

Sound

Magazine



Waves

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**Volume 30
Issue 10
October 2020**

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- Johnny Rawls
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& the Maytals

**An
Interview
with**

**ALICIA
KEYS**

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Dear Readers,

Today we are announcing an extension of Sound Waves Magazine called Sound Waves VR Cafe! It is a venture that will create a revenue for local and regional musicians. Because of today's crisis many musicians are having a hard time of making a living at a craft the love. Their music and creativity is not being heard. This project will allow people to experience in a unique way the music of the artists, and it will create a revenue for them. It will help to keep the music alive! The project will be in Virtual Reality, with the experience soon after to also be viewed in Augmented Reality. Right now there are over 14 million VR headsets in use in the world today. Tapping into this market could create an enormous opportunity for the musicians and their work. We feel this is where the future is headed. When the venues finally open, this will also create a revenue for them. We will record shows in VR at the venue and they too will share in the income. Imagine having a full house, but maybe thousands watching from around the world! So check it out. If you know of any musician that would like to take part in this project, feel free to contact us.

On another note, this is a crucial time in the future of our country. We have become a divided nation. It is no longer us, but we and them. As a country we must heal and become one. We need to care about our fellow Americans, not just how the stock market is doing today. This is a great country, but we can be better. So make sure you get out and vote! Your voice matters.

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David Pottie
Publisher

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MUSIC NOTES

“A Judge Looks at 65, (and Back at 50):”

By Mark T. Gould

By the time you read this, I will have either approached or passed my 65th (!) birthday. It's also my 55th year collecting music and would have been my 50th of going to concerts (you remember concerts, right?). Clearly, music has played an integral part of my six and half decades. So, it's a time to both look forward and, perhaps, harken back. Although most people, starting with my wife, will tell you that I still think and act like a teenager, and 65, like all the others, is really just a number, it's a splendid time to recall, in the spirit of music and what it has meant, and will mean, to me, at what she, and a fabulous group of musical friends, did for my 50th birthday 15 years ago. It is, truly, the ultimate Throwback, even if it's not Thursday. It'll take something to top this for the 65th, but, hey, we'll give it a shot.....

“Pickin’ Up The Pieces” for My 50th Birthday: On the Road with Poco By Mark T. Gould

It was the night before my 50th birthday, and I was in the backstage artists' trailer at the Topsfield, Massachusetts Fair. There was a lighted birthday cake for me on the table. Around me were some good friends, Jon, Georgina and Alison Rosenbaum and Marc Smith.

But, the real mind blower was that standing around the cake, singing Happy Birthday to me, were Rusty Young, Paul Cotton, Jack Sundrud and George Lawrence.

Poco. My favorite band for all of their 37 years, singing a private Happy 50th Birthday to me.

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And, therein, lies a wondrous tale.

About a year ago, I had that startling revelation that my next birthday would be The Big One. The 5-0. Yes, the “Get Ready for the Senior Tour and AARP Membership” 50th. And, my wife, bless her, wanted to do something very special for me. “Why don’t you go on the road with Poco,” she said. “You know that’s really what you want to do.”

Well, she had a point.

My friends and family have long known of my singular musical devotion to this incredible band. They’ve been together for 37 years, and I’ve been a fan for just about every one of them. Over the years, I’ve gotten to know the band members and their management (a well deserved shout-out here for Rick Alter, who has, along with the continuing vision of Rusty Young and Paul Cotton, brought this band back to where it should be), and it has been one of the thrills of my life to be their fan.

So, it was settled. But, I had no idea just how lucky I could be until I found out that they were scheduled to play four shows over two days, including October 5, my birthday, at the Topsfield Fair, the country’s oldest agricultural fair, just outside Boston, and more importantly for my family’s collective pocketbook, only about a three-hour drive from my home in Connecticut.

So, with my wonderful wife’s blessing, I contacted Rick, and

volunteered to chauffeur the band around for the time they would be in the area. More than 24 hours of flight delays later, there I was, driving a white 15-passenger van north on Interstate 95, with my favorite music group seated in the back. It doesn’t get much better than that, believe me.

But it did.

On the 4th, the day before my actual birthday, we were in the hotel lounge, relaxing between the afternoon and evening sets of the first day’s performances. As we ate and drank, I casually mentioned to Paul Cotton how great it would be to hear “Bad Weather,” my favorite of his many wonderful Poco songs, in the evening set. He nodded and said he’d see what he could do.

So, it was on to the evening show. Most Poco fans know that the band’s set closes with “Crazy Love” and “Heart of the Night,” which saves their two most popular songs for the end. That night, though, it was a bit different as, following “Crazy Love,” Rusty and Paul conferred on the stage. Seconds later, Rusty walked back to the microphone and said, “Tonight’s a special night because it’s the 50th birthday of a good friend of ours, Mark, who’s our attorney, as well as our chauffeur for these shows. Here’s one for him, that’s a real Poco classic.” The band then left the stage as Paul performed a breathtaking version of

“Bad Weather.”

Thank goodness it was dark out so no one saw the tears in my eyes.

The next day, I turned 50 years old, for goodness sakes. I got up fairly early, as I always do, and I wandered down to do a workout in the hotel gym. As I headed back to my room, Paul Cotton was walking through the lobby. He came over to me, with a big smile on his face, said “Happy Birthday, man,” and gave me a big hug.

One hell of a way to start my 5-0, sweat from my workout getting all over Paul notwithstanding.

The 5th was another beautiful Indian Summer day, and the crowd responded with standing ovations throughout Poco’s afternoon show. After performing a song, bassist Jack Sundrud announced to the crowd that it’s “our friend Mark’s birthday, so let’s give him a hand.” I, little old me, got an ovation from the crowd, and Jack then remarked “and he’s only 22!” which got a big laugh. Rusty Young was seated, making adjustments at the steel for the next song, but, in his best Monty Python voice, followed Jack with “and he’s not dead yet,” which brought still another good-natured laugh from audience.

After the evening show, there was a final “meet and greet,” with fans, lasting well over an hour. Then, the band gathered up their instruments, and it was time to take them,



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and their musical stuff, back to the Providence airport. It was about 9:15 when we left the venue, and a 90-minute ride back to the airport, where there was an 8 a.m. flight to Missouri awaiting the band the next morning, as they started the tour travel merry go round all over again.

We arrived at the airport hotel just before 11. We unloaded their gear, and it was, unfortunately, time to for this "Birthday Boy" to say goodbye. There were hugs all around, and it was just a beautiful time for me, just like every other minute I've been involved with Poco over this more than three decades of great music and fun.

So, that was it, Poco for my 50th birthday, complete with me hanging around, and hopefully helping out just a bit, with a tremendous group, no, band, of guys who have put a smile on my face and made me feel just so much better every day for the past 37 years.

Long live Poco!!

(Coda: The band has changed a bit since those amazing three days at the Topsfield Fair. Paul Cotton has retired and moved to warmer climes, although he still performs the occasional show with his old friends. Michael Webb, a wonderful musician, replaced him in the group (although most of us would agree no one can replace Paul Cotton!!), and he has since been supplanted by the ultra-talented Tom Hampton. Rick Lonow, a former member of the Burrito Brothers, has taken over the drum stool from George Lawrence. Poco stills play a handful of gigs each year, although Rusty does claim to be semi-retired [don't bet on it...he's working on his second solo album]. And, we are still waiting for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame to wake up, end a travesty of musical justice, and induct them.....Maybe in time for my 70th?.....Stay tuned)



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All The World's a Stage

"Thirteen Basements"

By Sue Menhart

I went down to my basement the other day to look for an extension cord or something and I stopped dead in my tracks. No, it wasn't another mouse or a monster daddy long-leg, it was worse: it was a band practice basement frozen in time. My guitars in their cases, speakers strewn about hastily set down in the middle of the floor after the last post-gig load-in; printouts of chords and lyrics of songs to be worked on; mic stands placed haphazardly here and there; a zipped-up gig bag filled to the brim with carefully wound equipment cables; another bag with multiple microphones set into their foam resting places. I also spied a massive and intricate spider web between the mixer and the drum set. The day the music died was around March 13, 2020. We all know why.

It got me thinking about my other basements of band practice pasts. Upon reflection, most conjure memories of low ceilings, dank and dark, moldy and cave-like; some more spider-webby than others.



Some were finished and carpeted in completely livable lower levels with walkouts to fresh air, useful when needing a breather from the intensity of bandmate drama or creative juice overload. Some band practice spaces weren't basements at all. They were apartment living rooms, upstairs bedrooms or rented studios, all transformed for the same purpose: musical creation and comradery.

The tools of music have always been able to find their own rightful spaces next to weight-lifting equipment, exercise bikes, holiday storage bins, stockpiles of toilet paper and extra condiments and the aforementioned, extension cords. The tools always had a higher purpose.



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They had a reason for being there. They were essential to a life well lived.

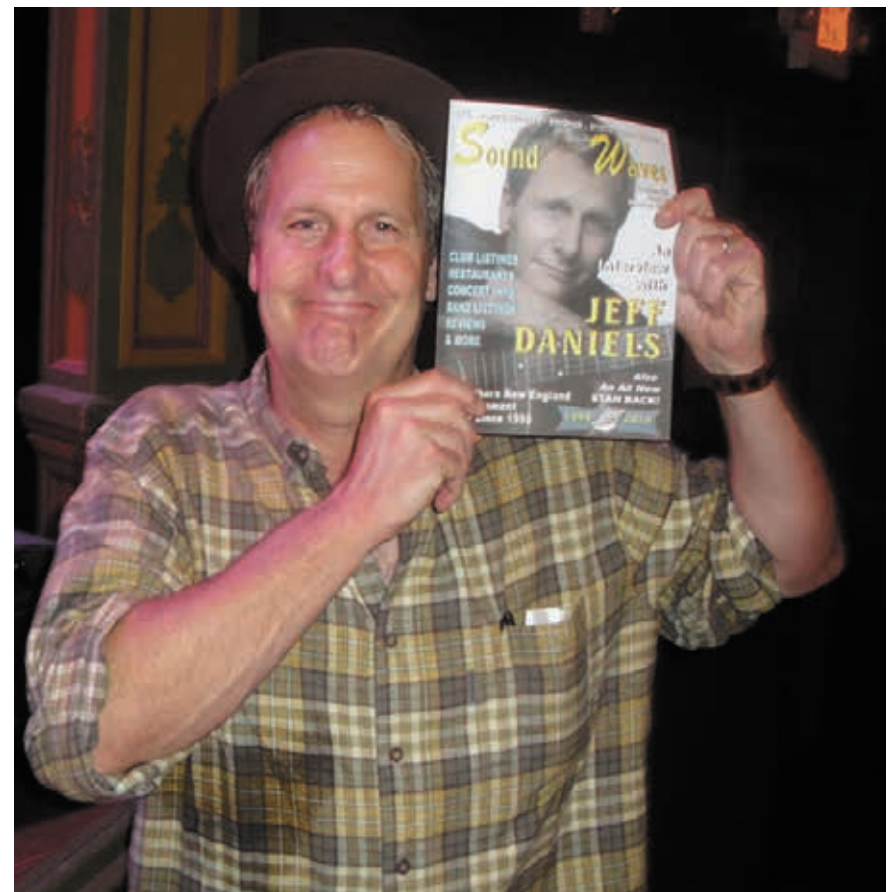
The fact that my current basement space has succumbed to paralysis and cobwebs due to global events beyond its control, is indeed, sad and scary. They say you shouldn't get sentimental about real estate, but this basement has served me well; better than the others. It is bright and airy with majestic countryside views through copious windows, with plenty of lighting when things go late into the evening, complete with a spacious groupie sectional couch. Plenty of room for even working on some background dancer numbers (no, but oh how fun that could have been!) Oh what could have been indeed.

We continue to hold on to hope.

Happy Halloween.



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=



Jeff Daniels

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LOCAL BEAT

“Revisiting the Great Wall of Sound On Dr. Martino’s “Caving In” Album ”

By Andrew Kerbs

Dr. Martino is a band hailing from Willimantic CT featuring guitarist Simone Puleo, bassist Amy Shaw and drummer Mike Kaminski. The band plays great surf punk with sound and harmonies of a magnitude not matched since 90s indie rock band Papas Fritas. It is only fitting in times with scarce live music that we revisit one of their more available CDs: “Caving In.”

The album starts off leisurely with “Dad’s Dead” as Mr. Puleo singer sings about such adolescent clichés as skipping school, loitering at a corner pharmacy, playing sports and (strangely) the civic virtues of cleaning the beach. The chorus is catchy and full of “Ohhs” and the song ends with a strident sounding chord. Simone’s chords are emo insofar as they are simple and cheery but sad at the same time as he indulges perseverative thoughts about Dad and saving a dying environment.

“Out on the Waves” features sensitive notes on the guitar as singer Amy flaunts her attractive voice and sings about leisurely drifting like a canoe past country tanger-



ines like the Beatles-meets-Anne of Green Gables. The tempo changes and the guitar becomes much more staccato as she starts singing about hurricanes and Simone noodles a playful solo at the end.

“Your Garage” starts with Amy’s warm bass strum and Simone’s vocals about sleeping in and waking up to coffee and music. His vocals and guitar chords go up in pitch then he takes a fast fingerpicking guitar solo. Yet his lyrics are what carry the day, particularly on this song about album nostalgia. The singer vacillates between thoughts of going to the movies or thoughts of staying in the garage losing oneself in an album that may not last forever as time marches on. One must wonder how long physical album sales will last and the cost to the music community caused by the faceless convenience of digital downloads and streaming.

In addition to the softer hippie sounds, Martino’s album has a rough side to it as well. “You Were Around” is the one song on the album that has an edge with phat power chord progressions and a singer that’s thankful she’s been around since his birth . . . a reunion recollected by happy lyrics about her brightening his day. The title track features Mike’s

thumpy drum intro with Amy’s meandering bassline which she plays like a solo. Lyrics allude to an ideal country lifestyle in which couples fall in love and take each other home and the wall of sound mimics 90s power pop bands with echoey solos and chord sounds.

“Weekend Shoes” is a punk rock barsong which starts fast and ends with tension-building guitar chords. It was neat how Martino could take an alternative rock song and lace it with walking bass and hip doo wop the likes of which most listeners haven’t heard since Huey Lewis.

Fans of 60s rock n roll and 90s alternative rock should enjoy the whimsical nonchalance of the Dr’s EP about growing up, surviving, falling in love and returning home. . . . Be sure to buy it at your local music store.



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9 - Hearthstone Winery, Columbia, CT 5-8

NICK BOSSE
3 - Clyde's Cider Mill, Mystic, CT 1-4pm
23 - Elks, Groton, CT 6:30-9:30

**NICK BOSSE
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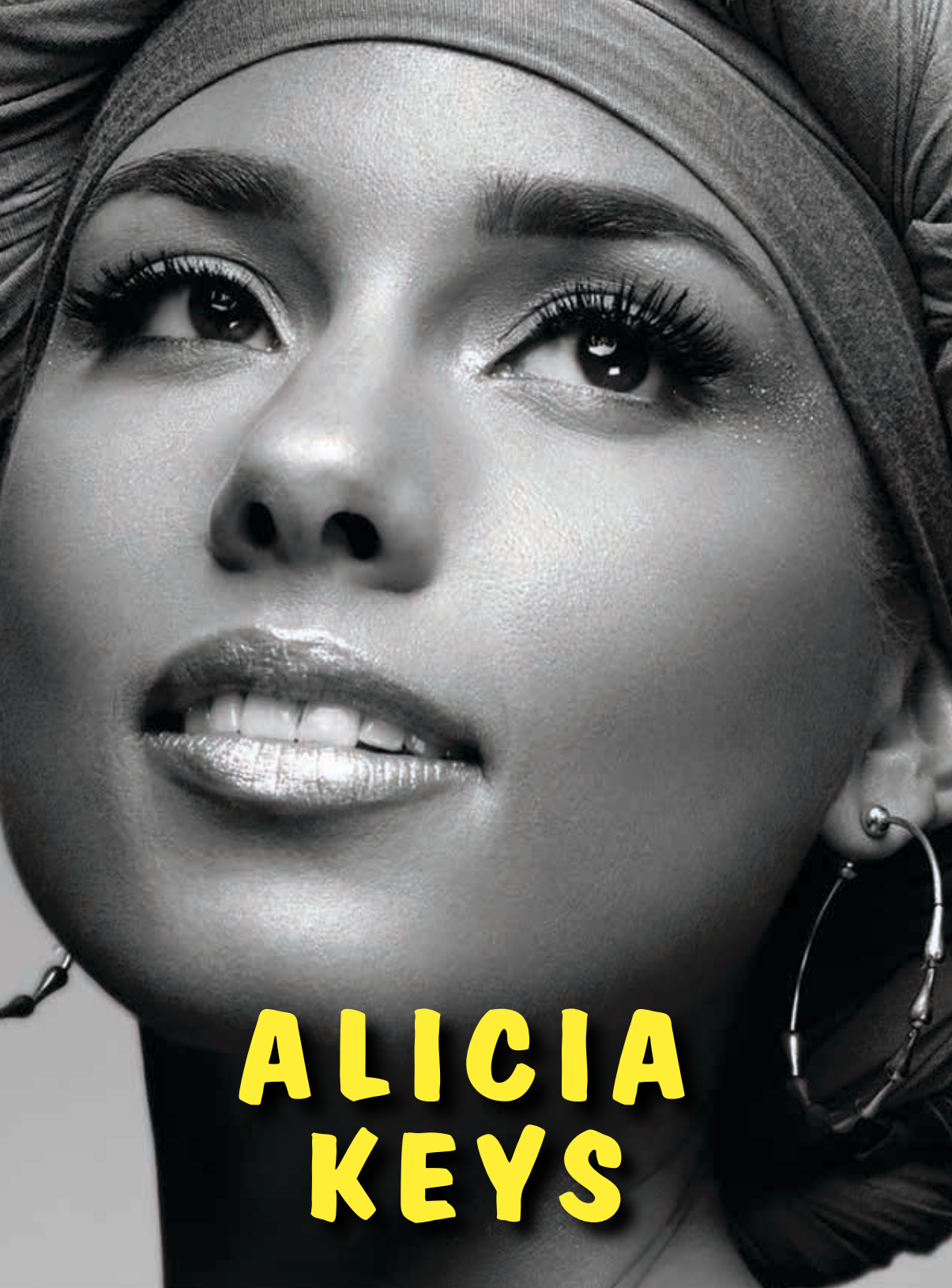




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ALICIA KEYS

By Eleanor Halls
The Telegraph / The Interview People

In public and in her brutally honest memoir, Alicia Keys is one of pop's most outspoken stars. And if you have a problem with that, tough

When Alicia Keys was seven years old and being driven home to the one-bedroom flat she shared with her mother, she glimpsed a group of sex workers standing on the street corner, their goose-bumped flesh exposed to the harsh air of a New York winter. "I slid down into the cracked leather seat

and made a silent agreement with myself," Keys recalls in her recent, bestselling autobiography *More Myself*. "I will never be in a situation like that. Half-clothed. Vulnerable. Powerless. Exposed."

Twelve years later, when her debut album *Songs in A Minor* sold 12 million copies, won five Grammy awards and changed her life almost beyond recognition, this memory returned to Keys. After years spent practising on a neighbour's piano and singing with friends, success had arrived suddenly: Keys's voice pricked the ear of a manager who secured her a spot on Oprah Winfrey's television show, which turned her into a star overnight. Record labels came knocking, as did industry bigwig Clive Davis, one-time mentor to Janis Joplin and Whitney Houston.

But Keys was young and alone in the wild so when, while shooting her first major magazine cover, the photographer asked her management to leave the room before cajoling her into shedding her clothes, she did as she was told. Then she went home and burst into tears. The day the magazine hit the newsstands, Keys felt ashamed of its overtly sexual cover image – and renewed her childhood vow: "to never again let someone rob me of that power."

Out soon, the singer's seventh album, *Alicia*, represents the keeping of that promise. Both affecting and assertive, it charts her 20-year refusal to relinquish her individuality to an industry that had little idea how to market a young black girl who knew her Chopin as well as her hip-hop, and who wielded a voice far more powerful than her frame.

Over the past two decades, Keys has shunned dresses for trousers and princess curls for braids, abandoned a six-figure record deal in order to produce her own songs and, most recently, refused to wear make-up on the red carpet. She has also picked up 10 further Grammys and had nine UK top 10 hits including *Girl on Fire* and *Empire State of Mind*.

"Alicia is my most truthful, authentic album," Keys tells me when she calls, via Zoom, from her car in Los Angeles, her serene, golden face pressed up against the screen. In its 15 tracks of typically assured R&B, Alicia touches on everything from love, loss and friendship to Black Lives Matter. It culminates in *Perfect Way to Die*, a deeply moving song dedicated to recent black American victims of police brutality.

"It was," says Keys, "the most chilling song to sing." On the day we speak Jacob Blake, a black man from Wisconsin, is shot seven times in the back by a white policeman and left seriously injured. "I mean, why does this song exist, why is it still relevant and how is it even more relevant today than it was yesterday and will be even more relevant tomorrow than it is today?"

When the initial wave of BLM protests was sparked in 2014 – by the
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killing in Missouri of Michael Brown, an unarmed black 18-year-old, by a white police officer – Keys was approaching her due date for her second son, Genesis (she and her husband, music producer Swizz Beats, also have a nine-year-old son called Egypt). Was she anxious about bringing a black baby boy into such a hostile world? “It was terrifying,” she says, slowly. “Am I concerned [for my sons]? Yes. Is that a terror? Yes. Is that horrifying to be even considering?”

“That a child even has to think, about the police, ‘Is that a good guy or a bad guy?’ is crazy. There are plenty of honourable police, but to have to train yourself to think that nine out of 10 times it’s not going to go well... wow.”

As a child, Keys once asked her Irish-Italian mother, a jobbing actress and legal assistant, why their skin colour differed. Has she had similar conversations about race with her two sons? “My youngest, Genesis, has been asking me a lot of questions recently, questions I would once have tried to find a way out of answering when talking to my eldest, Egypt,” she says. When Egypt was six, she tells me, he asked about the N word – a word Keys, unlike many other black musicians, refuses to use and does not allow to be spoken at home.

Keys has often been referred to as one of the first “woke” celebrities: her 2016 album *Here* tackled everything from addiction to global warming. On *Alicia*, two of the catchiest songs – written a year before the current pandemic – are dedicated to the efforts of key workers: *Underdog* and *Good Job*. I ask her how she feels now the word “woke” has become a term of ridicule; used to bash soft-hearted millennials whose idea of activism begins and ends with a tweet. She bristles, her easy grin dissolving rapidly. “First of all, I despise the word celebrity, to me it’s such an empty word,” she says, curtly.

“And second of all, this idea that people who might be well-known are not supposed to be intelligent or thoughtful or interesting is a misconception and demeaning. People who tell artists or athletes who are very outspoken politically to just sing their song or just play their sport, it’s so rude,” she says, no doubt alluding to the Fox News presenter Laura Ingraham who, in an interview with LeBron James, told the NBA basketball player to stop talking politics and simply “shut up and dribble”.

“Anytime anyone says that, I say f--- you. Because that’s what is wrong with America in a lot of ways, this idea of staying in your lane. And if we’re not involved in politics then that’s how crazy people start running things.”

While Keys is famously guarded about her private life, she has rarely shied away from politics. She performed at both Barack Obama’s inauguration and during Hillary Clinton’s election campaign – and has spoken out in support of the Black Panther Party. A chapter in her autobiography is devoted to the shock she felt upon hearing Donald Trump had won the US presidential election in 2016. When I ask how she feels when she considers the possibility of him winning a second term, she neatly places a middle finger horizontally across her forehead and grimaces. “I refuse,” she says, finally.

“It can’t happen. We are on a precipice again, and America has a sickness,” she adds, before gently nudging me away from the topic. “We would need a whole other interview to get into all of that...”

Instead, we circle back to the subject of motherhood, and Keys’s eyes light up. Pregnancy takes up a large part of her memoir: she reveals that,

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when she first discovered she was pregnant with Genesis, she considered having an abortion. The experience was not an easy one for a woman who had once been told by her own mother that she had considered aborting her. “And there’s every reason why she should – she was scared, she was alone, she was in a city on her own, she was struggling financially,” says Keys, whose father, with whom she is now in touch, works as a flight attendant. “It wasn’t the prettiest love story.”

Keys’s achievements are not limited to music: as well as the memoir, she has published a book of poetry, appeared in two Hollywood films (*The Secret Life of Bees* and *Smokin’ Aces*), is about to produce a Netflix rom-com and, in 2018, co-founded *She Is the Music*, an organisation set up to highlight and help eliminate gender bias in the music industry.

Her efforts aside, does she see the industry getting fairer? “Not really,” she admits, with a wry smile. “It’s always been about the dollar. So if you’re making someone money, then there is all the respect in the world.” She sighs. “You know, I just can’t wait until we’re really able to look at each other as human beings. To really see each other. I mean, is that so much to ask? Is it really that hard?”



Alicia Keys has just released her new album “ALICIA”
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HEARING AID



Vanessa Collier “Heart On The Line” Phenix Fire Records

Although I constantly look for new music to review my publisher also sends me cd’s from various new artists, and earlier this month I see the latest Vanessa Collier cd on my desk. On the cover it shows Vanessa sitting barefoot in a green field with her sax on her lap. To be honest I wasn’t familiar with her work and thought to myself OK, this is going to be another “tame” Kenny G style album ... Wow, was I wrong!! What I heard was an amazing compilation of funk, soul, and blues. The more I researched her street creds the more impressed I was. She is a 7 time BMA (Blues Music Award) nominee and won in 2019 and 2020 as “Horn Player Of The Year”. She has played with the legendary Buddy Guy among many other well known blues artists. Guy later said in one of his interviews that Collier was an amazing sax player, and from what I hear her performances are passionate and fiery.

Collier embarked on her road to recognition at the prestigious Berklee School of Music earning dual degrees in Performance and Music Production & Engineering and put those degrees to good use by producing her own album on her recording label “Phenix Fire Records”. Her band consists of Nick Stevens on drums, CC Ellis, Scot Sutherland, and Cornell Williams on bass, Laura Chavez on guitar, William Gorman on keyboard, Quin Carson on trombone, and Doug Wolverton on trumpet. On a final production note Collier also did all the brass arrangements herself. Now onto “Heart On The Line” -

What I found is Vanessa Collier’s latest album “Heart On The Line” is like playing poker with a royal flush, a definite winner with all the boxes checked. Her talent is amazing on many different levels. As I mentioned earlier her awards were all for “Horn Player of the Year” but she is a serious contender when it comes to her vocals too as you will hear when you listen to her album. Her songs on this album are “related” but different enough to hold your interest and keep you wanting more. The album opens with a soulful rendition of James Brown’s “Super Bad”. From the first note I couldn’t sit still, my head starts bobbing and hips swaying. Track #2 “What Makes You beautiful” is a sweet bluesy ballad followed by track #3 “Bloodhound” a down & dirty slide guitar rendition that takes me back to the Louisiana Bayou snacking on Alligator tail and fresh Gumbo. Yep, been there, and done that – it was Delicious!! Track #4 “I Don’t Want Anything To Change” is a very sit up and take notice soulful ballad spotlighting Collier’s vocal sweet side and sax playing as well as the guitar of Laura Chavez with her clean amp tube tones that chime. I really enjoyed it.

Track #5 “Leave Your Hat On” is another excellent song choice. This is a remake of the Randy Newman composition made famous by the late, great English blues vocalist Joe Cocker. The track really highlights how tight the band is. Scot Sutherland on bass and the horn arrangement absolutely steals the show. Track #8 “Weep & Moan” is what I like to call a soulful bump & grind and shows off Collier’s vocals, and the excellent guitar playing of Laura Chavez along with the ever amazing horn section especially towards the end. I add kudos to Nick Stevens on drums for providing a strong, steady beat throughout and still keeping it interesting. Moving onto the title track “Heart On The Line” is an upbeat Dixieland style marching anthem with horns blaring for working women everywhere – “I’m going home, kicking my shoes off, and pouring myself a glass of red wine”. I give this cd a strong Buy recommendation. No doubt you will enjoy it as much as I do. Vanessa Collier’s latest album “Heart On The Line” is

available at VanessaCollier.com, and Amazon.com.

Until next time – Adrian Webb



Toots & the Maytals “Got to Be Tough” Trojan Jamaica / BMG

The world felt a great loss when Toots Hibbert recently passed on. He had been one of the biggest influences on reggae music from it’s very founding to the present day. Toots has worked with many of the greatest artists of our time and influenced multiple generations of music lovers with his upbeat, energetic style and heartfelt lyrics.

Shortly before he left us, Toots and the Maytals released their first new album in quite a while and it’s a real gem. “Got to Be Tough” is exemplary of the kind of music Toots was so well known for. The songs are upbeat, inspiring and heartfelt, driven by the always strong sound of Toots’ vocals.

These songs sound like they came right out of his old catalog, but they’re still incredibly fresh and new. The album kicks off with “Drop Off Head” featuring a strong beat and more of Toots’ inspirational lyrics: “Just try, try and try, don’t let the enemies bring you down”. The hook is punctuated by some fun horn work and the song sets the groove for what’s to come.

The next track “Just Brutal” has got a strong 70’s soul feel. It’s another high energy joint with a catchy chorus “Everything you do is just brutal, I don’t know what this world is coming to.” It features sweet backup vocals and horns giving the track the sound of a full stage dance party.

The album is mostly up-tempo, but there are a couple more ballady tracks on here too. “Good Thing That You Call” is a more sentimental song,

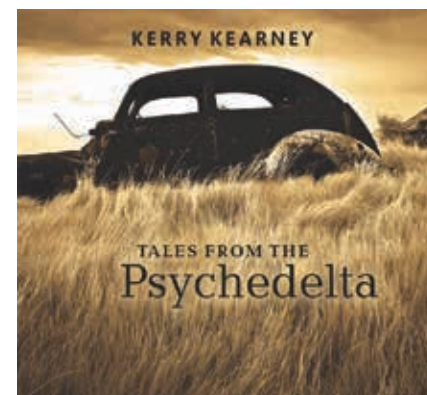
touching on the difficulties staying connected and the importance of reaching out to others.

One of the real highlights is on “Stand Accused”, featuring a powerful hook: “I stand accused for doing the right thing; I stand accused of loving the children; I stand accused since the day that I was born; I stand accused for feeding my enemies”. Toots has always been known for his uplifting messages and willingness to call out for justice.

He features Ziggy Marley on an interesting remake of the iconic Bob Marley tune “Three Little Birds”. This is a totally different version musically, with an upbeat ska feel and a totally different cadence.

The other tracks on “Got to Be Tough” are great too. This album has been great to have as I reflect back on his life and appreciate all the great times I’ve had at his shows and listening to his music. Certainly worth checking out if you’re a fan of reggae music or music history.

**- Tom Matthew
Two Ton Music**



Kerry Kearney “Tales From The Psychedelta” Highlander Records

Kerry Kearney has been playing the delta blues for over forty years, though his has been primarily New York’s East River delta: over this span of time he has become recognized as a master of the slide guitar, playing a range of instruments from the vintage to the custom. His regular venue is often on the waterfront places of Long Island where fishermen and families at leisure once worked and played under canvas sails: Huntington Harbor, and Great South Bay, where Kearney takes the main stage at their annual Music Festival. But his guitar talents have also found him touring with the Allman Brothers

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and Dickey Betts, sharing the stage with BB King, opening for Robert Cray, and more.

Kerry Kearney's new album, *Tales from the Psychedelta*, opens with an unexpected departure from his trademark slide guitar, opting instead for a repeated melody which moves easily into an agile display of blues guitar. His vocals, sung in an upper range, have a gruff, almost strained edge which only the years can bring. From this starting point he unleashes his slide guitar talents, first on Mississippi River Stomp, which features high-paced but perfectly controlled slide work, leading into some fine harmonica and riffs on the 88. Trouble In Mind stretches the melody over a shuffling beat, as Kearney sings "I won't be blue always, sun is gonna shine on my backdoor someday."

Thank You Jesus has that New Orleans sound, a slow beat under a sustained, bending twang that you somehow remember you've always known just by the way it makes you feel. "I'm going away," sings Kearney, "and when I get there I'm gonna say Thank You Jesus for your sweet yesterdays." Shaefer Time/Duck House opens with some intricate acoustic guitar, moving into a slow, ringing dobro piece, showing another spectrum of the musicians style. In all there are twelve songs, mostly new with a few covers, featuring variations of Kerry Kearney's guitar skills backed by a band of complimentary talents, the result being decidedly unique and thoroughly entertaining. More info may be found at www.highlanderrecords.com, or on Facebook.

- Jon Persson



Tenille Townes

"The Lemonade Stand"

Columbia Nashville / RCA

My friends from the Nashville office at Sacks came through for me with the

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latest Tenille Townes album, "The Lemonade Stand" but the funny thing is they neglected to tell me Townes was performing at the 55th ACM Awards. Being a Country fan myself I was definitely watching and to my surprise there was breakthrough singer, songwriter and musician Tenille Townes performing her song, "Somebody's Daughter," in my living room. ... on TV. Not only that but she WON the "New Female Vocalist" award too. A very pleasant surprise for me and a great night for Townes. For those of you not familiar, Tenille Townes is a Canadian country music singer/song writer from Grande Prairie, Alberta. In 2011, at the age of 17, she was nominated for a Canadian Country Music Award for Female Artist of the Year and has been a rising star ever since.

Townes has opened for several well known Country artists such as Miranda Lambert, and Little Big Town. The accolades for Townes continues as the most nominated artist at this year's Canadian Country Music Awards with six nominations and recently released her acclaimed debut album, "The Lemonade Stand", on Columbia Nashville in partnership with RCA Records and produced by Jay Joyce (Eric Church, Miranda Lambert, Little Big Town). The album consists of twelve songs written by Townes and continues to receive widespread critical praise:

As I begin my review of "The Lemonade Stand" the first thing I notice is Tenille's unique upper registry vocals which reminds me of a modern day Dolly Parton. Right from the first track "Holding Out For The One" I knew I was in for a treat. Her songs are very catchy and uplifting straight out of the Taylor Swift play book and I mean that as a compliment. During these uncertain times we need more uplifting, feel good music. If you look beyond the music you'll hear meaningful lyrics that exudes positive vibes and give you insight to Townes the person. In track 3 "Jersey On The Wall" is one of those special songs that fits perfect in present time or a remake as a ballad which I hope Townes considers for future projects, either way one of my favorites on this cd. The lyrics on track 4 "Lighthouse" is another example of Townes positive messages you find throughout her music. In track 6 "I Kept The Roses" is a romantic country ballad of heart break where I can picture sacheying across the dance floor, slow dancing with your honey at the local honky-tonk. Take note of the great breakup tones com-

ing from the electric guitar on this one. Track 7 "When I Meet My Maker" is a very deep, heartfelt ballad dealing with mortality. Nothing morbid, more pen- sive that made me think of family and friends. Track 11 "Somebody's Daughter" is her first song to be promoted in the United States and started her promising career to country super stardom when she signed with Colombia Nashville in 2018. It made number #1 on the Canadian Country Billboards, and number #26 on the American Country Billboards. An interesting tidbit is Jay Joyce who produced this album in its entirety also played electric guitar and keyboard on several of the song tracks, nice job too. In closing I would like to say that I've been in this business long enough to know that Columbia Nashville has a solid, big hit on their hands. I give Tenille Townes "The Lemonade Stand" a strong buy recommendation. If you like uplifting, feel good modern Country, you will love Tenille Townes. The "The Lemonade Stand" is available at TenilleTownes.com, and at Amazon.com

Until next time – Adrian Webb



JOHNNY RAWLS

Johnny Rawls

"Where Have All The Soul Men Gone"

Third Street Cigar Records

*In 1985, Johnny Rawls (no relation to legendary crooner Lou Rawls) began touring as a solo artist and made his first solo recording and has released more than 15 albums since his debut solo album, *Here We Go*. Johnny has released albums under various labels such as Third Street Cigar Records, and his own label Deep South Soul, which he created in 2002. The Blues Music Awards frequently recognize Johnny's work and to date, ten of Johnny's albums have been nominated for Soul Blues Album of the Year with "Ace of

Spades" winning in 2010, and "I'm Still Around" winning in 2019. Johnny has been nominated for Soul Blues Male Artist eleven times, and received one nomination for Blues Song of the Year. Roots Music Report declared Johnny's 2017 release, "Waiting for the Train," one of the top 50 blues albums of the year. *(taken in part from his BIO page; JohnnyRawlsBlues.com).

On his current album "Where Have All The Soul Men Gone" his band consists of

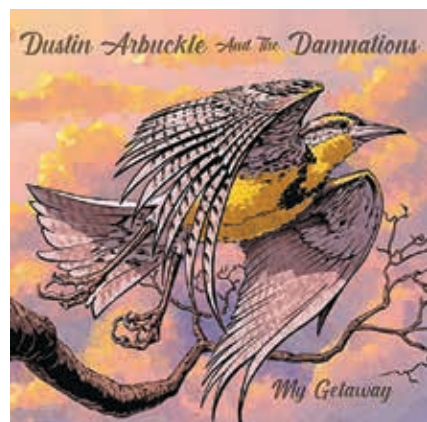
Johnny Rawls: vocals, guitar, and keyboard – Alberto Marsico: vocals and keyboard – Kenan Ozdemir: vocals and guitar – Levent Ozdemir: vocals and drums – Erkan Ozdemir: bass – Larry Gold: guitar solo on tracks 6, and 7. The horn section consists of Travis Geiman: trombone – and Mike Williams: alto sax. Interesting production facts: This album was recorded in two different countries; Heyman Studios in Copenhagen, Denmark, and Big Foot Studios in Waterville, Ohio. The album was engineered, mixed and mastered by Travis Geiman who owns Big Foot Studios and also plays trombone in the horn section throughout the album.

Although Johnny Rawls has decades of awards and notoriety in the blues industry I have to say I didn't love his current album. As a music reviewer there are many things I look at before I recommend my readers buy a cd or not. I look at the artist talent, the musical arrangement, the sound engineering, and I even look at the song choices making up the album. Did I like the cd? Did I find it interesting enough to listen again and would I recommend the cd to friends?

As far as talent goes there is no denying that Johnny Rawls is a serious Blues contender. His professionalism and charisma as a stage performer along with that great raspy, soulful voice makes this artist super star material. The title first track "Where Have All The Soul Men Gone" is a truly great song that has much commercial promise. This is one of the tracks that has everything going for it. The horn section adds whispers of the Blues Brother's and Rawls's vocals are amazing, it's definitely a feel good song. But as early as the second track in "Bottom To The Top" I found as in most of this album the horns find a catchy riff and play it over, and over to nausea. If the band added another horn player who is experienced in musical arrangement this would significantly improve on song structure and listeners interest.

I also found much of Johnny Rawls's music very similar and repetitious. As a matter of fact if a listener wasn't paying attention you would think that track 3 "Can't Leave It Alone" and track 4 "Keep On doing My thing" is an extension of track 2. Moving onto track 5 we have a soulful crying blues song that Johnny wrote for his lady. It has great Johnny Rawls vocals along with excellent piano and keyboard. Track 6 "Money", and track 7 "Towns Too Small" are other examples of Johnny Rawls feel good compositions that will have you dancing every time. In track 8 "Time" we have a blues ballad but this one could do without the horns altogether which as mentioned earlier play the same riff over and over like nails on a chalkboard. Unfortunately track 9 "Baby Baby Baby" is only a similar and faster rendition of track 8. In track 10 "Calling On Jesus" get ready to put on your choir robes and Testify because this great tune puts you smack in the middle of a Mississippi Baptist Revival with lots of feel good singing and clapping. Think of the legendary Mahalia Jackson or Aretha Franklin (both passed) doing a duet with Johnny on this one... Can I get an Amen? In closing due to the fact that I only found four tracks (1, 6, 7, 10) out of ten that I really like I can't give a buy recommendation for this cd, but I do give a buy recommendation for the four tracks I mentioned above. This album along with a multitude of other works of Johnny Rawls can be found on Johnny-RawlesBlues.com, and Amazon.com.

Until next time – Adrian Webb



Dustin Arbuckle & the Damnations

"My Getaway"

"We all wanted the band to be a space where we could play anything," Dustin Arbuckle imparts: and so, by design, he

and his bandmates have produced a first full-length album, *My Getaway*, which covers rather than features a range of styles, from classic rock to the blues, Americana, and folk. It is an ambitious undertaking, to be sure, and the result is a blending of styles even as each song carries a bit of the unique flavoring of a particular genre.

The opening track, *Say My Name*, brings a real 60's feel, Arbuckle's harmonica over the bass, a fuzzed out guitar underlying the chorus. The guitar opens into a solo which somehow evokes San Francisco of a hopeful time, complete with flowers and peace signs. *Across The Desert* continues with this vibe, only with a faster beat, as Arbuckle sings "I'm bound for greener pastures but I'm traveling all alone." Then a stylistic change, slowed down and headed towards southern gospel with a touch of rock, is heard on *Daniel Fought A Lion*.

Dustin Arbuckle has his own roots in rock and blues played with an edge; for fifteen years he performed with the trio Moreland & Arbuckle, whose music he described as "gritty," which is to say, authentic. Originally an acoustic duo, they added a drummer and electric guitars, built a reputation as a hard-driven blues trio, then decided to move on after six albums. With his new band, Arbuckle is charting a course to greater expression and variety of sound, a new voice for his musical impulses.

This can be clearly heard on *Darling Dear*, a country/folk piece featuring acoustic guitar, for a mellow, pleasant love song which confesses "simple pleasures are my weakness....Darling Dear you are my heart." The title track, *My Getaway*, is about a break of dawn escape before the return of a jealous rival who is "nine-foot-two," and features Arbuckle's harmonica play. When *A Song Comes Along* shines with some fine lyrics, complete with interior rhymes, fast paced keyboard and harmonica filling as Arbuckle sings "If you wait on fate that might be a chance you shouldn't take You might be unhappy all your life." The album closes with *Swingling*, a nice jazz-influenced instrumental piece that shows off the talents of this band.

More info may be found at www.dustinarbuckledamnations.com or on Facebook: [dustinarbucklemusic](https://www.facebook.com/dustinarbucklemusic).

- Jon Persson



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By Jack Chaplin

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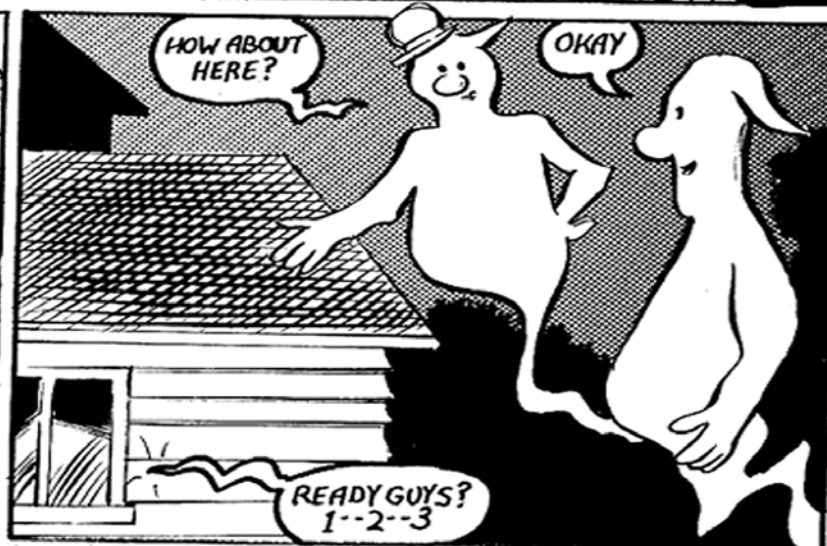
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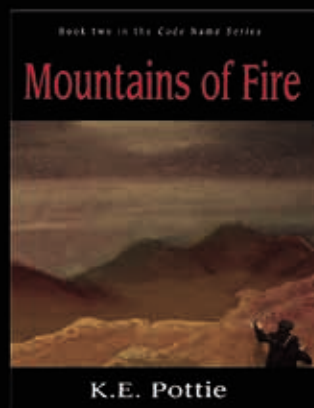
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Ken is the award winning author of The Code Name Series of books. The series is based on his father's experiences behind enemy lines in World War II. He has won awards in the Readers' Favorite contest, The NABE Pinnacle Awards in Military Fiction,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

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