himself BB King was the greatest record collector I have ever heard of. BB King donated 30,000 records to the University of Mississippi. I mean talk about a record collector! Is he a folk musician or not? That man had thirty thousand fucking records! I mean good lord! But he's an authentic folk musician and Lonnie Johnson probably didn't even listen to his own records. Lonnie Johnson didn't learn from records, Lonnie Johnson learned on the streets of New Orleans playing with his father. There was no music school conservatory or anything like that. Lonnie Johnson was doing that twenty years before Robert Johnson picked up the guitar and fifteen years before Charley Patton. So as far as the guitar goes, there's nobody that comes before Lonnie Johnson but before Lonnie Johnson it was the trumpet players and the piano players and he transposed what they were doing to the guitar. I play like Lonnie Johnson, Eric Clapton plays like Lonnie Johnson, everybody plays like him. When you listen to it now it doesn't sound remarkable. Why? Because you've heard it a million times. But you've got to put it in context, when he first did it there was nobody that sounded like that. He is that standard."

This interview could have lasted another hour. There's just so much to talk about with Chris. He has generously made some of the new songs that will make up the "Angola" record available to listen to on his Facebook page. However, the finished product should be available within the next several weeks. Hopefully this pandemic ends and ends soon. It will be nice to see Chris again in 2021 in concert, on Broadway, and at a book signing.



HEARING AID



The Riverdogs "Passages"

Good Sponge Music

The Southeastern Connecticut Roots Rock / Folk / Americana almighty Riverdogs proudly present their seventh studio release in "Passages" on the Good Sponge Music record label, and we're the better for it. To have the guts, determination and persistence to release new music during a global pandemic is such an admirable feat I can't even find the words to express enough admiration. I gave it a listen, extremely grateful for the opportunity to get off my couch and out of the kitchen. It moved me in many ways. I highly recommend everyone check it out as it's chockful of reflection, The Riverdogs' infamous social commentary, melodious harmonies, expert musicianship and powerhouse songwriting. The song titles alone will pique your interest immediately.

Husband and wife team Ben Parent (songwriter on nine of the songs, lead guitarist, lead vocalist and harmonica) and Nancy Parent (acoustic guitarist and lead vocalist) lead the band with support from: Bil Groth on piano, organ, and Wurlitzer; Chris Debiase on drums; Mark Gehret on electric/upright bass; with special guests - Joseph "Butch" Rovon on tenor sax; and Carl Franklin on Resonator slide guitar. "Passages" was recorded at PWOP Studios in New London, Connecticut in 2019 with mixing and final production done remotely throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 by Franklin and the Parents.

The instrumentation of the opening track "Tropical Depression" is majestic.

tic and hopeful, while the lyrics are to the contrary in this harmonious cinematic gem. "Go Down Now, Mama" has some country licks and shuffle and some rockin' boogie piano. A dance number for sure if we ever get to see this live. Nancy takes over lead vocals on "Let Me Out Lord" with a bluesy, passionate and strong delivery. "Long Way Down" is radio-ready and catchy. "Breakfast in Bed" has an old-time classic country feel-good feel. The politico for New Englanders "Yankee Rant" features some sweet sax from Rovon with lyrics spot-on relatable for those of us 'round here. "Walk Another Mile" is a luscious love song the Parents sing to one another with some of the most superb resonator guitar I have ever heard, courtesy of Carl Franklin.

The title track "Passages" is an instant Riverdogs classic with signature guitar licks, bounteous organ, lively and spacious vocals from Nancy, exquisite production and my fav: wah-wah! The final original "One for All" is an upbeat social commentary offering the notion: "each of us just dyin' to go on livin'." The final track is a Neil Young cover of "On The Beach" featuring some brilliantly nasty electric guitar and an absolutely beautiful vocal rendition from Nancy. The lyrics of this song from 1974 are just as relevant today as they were then. Just a genius addition to the album, which can be accessed at the links below.

Links:

Web Site: www.theriverdogs.com

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/theriverdogs

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/theriverdogs

Band Camp:

<https://theriverdogs.bandcamp.com>

Pandora:

<https://www.pandora.com/artist/theriverdogs/passages/ALKqKwtqkhjt2Z>

Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/album/2l0Mrs4s7GjzLToer5wFIW>

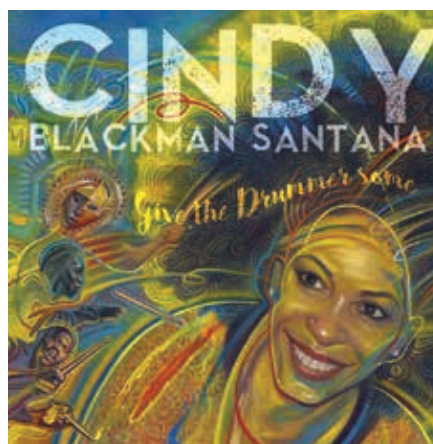
YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_kzltb8U-WqUhSwnpMuwqLsAVwa7KEK-jjM

iTunes:

<https://music.apple.com/us/album/passages/1528304089>

- Sue Menhart



Cindy Blackman Santana

"Give The

Drummer Some"

CMG Music Group

Cindy Blackman Santana is a drummer with flair, flash, and precision, something we can know without ever hearing her play: because, for the past ten years, she has been the drummer in her now husband Carlos Santana's band, where such qualities are an assumed prerequisite. But, she was an accomplished drummer long before the show in 2010 when she filled in at drums, setting off a musical affair that blossomed into marriage on and off the stage. At the same time, Cindy has continued with her own music, leading to the current release of a new album, appropriately titled Give The Drummer Some.

The album opens with a rendition of John Lennon's Imagine, which in a perfect role reversal features Carlos Santana on guitar, Cindy Blackman Santana providing vocals and, of course, drums, in an acid rock version of the iconic song, blending into a gospel-infused closing over the riffs of one of rock's premiere guitarists. The level of creativity and unique interpretation is inspired. Track two features the blazing guitar of John McLaughlin, the blues fusion legend sounding like Charlie Parker on electric guitar with distortion, Cindy's drums driving the machine. Carlos Santana returns on Everybody's Dancing, a

'70's disco song with easy rhythm under some fabulous guitar work. Velocity shows off the jazz/rock drumming chops of the album's star, in what could have been an extended drum solo but is instead a pleasant interaction with a light jazz keyboard piece.

Cindy Blackman Santana plays drums

with an intense joy, captured in photos and video in her totally engaged smile as she works her art. This is a lesson, of course, in living one's passion while fulfilling the moments of a life. This album carries that intensity through seventeen tracks, with further flourishes of guitar by Santana and McLaughlin, Cindy's vocals, and guest rappers addressing issues of our times. There's even a bit of heavy metal on Evolution Revolution.

This is clearly an exceptional album by masters of the art and craft, deserving of a listen and place in any collection. More info may be found at www.cindyblackmansantana.com.

- Jon Persson



Veronica Lewis

"You Aint Unlucky"

Moonwink Music

In this review we have an artist making her way to her first debut album. The management branch of "Moonwink Music" who represents Veronica Lewis reached out to David, our publisher and said they have a up and coming artist that would be a perfect fit for Sound Waves Magazine.

The next thing I know there is a note in my in-box from Dave saying "Adrian, check out this artist, you will be amazed". My regular readers already know I listen to new music all the time but when I heard Veronica Lewis latest single "You Aint Unlucky" it immediately transformed me to New Orleans on a lively Saturday night where you would find street musicians playing, people dancing, and everyone forgetting their troubles and letting the good times roll. As the Cajun say; "Les Se Bon Ton Roulet"!!

The music is best described as boogie woogie, rag time, and blues all rolled into one with Veronica Lewis's vocals taking center stage. She has the perfect what I call a crying type blues style vocalist that is ideal for this genre, What is

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equally amazing is the full sound Lewis gets from only a 3 piece band consisting of Drums, Sax, and Lewis on keys and vocals. This song has a cool story too, Veronica wrote it in memory of Dr. John and performed it for the first time with Marcia Ball at Rhythm & Roots Festival 2019 with an overwhelmingly positive reaction from the crowd.

If you feel this review is on the light side, it's because Moonwink Music teased us with only one single of Lewis to review but we have been promised a first "listen" when Veronica Lewis comes out with her full length CD later this fall. Until then I give "You Aint Unlucky" a strong buy and can be found on iTunes, Spotify, Sound Cloud, Pandora, and Google Play. Until next issue

- Adrian Webb



Turkuaz

"None's A Ton"

Electric Habitat Music, Inc

Turkuaz is well known in the jam / funk scene for their high energy performances and top-shelf talent. A nine-piece band from Brooklyn, they exhibit enormous creativity and energy. They certainly fill up the stage with their punchy horn section, cadre of singers and long list of talented players.

Their recently released full-length live concert movie and soundtrack "None's A Ton" is a two set powerhouse. They explore the full range of their vibrant catalog from early songs like "Chatte Lunatique" and "Monkey Fingers" to more recent numbers like "Life In The City" and "The One and Lonely". Turkuaz never lets off the gas pedal from the moment the show starts and they continue pumping out the jams for over an hour and a half.

It's hard to pick highlights on an album so jam packed with great performances. Taylor Shell on bass lays down some extremely funky hooks, rocking the envelope filter and pushing the

groove. Michelangelo Carruba is one of the tightest drummers around and drives the kit hard, keeping a steady beat while constantly switching up the hits. Guitarists Craig Brodhead and Dave Brandwein take the songs up a notch with punchy rhythm and massive leads that take soloing to new heights.

Floating on top of the groove are the smooth and powerful vocals of Shira Elias and Sammi Garrett who bring a strong R&B and soul vibe to the performance. They're joined by Brandwein and others at times to bring a massive vocal presence to overlay the already thick sound and transform it into something massive. Add to that the tasteful horn section featuring two saxes and a trumpet and you've got one of the fat-test sounds around.

One of my favorites on this album is "Typa-Lika" which features some super noodley guitar work and drums that sound like the grand finale of a fireworks display. Another great track is an old favorite "Bubba Slide" which has catchy vocal hooks and some nice harmonies. It's hard to pick favorites when this whole concert is so solid from front to back.

I highly recommend checking out "None's A Ton" either on video where you can see their high color costuming and mesmerizing stage presence or by listening to this soundtrack. Turkuaz has amazing talent and this album will lift your spirits for a long time to come.

- Tom Matthew
Two Ton Music



A Band Called Sam

"Legacy"

Highlander Records

Dear Readers, for those of you who are familiar with my work it's very rare that I "gush" about a musician or band so here's a spoiler alert... I really really like "A Band Called Sam". This is a tribute band of sorts to the legend-

ary blues performer Sam "The Bluzman" Taylor. His accomplishments span from performing with Joey Dee and The Starlighters, songwriting for Maxine Brown and B.T. Express, to being musical director for performers like Otis Redding, The Isley Brothers, and The Drifters. Truly an amazing, multi-talented artist.

BUT WAIT !! This isn't your typical tribute fan-band that plays like the target artist note for note. No, these are seasoned, and highly respected musicians in their own right that take the music of Sam Taylor and add their own musical arrangement and playing style to enhance the blues texture of Sam's work. Most of the band were actual members of the original Sam Taylor Band and played with him for years such as Sam's daughter Sandra Taylor, a recording singer in her own right. She share's lead vocals with Angela Canini and Maxine Brown. Sam's grandson Lawrence "LAW" Worrell, singer and guitarist, has traveled the world with Sam, and has also been on tour with Amy Winehouse. Gary Grob, bassist, has also played and traveled with Sam. Mario Staino, drummer, plays across the globe with Savoy Brown as well as being a drummer for other artists. Gary Sellars, Sam's protégé, plays guitar and sings. He has his own band that plays across Long Island and New York City. Danny Kean, keyboardist and vocalist, has played with Stevie Cochran, and Richie Cannata on Tenor Sax who is also a music producer, a multi-instrumentalist, and owns Cove City Sound Studios in Glen Cove, NY where this CD was recorded. He is most notable for playing Sax for Billy Joel for years before opening Cove City Sound Studios. OK, Lets get to the music.

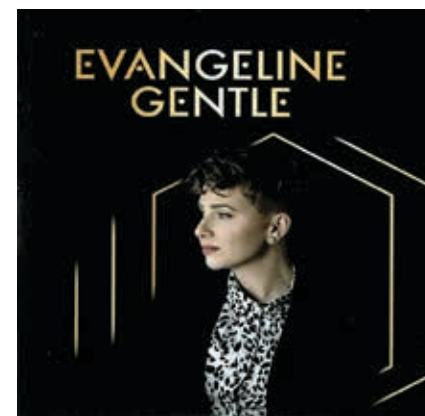
From the first track "Voice of the Blues" you immediately hear the overall quality of the recording. Nice to hear sound engineers that know what they're doing. The most amazing is the horn section that consists of Richie Cannata playing Tenor Sax with Danny Kean who is actually filling in the other horns via synth. What does that mean? Cannata is the only one with a horn. Kean is filling in the other horns via a midi keyboard. From what I understand Kean did the horn arrangements and anyone who has read my reviews knows that I hold a special respect for music arrangers. They have to arrange each musician within the context of the music to get the right sound. I hear myself getting too technical here so lets get to my next favorite, track 4 "Mother Blues" is

what I like to call a slow, comfortable bump & grind blues rendition. Picture a small, smokey blues club and sipping on Kentucky Bourbon and just taking it all in. That's where "Mother Blues" puts you, and not a bad place to be.

Tracks 5 "Hole in your Soul" and 7 "Nothing in the Street" have amazing horns and by the way the horns on track 7 is all Danny Kean on synth. You go it, no actual horns playing at all – just a midi-keyboard. Amazing! Next is track is 6 "Devil in our Eyes". I dare you to try and sit still. I can picture the band playing at NYC Blue Note and driving the staff crazy because the patrons are all dancing in the isles. Track 8 is a 50's style ballad with co lead vocals Sandra Taylor and Maxine Brown, and Richie Cannata on Tenor Sax. It brought me back to "Mel's Diner" on Happy Days. I really enjoyed it. Finally track 8 "Stinger" spotlights the talents of Lawrence "LAW" Worrell, who takes center stage with lead guitar, and lead vocals on this more funk than blues rendition. Rhythm guitarist Gary Sellers and Bassist Gary Grob do a great job of assisting drummer Mario Staino with the overall feel of this song. A Band Called Sam, "Legacy" CD can be found at highlanderrecords.com/shop for \$15.00. I give this CD a Strong Buy rating. Money well spent. You won't be disappointed.

Until next issue

- Adrian Webb



Evangeline Gentle

"Evangeline Gentle"

Sonic Unyon Records

My publicists friends at Sacks & Co asked me to give a listen to one of their rising stars Evangeline Gentle, a Scottish born Canadian singer/songwriter who has been working on her self-titled debut album since age 19. Gentle is signed with Sonic Unyon Records and her album is produced by Jim Bryson,

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who also plays guitar, bass, piano and synth in the band. Other members in her band include Pascal Delaquis on percussion, Carleigh Aikins background vocals, and Mathew Greco playing percussion on track four.

Right from her first note I hear a pitch perfect, angelic voice with touches of vibrato that is very reminiscent of Joan Baez from the Woodstock days and it carries throughout the album. The first track "Drop My Name" has got an edgy indie style that grabs you with its echo and reverb making it sound like the artist is performing live in a grand hall whereas the second track "Ordinary People" is going in another direction. More close and personal with a traditional folksy feel. As mentioned earlier I see Evangeline as a modern day Joan Baez and any Baez fans out there would immediately go crazy for this album. When I listened to "Even If" it transported me to a quiet Tiki bar on a breezy beach at sunset with a Pina Colada taking it all in. Very relaxing with a touch of fun. In track 5 "So It Goes," Jim Bryson starts off with his talented guitar playing but is quickly followed by Gentle's melodic, vibrato voice taking the spotlight as usual. I would have liked to hear more of Bryson's guitar playing because by track 5 you have a pretty good idea how the rest of the CD is going to sound. Gentle's voice is amazing but a one trick pony. Maybe too much of a good thing is not a good thing? When the inflections in a voice become predictable that's when its time to realize it's time for change.

Without a doubt Gentle's voice is amazing and what is also amazing that she wrote all her own music but what is lacking are the different textures that create interest. Maybe from time to time share the spotlight and let the other musicians in her band play a more leading role. Her next track "The Strongest People Have Tender Hearts" is a perfect example that lends itself to Gentle singing a duet with another artist – not backup vocals, I am talking a duet and fully sharing the spotlight with another artist. This was a definite missed opportunity. In my mind I can hear Jim Bryson playing blues guitar in sections of this song as well as another vocalist sharing the lead. That's what I find lacking in most of the album, missed opportunities. There is no doubt in my mind that other vocal artists would love to work with Gentle once they hear the quality and purity of her voice. I think that "The Strongest People Have Tender Hearts," my favorite track on this

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CD has the potential to become great with the right revisions. Other tracks that deserve mention are "Long Time Love", and "Good And Guided". Evangeline Gentle can be found on Amazon, and Sonicunyon.limitedrun.com
Until next issue

- Adrian Webb



Bette Smith

"The Good The Bad And The Bette"

Ruf Records

Bette Smith's journey through life has brought her to a place of inner strength wrought from inner pain, her childhood in Brooklyn's Bedford Stuyvesant touched by abandonment amid the harshness of a rough neighborhood. Yet she has also been moulded by the gospel music of her church and the soul music of the street, which has given her a voice to express and address the hard past and bright present she has created for herself. Along the way she has brought into her realm musicians whose own fire and skill provides backgrounds of intense, driving rhythms or subtle, supportive sounds to accent Bette's wide ranging voice.

Her musical objective for this album was to create a southern, soulful, gospel, rock sound, to match her rock and soul singer persona. This naturally suggests some Detroit influence as well, where the migration from the south met a city with many edges. Bette Smith opens her new album with Fistful Of Dollars, an energized, funk-style number which showcases the musicianship of her band behind her vocals, which measure well with a Tina Turner number. Whistle Stop is a slow, last good-bye to her mother, with whom a reconciliation occurred in time for a farewell before her passing: the song is soulful, sustained, and nicely crafted.

Bette Smith's voice is full, powerful, yet agile, able to express the pains of regret or the exultations of triumph with a

change of intonation that demonstrates a mastery of her art. This holds up well through an album that celebrates a life that has attained a place of self-awareness and peace, while recounting the path that has led to this place. And yet one of the poignant lessons of her life, recounted in the song Human, is of the trust and vulnerability needed for stable relationships, taught by her most faithful of friends, the dog to whom she sings "when your heart is in pain, I wanna be your human." Of her concert audiences, Bette notes, she is "singing to their inner child," connecting to the past and power of people who can relate to her path through life.

Bette Smith has produced an album, with the backing of friends of impressive musical talent, which any fan of rock, soul, and good songs will be happy to give a listen to. More info may be found at www.bettesmith.com.

- Jon Persson



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COOKING WITH THE BLUES

By Jack Chaplin

Fall is in the air, whew, it's been what I would call a sweltering summer except that it's been a cool summer in another sense. Cool because I haven't spent a day sweltering in a 100 degree plus restaurant kitchen. It's the first year in a very long while that I haven't had to slave over a hot stove during the dog days of summer. Personally, this hiatus has been a blessing allowing me to focus on living life instead of business. Career-wise it has been a challenge, to say the least. At Daddy Jack's, we are reinventing our game plan by the day. We had been doing some take out business and now have reopened the bar with inside dining and some outside tables on our front porch. We put plexiglass on the bar (courtesy of Camara Signs in Norwich), who made it all very easy for us; thank you for that. I had signs made for my Daddy Jack's in Bozrah back in 2001 from Camaro, so COVID has brought us full circle. I have taken a reduced role at the restaurant, and I am trying to ease into retirement. People ask me what I plan to do, and I am often asked, won't I get bored? I'll let you know, but I don't think boredom will be a factor. I know I'm old when sitting on the front porch watching nature, and the world goes by is almost enough. I have been working 60 hour plus weeks my whole life, so I think I deserve to hang up my apron and only pick it up when I feel like it. During these times, we are forced to adapt and alter our daily routines. Life is not as it was, but hopefully, we can all find the silver lining in the clouds soon!

I took a trip over to my old stomping grounds, Manchester, today. I had to pick up some Daddy Jack's Blackening Seasoning that I am marketing, a plan that has been in the works for some time. Funny enough, I'm from Vernon, and I



found a company, The Spice Mill, that custom blends and spices and ships them all over the country, the next town over. That and my cousin use to live a few blocks away, and I would visit him often when I first moved back to C.T. I plan to sell the seasoning on Patreon and market on my YouTube channels, Facebook, and maybe I can talk Fiddleheads into stocking them? Being in Manchester, I had to swing by Shady Glenn on my way out, an old school dairy bar that I have been going to since I was five years old. Shady has been open for about 80 years and usually is elbow to elbow packed. Today the counter only sat five or so with every two stools blocked off, and almost every other table was closed off, not sure how the numbers work with all this. Shady Glenn is known for its crispy cheeseburgers and homemade ice cream and the Cheese Furtter, which my Mom would always order. I always get a cup of their Minestrone, a jacked-up Campbell's Vegetable Beef, but it is so tasty, and it's a ritual. Then it's a Bernise Platter (named after the founder), a Big Crispy Cheeseburger, Crinkle Cut Fries, and their

famous Cole Slaw. The waitress I remember from many years ago, and she remembered me and was asking about my girls. I asked her how long she had worked there, and she said 21 years, she had started there when she was 17! When I lived in Texas back in the 90's we would come back for the 4th of July as often as possible, and Shady Glenn was always the first stop, and we'd make many more stops during our stay, many nights just for ice cream. They use to serve the condiments in a carrier that you could spoon on yourself; catsup, mustard, chopped onion, and relish. Nowadays, they have packets that you have to open and squeeze out. I had to strain to open up ketchup and only got out an ounce or so, ridiculous! Life is not the same. When I would go there, I would look around at all the older folks that had been coming there for years, and now I'm one of them! Our times have drastically changed, but there is something very comforting to go back to Shady Glenn, and the food, the look, and the service are

just the same as 56 years ago!

An Excerpt From My Memoir, "Cooking With The Blues"

Dallas, Texas

I hit Dallas on an early Sunday morning around 5:00 am. Driving through downtown was like a ghost town. No one on the insight, you could have shot a cannon down the main street. I had driven all night and was exhausted and thought it was too early to head over to the Fairmont Hotel. I drove around and ended up around the Knox/Henderson exit off of Rt. 75, the main North-South artery. We couldn't find a motel and asked a cop where was the cheapest one in the area to rest for a few hours. He directed us over to Harry Hines Blvd. and said we should get a cheap room. We did find a cheap, alright. The area was sketchy, and we later found out it was a high crime area known for drugs and prostitution, the seedy side of town. We settled down for a few hours of much-needed rest. I soon found myself getting bit by something and itching like a mad

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man, my first introduction to bed bugs. We were out of there quickly after getting our \$25.00 back and decided to head for the Fairmont. They were expecting us, and we went up to our room where there was a huge fruit basket, and all kinds of goodies left for our warm welcome. Later on in the morning, I headed down to the main kitchen to meet up with chef Klaus for my orientation. He laughed when I told him about our experience with the fleabag motel. I don't think Klaus had a firm position for me right away, so he would send me to different outlets to get me acquainted with the layout. In the first few weeks, he put me down in the Pyramid Room, the 5 Star French Restaurant, which served some of the finest cuisine in the city at the time. Remy was the Chef, a real nice mild-mannered man who was super organized and neat. Everything had to be in its place in the coolers and the kitchen. If something were left dirty or not where it belonged, Remy would freak out, possibly a little OCD. The Pyramid was real fancy; we had mini ice swans that we served sorbet to clean the palate before the main course. We had a dessert soufflé station where we made these incredible desserts that had to be prepared for exactness. We did chocolate, a grand marnier, a hazelnut, an apricot, and one that was half and half called an Arlequine. There was no room for error, and we had to prepare them for 20 min. in advance and time them to go out. It was a matter of minutes before the soufflé would fall, so it had to go from the oven straight to the table. They sent out all the food for the famous Venetian Room out of the same kitchen, a showroom that had top-notch music and great food. All the greats played there, B.B. King, Lou Rawls, Ella Fitzgerald, to name a few. There I met David Leeks, who would become my first great friend in Dallas and from who I would learn so much from about Soul Food and Louisiana cooking. David treated me real nice from day one; the rest of the crew kind of had their nose up in the air. I think they thought I was a spy sent down by www.Swaves.com

Klaus; they knew that he had brought me from Atlanta and maybe didn't trust me. While helping Dave one night, he asked me to cook the Yorkshire Pudding. He had made the batter and instructed me to put a tablespoon of drippings from the prime rib into each muffin tin, get it hot in the oven, and pour a ladle full of batter into each hole. While it was preheating the oven, I got called up to the main kitchen and forgot about it. When I came back down, I opened the oven, and the molten beef drippings exploded into flames! Dave was cool and handled the situation, but I felt like an idiot, one of my first days at the Fairmont!

After a few weeks, Klaus moved me up to the main kitchen and gave me the title of Banquet Chef. We were a convention hotel and had huge ballrooms. The International Room sat 2200, the Regency sat 1200, and many others sat 200, 100, 50. When we had a big convention like Mary Kay or the Automobile Dealers in town, every seat in the rooms were taken. Little did I know what I was in for! During these big

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conventions, we would work two weeks straight. I had one day off a week, and during busy weeks we would work 13 days straight, 6 am to midnight. I wouldn't see daylight unless I caught a glimpse out of a dining room window. It was grueling and stressful work; I call it my culinary Vietnam, something I could only go through once. Toward the end of my stint at the Fairmont, we did a party for Dr. Pepper's 75th Anniversary. It was for 3700 people, and they set it up on a level of the Dallas Convention Center parking garage. They put in temporary walls, floors, ceilings, lighting, and air conditioning, quite a feat in itself. The appetizer was a whole Maine lobster out of the shell served cold, that took over a week to prepare. We'd cook 400 lobsters a day. We put the shelled claws and the sliced tails on sheet trays, wrap them tightly, and into the freezer. The main course was petite filets of Veal and Beef, Spaghetti Squash w/ Peppers, and Almond-Crusted Potatoes. The day before the party, I went in at 6 am and worked till 11 pm. Klaus had quit the Fairmont right before the party, and they brought in Jean Luci Albin, who had been the Chef in the New Orleans Fairmont. He was the youngest Chef in the chain and a real hot-shot. He had a fancy dinner sent up to the office from the Pyramid Room with wine and all. We had dessert and brandy after. I got up to say good night, said I'll see you all in the morning, and Chef says to hold on. "Let's load the trucks and go plate the appetizer course," Are you kidding? We start plating about 2 am loading the finished plates on what we called Queen Mary's and then loaded them onto a refrigerated truck by a forklift. Then it was upstairs to the main kitchen to work on the rest of the meal. About 10 am. I was browning the filets and listening to the Mexican guys that had just come in from a full night's rest; they were always busting chops! I was hitting the wall; I shut my grill down and took a break. The Convention Center's employee dining room was closed, and I went there where it was dark and quiet. It was

20 SOUND WAVES

thundering and lightening out, a real nasty day outside. I took off my apron, rolled it up with a few kitchen towels, and crawled under a table to take a quick nap. By this point, I had been working for 28 hours. I fell into a deep sleep and woke up not knowing where I was. It was eerily quiet, and I panicked; I thought I had slept through the event! I walked into the kitchen, 15 minutes had passed! I was fully charged up, my body was rested, and my mind was clear to continue. Everyone was drinking Mimosas, and maybe they were doing some other energy boosters, but I passed. Everything went off without a hitch, and at 11 pm, the Chef told me to go back to the hotel and finish up poaching 1300 eggs for the Geraldine Ferraro breakfast the next morning. My assistant, Billy McNeil, and I finished up around 1 am after a total of 43 hours straight. I went to bed and had to wake up at 5 am but slept right through my alarm. Chef called at 6 am saying, "Good Morning, Jack, the coffee is ready; we're just waiting for you." I wanted to quit right then but dragged my ass out of bed and soldiered on. I remember the breakfast was a Poached Egg on Corned Beef Hash w/ Salsa, Sausage Links, and Fried Potatoes. When I was finished that day, I knew my days were numbered, and it was time to get out of the hotel business. I had planned to take two weeks off to get married up in C.T., and I was really looking forward to the break. I could have had most of the expenses for the wedding paid if I had it at the hotel, but much of my family wouldn't have made it. We drove up in my brand new Mazda B200 pick up truck and had our wedding, and the two weeks went by in a blur. We spent a few days in New Orleans and had a few nights at the Fairmont carte blanc. It was over Thanksgiving, and we took a riverboat cruise on The Natchez. They had a deal, a buffet, Dixieland jazz band, hurricanes, mimosas, and other drinks for \$25. I thought the cruise and drinks were worth that and wasn't expecting much, but that food was off the hook. All catered by the Gumbo Kitchen, they layed

out an unbelievable spread. While in New Orleans, we had to have the Beignets and Chicory Coffee at Cafe Dumond, the Muffulettas at Central Grocery, and an unbelievable meal at K-Paul's, the great Paul Prudhomme's legendary eatery. The whole N.O. experience and time off was great, and I was dreading going back to work. I got back to Dallas a few days early, and an hour after I got home, I had a call from Heinz Prast, who owned two Swiss/Austrian restaurants, the Chimney and the Belvedere. He wanted to talk to me, and we set up a breakfast meeting for the next morning.

I wish all the children that are going back to school to stay safe and healthy. I wish all the people of this great nation to find peace and relief from all these troubling times. I pray we can all come together in this country and find a reason to unite and become united once again.

God Bless, Jack



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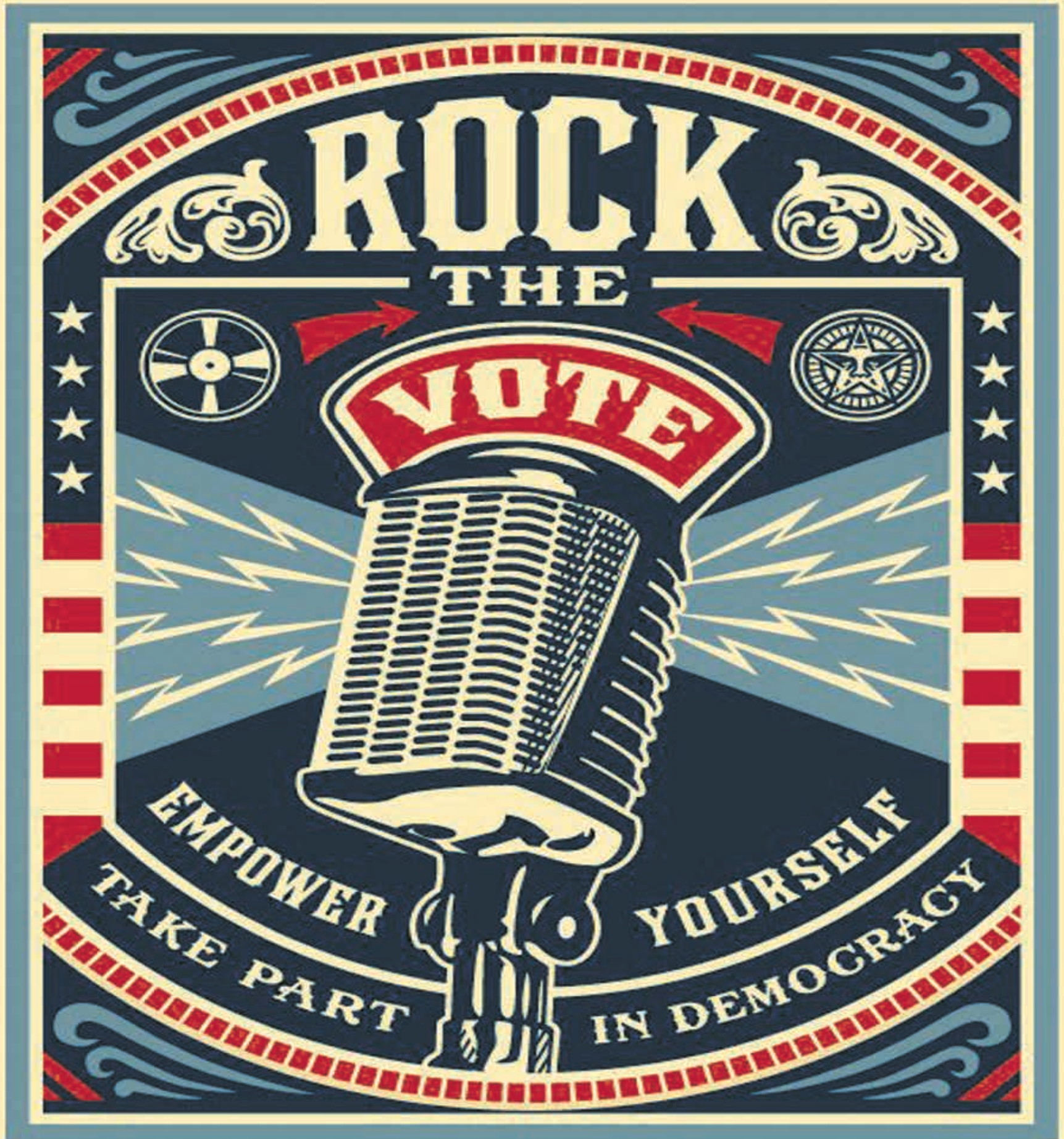
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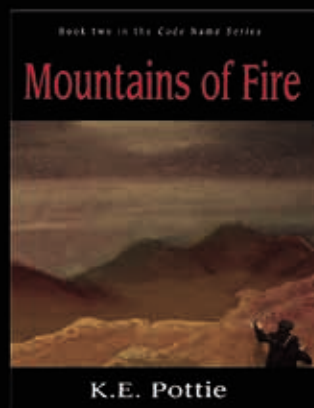
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Ken is the award winning author of The Code Name Series of books. The series is based on his father's experiences behind enemy lines in World War II. He has won awards in the Readers' Favorite contest, The NABE Pinnacle Awards in Military Fiction, and Hollywood, Paris, and New York Book Festivals.

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