



Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania
www.bscpblues.com

BLUES NEWS

July - Sept 2024

THE BLUES SOCIETY OF CENTRAL PA MISSISSIPPI RAILROAD SHOW

SUNDAY JULY 14, 2024

**MARK
'MULEMAN'
MASSEY**

*with
The Cornlickers*

Doors open

12:00

Workshop

12:30

Delta Blues Workshop
with Mark "Muleman"
Massey

Show

2:00

CHAMPIONS SPORTS BAR
300 2ND STREET HIGHSPIRE, PA 17034

BSCP members **FREE** Non-members **\$20**

Bring your instruments to jam with the "Muleman"



Memberships and tickets for sale at door of event

Poster design by Jay McElroy



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Mission Statement

The Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the preservation, promotion, support and enjoyment of the truly original American art form, the blues.

From your President...

People love surprises. Based on that premise, "toy surprises" were included in every box of Cracker Jacks beginning in 1912. Anyone with a Lego fan in the house knows the marketing appeal of a little package with unidentified surprise figures inside. America's Got Talent judges and audiences love it when something so unexpected happens on stage that it feels unbelievable, like magic.

Blues fans experience these same thrills at the Thursday Night Blues Jam, a weekly event that often provides surprises, like the excitement that comes with the arrival of a new young person on stage or a visitor from outside of the area. Sometimes it is a moment of brilliance from someone we see play every week or the combination and chemistry of players in each unique set that catches our attention.

Recently Derek Matteson (a.k.a. Slim) surprised us, having driven here through rush hour traffic from Philadelphia. Last time we saw Derek was when Slim and the Perkolorators opened for Vanessa Collier Blues Band at our Spring Show (p.8). It was another magical night at the jam. Best part is that Derek said he will be back and will be bringing musician friends. More thrills awaiting us!

I had another wonderful BSCP surprise recently. This time it was in my mailbox when our member, Keshav Rao, sent our blues library a magnificent anthology called Song Keepers (p.11). Keshav moved here recently from Hartford CT and he is delighted to have found so much blues music in Central PA. We are fortunate to have him living here and we appreciate his support and love of the blues.

Summer brings a wealth of music and magic to our area. Mom I Picnic was wonderful with perfect weather, awesome bands, excellent food and

an ideal setting. BSCP released its latest outstanding CD featuring bands from the Mom I 25th Anniversary Picnic. Many thanks to everyone who attended and all who worked so hard to make this very enjoyable event happen. Congratulations and thank you to two very special long-time volunteers, Jill Smith and Kathy Young, who were awarded Certificates of Appreciation at the Picnic (p.9).

Our next big event is the Mississippi Railroad on Sunday, July 14, at Champions featuring Mark "Muleman" Massey with the Cornlickers (p.4). Then on Sunday, September 22, the Cinelli Bros, the 2024 International Blues Challenge second place winners, will be bringing their magic from the UK with the Tom Lowry Blues Band opening (p.5).

The end of the summer will bring two blues festival into the Central PA area. The East Petersburg Blues Festival will be celebrating its 13th Anniversary Saturday, August 31st with a great line-up of regional bands. One of the biggest surprises for the summer is the return of the Lancaster Roots and Blues Festival (p.12). We are thrilled to have this national event return to our area with 80+ performers. Thank you, Rich Ruoff and staff, for your dedication and love of the blues.

To keep you aware of the many upcoming blues shows, BSCP will continue sending information to your inbox and posting gigs and events on BSCPblues.com.

Keep tuned for upcoming surprises!



Lovin' the Blues,

Kathryn Gregoire

bluesmunga@gmail.com

In Memoriam

by Jackson Fogel



John Peter Perkins

09-09-64 / 03-31-24

John Peter Perkins was a talented drummer and caring husband. Best known for his work backing Bryan Lee and the Blues Power Band, he spent more than a decade touring and playing with other very talented musicians. Recently, he had spent time playing with Jason Ricci and the Bad Kind, who also helped plan his celebration of life. The last song John Peter Perkins played live was "If you lose me, you lose a good thing."

Robert Whitall Jr.

04-14-48 / 04-24-24



Robert Whitall Jr. might not be crushing a stage, but his four decades of photography and music promotion and 24 years as publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Big City Rhythm & Blues was more than enough to earn him recognition with a 1998 Keeping the Blues Alive Award by the Blues Foundation and a 2019 Detroit Music Special Achievement Award. He led the magazine's team as it traveled to the Mississippi Delta, New York, LA, Chicago, Memphis and more to cover the best and brightest in the blues world. He was a champion of underrated and unknown blues musicians, and in the past few years helped start and grow the nonprofit Gimme Five, which helped struggling folks in the music world in times of need.

John 'Johnny Mac' McGovern

Unk / 04-25-24



John Dean McGovern, age 61, of West Grove, Pennsylvania, was a member of Barrelhouse Blues Band. The band was featured in the BSCP Backyard Blues CD and opened for The Chris O'Leary Band at the February 25th BSCP 2024 Winter Show. A multi-faceted musician, McGovern played bass, guitar, trumpet, trombone and keyboards. He was a Berklee School of Music certified Pro Tools audio engineer and the owner of JAM Studios Inc. He was a founding member and bass player in the popular rock/funk band "Vitamin F" from 1992 to 1998, playing with multiple bands throughout his life, and frequently recording bass parts for many of the regional artists.

Phil Wiggins

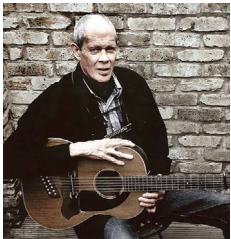
05-08-54 / 05-07-24



Phil Wiggins was a champion harmonica player in the style of Piedmont blues, jamming with his ten-hole harmonica in a way not many could match. He got his start in the '70s, where he joined the Barrelhouse Rockers with Wilbert "Big Chief" Ellis and John Cephas. When Ellis retired, the other two continued touring as Cephas & Wiggins for the next 32 years. They played on every continent except Antarctica in places like Carnegie Hall, Royal Prince Albert Hall, and the Sydney Opera House. When Cephas passed in 2009, Wiggins continued to play, and taught thousands of new harmonica players through different classes and workshops.

"Spider" John Koerner

08-31-38 / 05-18-24



Called "one of the most talented songwriters of his generation" by the Encyclopedia of Popular Music, Spider burst onto the scene with the album *Blues, Rags and Hollers* by his trio, Koerner, Ray & Glover. This album, among others by Koerner, would gain praise from John Lennon, David Bowie, and Bob Dylan. Koerner's unique blend of classic blues and more modern sounds allowed him to create his signature style that awed other musicians. Koerner was multifaceted - he was a musician, filmmaker, bartender, cleaner, and factory man, but he always found his way back to the blues. When he officially retired in 2023, he donated one of his iconic 12-string guitars to Palmer's, a bar in Minneapolis where he was a frequent performer.

**SAVE
THE
DATES**

Mississippi Railroad Show – 07/14/24 – Mark "Muleman" Massey w/The Cornlickers

Fall Show – 09/22/24 - The Cinelli Brothers w/Tom Lowry Blues Band

Christmas Party – 12/01/24 – Darrell Nulisch Band

Please visit our website @ <http://www.bscpb Blues.com> for further details

Mississippi Railroad Show Features Mark “Muleman” Massey & The Cornlickers



By Kathryn Gregoire



“Muleman”

A powerful, authentic, and colorful storyteller, Mark “Muleman” Massey, was born and raised in Clarksdale, MS, and currently resides on a farm in Senatobia, MS. And yes, he does have mules on his farm! He received his moniker “Muleman” from his mentor, Big Jack Johnson.

He purchased his first guitar for \$28. He figured he had plenty of time to learn since he was in the infamous Parchman Farm Mississippi State Penitentiary. There David Kimbrough tutored him on the North Mississippi Hill blues basics while he played in the Parchman Prison Band. The Mississippi Blues Trail Marker, located at the front gates of the Penitentiary, honors Massey, making him the youngest white man to be on the Blues Trail. He appears in a Library of Congress documentary *Music of North Mississippi Hill Country: Mark “Muleman” Massey* and in *Parchment Farms*.

After his release, Muleman was further schooled in the rich legacy of the blues masters by blues harmonica player Blind Mississippi Morris and taken under the wing of Big Jack Johnson, a blues legend. Today he strives to keep the songs of those who came before him alive through his music.

One place he has paid homage to the blues musicians who inspired him is his work, alongside of Vince Johnson of Memphis, TN, in *Masters of the Blues* by DC documentary filmmaker David Minckler, which features music from the 2022 DC Blues Festival

A natural television personality, Massey has been on the online blues show *Moonshine and Mojo Hands* and the culinary television show, *Bizarre Foods*, with Andrew Zimmern. He also is featured in the YouTube Blues Series *The Mississippi Arts and Entertainment Experience*.

Having won the Mississippi Delta

Blues Society of Indianola Regional Blues Challenge in 2011 with his Band and in 2022 for Solo/Duo, Muleman went on both times to compete in the International Blues Challenge in Memphis.

He has two albums: *Mississippi Lockdown* (2010) and *One Step Ahead of the Blues* (2013).

In 2017 Muleman played for BSCP's Mississippi Railroad show, along with Billy Earhart. Three years later, as he was starting to recover from covid, he returned via Zoom on July 16, 2020 to play on our weekly Virtual Blues Jam held during the covid quarantine. He was one of the first people in Mississippi to contract covid and he was seriously ill. It was a very moving performance available for viewing on BSCPblues.com under VIDEOS/VIRTUAL JAM.

On a more festive note, he also played the 2020 Christmas Eve Virtual Show. The audience was happy to see his health restored.

One of his new original songs that he sang for us on May 13, 2021, was “Redemption Ain't Something.” The plaintiff refrain goes “So when my demons get restless, I head back to Texas and if I leave tomorrow that's one day too late. Yeah my demons get restless, I head back to Texas. Redemption ain't something I found along the way.”

Since the quarantine, he has gone on to tour in Europe and to write songs for his upcoming album to be released before the end of 2024.

Highly personable and down-to-earth, Massey is certain to educate and entertain his BSCP audience with his master class and show, bringing us the music of the Mississippi Delta and North Mississippi Hills.

The Cornlickers, who started the annual tradition of the Mississippi Railroad Show with two shows in 2005, will be playing a set from 2 – 3 pm and then will be backing Massey from 3:30 – 4:30 pm. All will be joining in on the jam from 5 – 6 pm.

The Cornlickers feature drummer Dale Wise (Harrisburg PA), Guitarists Dave Groninger (SC) and Bobby Gentilo (Marietta PA), and bassist Tony Ryder (Baltimore MD). Originally all the Cornlickers were from the Harrisburg area and played frequently in the region and served as the house band at Big Red's Juke Joint in Clarksdale, MS, backing Big Jack Johnson (W.C. Hardy Award Winner) until his death in 2011.

The band has recorded *Two Sides of the Blues* with Terry “Harmonica” Bean and The Cornlickers (2007); *Juke Joint Saturday Night* with Big Jack Johnson (2008); *Katrina* with Big Jack Johnson (2009); *Hill Country Blues* with the Big Sound with Terry “Harmonica”

Bean (2010); *Red's Juke Joint Sessions Vol I* with Cadillac John Nolden (2012); *Mystic Juke Joint Blues* with Carlos Elliot Jr. (2013); *Red's Juke Joint Sessions Vol II* with Anthony “Big A” Sherrod (2014); *Del Otun and el Mississippi* with Carlos Elliot (2015); and *Right on Time* with Anthony “Big A” Sherrod (chosen by Living Blues magazine for Best Blues Albums of 2016).

Carlos Elliot and The Cornlickers represented Columbia, South America, at the 2014 International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis. They appear in the documentary *Del Otun & el Mississippi: The Story of Carlos Elliot and The Cornlickers* (2015) and in the video “*Hoop of Life*” by Carlos Elliot & The Cornlickers (2018).

BSCP gives a big shout out to The Cornlickers. We greatly appreciate them reuniting each year for the Mississippi Railroad show to play with artists who travel from the Mississippi Delta and North Mississippi Hills to play for us in Central PA.



Bobby Gentilo



Dale Wise



Dave Groninger



Tony Ryder

BSCP Fall Show:

The Cinelli Brothers with Lowry Blues Band Opening

By Kathryn Gregoire



The Cinelli Brothers Blues Band

Kudos to Mike Knott for lining up another fabulous headliner for the BSCP Fall Show. Like many of you, I wasn't familiar with the band. After researching The Cinelli Brothers and listening to a few of their songs, I am very excited they are coming to Central PA.

Blues lovers in the US are just finding out about the band because they are young and they are from European countries. The two brothers, Marco (guitarist and singer) and Alessandro Cinelli (drummer) are from Italy, Tom Julian Jones (harmonica, guitar, and vocals) is from London, UK, and Stephen Giry (bass, guitar and vocals) is from France.

The awards keep coming. Marco Cinelli was named Best Guitar Player of 2018. In 2022, the band placed 1st in the UK Blues Challenge and then came to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis when they placed 2nd in January 2023. They were also Triple Winners on the UK Blues Lounge Radio Show with 2024 Awards in the categories Best Blues Band, Best Song of the Year "Spell on Me" and Best Keyboard player and received five nominations for the UK Blues Awards in 2024.

The UK Blues Federation awarded The Cinelli Brothers Band the 2024 Blues Band of the Year, an honor for which the band had been nominated in the previous four years. The Federation describes the band as "a

dynamic 4-piece from London. Their sound blends Soul and Blues with a contemporary twist, influenced by legends like The Beatles and Stevie Wonder."

Since their debut album in 2018, the band has released four studio albums with the most recent *Almost Exactly* being the most played album in the UK during the past two months. Two of their albums have previously been nominated for the UK Blues Awards as "Blues Album of the Year".

What a treat it will be to hear the band in the intimate setting at Champions with the patio open for those of you who prefer outdoor seating.

And if you like hearing them at Champions, you will get a second opportunity to hear them the next weekend at the Lancaster

Roots & Blues Festival. BSCP brought them to Central PA first but figured they are so good that you will want to hear them twice!

The Lowry Blues Band opens the show with four outstanding local blues players featuring Tom Lowry on keyboards, accordion and harp, Rocky Rothrock on guitar, Gordy Keeny on Drums and Jon Hill on bass. Rooted in blues, honky-tonk and zydeco, all are experienced vocalists.

Lowry, Rothrock, and Keeny started the band a year ago after playing together weekly at BSCP's award-winning Thursday night blues jam at Champions. Rothrock serves as the jam coordinator. All three participate in serving as jam hosts and members of the jam crew, setting up and tearing down. They also recorded several songs on the highly-rated BSCP Backyard Blues CD released in 2019.



Lowry Blues Band



In the Spotlight...

Christina Klucker



By Hannah Sherman



Christina began her life as a Southern girl, born in Atlanta, GA, where she was adopted at one month. Her biological mother received repeated requests from Christina and answered with just one letter, in which she told of an affair with a married man and having few options as a single woman working as a music teacher. She took the safest path she could and gave birth, held her newborn for a moment, named her Cameron and went on with her life. Later, she had another child, a half-sister to Christina named Sarah. Christina has never had any more contact with her blood relatives. Thankfully, Christina's path finally led her to us, her husband and sons and the BSCP.

Christina has danced as long as she can remember and went to dance school with her sister-in-law studying tap, jazz and ballet for 15 years. She was also a gymnast and came in second in the state of Georgia at the age of 12. She enjoyed all music throughout her life, and her favorite concerts were Stevie Ray Vaughn and U2 at the Fox in Atlanta. Events she now enjoys are comedy shows, festivals and BSCP events. She is also an avid fan of her son's wrestling matches.

After growing up in Atlanta and looking for direction in her life, she decided to join the Army and studied High Frequency Communications. Stationed in Alabama, she heard from an Army friend from Potter County who sent her an application for a job at Highmark. When she was accepted, she packed her car in one hour and headed for Harrisburg. That was February of 1989.

Now the story picks up. She lost her job, had no money and broke down on the road. When a guy came by and gave her a quarter (before cell phones), he ended up taking her to lunch and called the car dealer for her. I believe that was on a Monday. Tuesday evening, she was at this guy's

house. Enter Todd. He was supposed to meet this "guy" at the Monday blues show but the guy didn't show up so Todd tracked him down at his house where Christina just happened to be.

Todd was playing that Thursday at the Halifax Hotel and Christina went. After the show she asked if she could help and Todd said "Grab that amp," so of course she did. Todd says, "And then she bent over and showed me her butt cheeks." He moved in the next day. They were going out that Friday evening and stopped at the liquor store. In the parking lot, Todd thought he would show off so he stretched and did a backbend. Our girl kicked off her shoes, did a cartwheel, a back handspring and then a backflip. Todd remembers, "From that moment on I was under her spell. We've been together 34 years and Christina has danced at every gig including on her due date."

While their two sons were growing up, Todd always told Christina that he was going to teach her the bass guitar and it would be their retirement gig. She would play for a month and then put it down for five years. It's not easy with two boys. It was off and on for many years but she finally caught up with that bass. Christina says, "I have fun performing and I like playing and taking everyone on a musical ride. It is my thing, but do I have a desire to sit down and practice for hours? I enjoy the performing aspect rather than being a student, much to my husband's dismay." A mutual friend told them about the BSCP jam at the 40&8 and they've been going since then (unless wrestling got in the way). Mostly Christina loves the camaraderie: "It's my second family." And, of course, it's a chance to dance!

The Kluckers have lived in Enola and Duncannon. They've always had pets. Three cats were named Harmony, Melody and Rhythm and two dogs were named Fender and Gibson. There was a dog named Carmella, a Jack Russell who Christina says was herself in dog form. Now they have 3 dogs, Dolly, Willie and Cash. After her life's travels, Christina ponders, "I ultimately landed here and there's nowhere else I'd rather be. Every morning the mountain view is where I am, by the grace of God."

Gary "Rocky" Rothrock: Christina is a warm, kind person and a beautiful lady. And she has as good a natural feel for music as any musician I know. You can see it in the way she dances and now as a bass player, she grabs the groove and

sits in the pocket with the best of them. It is a joy to see her "dancing" with her bass!

Marianna Schaffer: I'll never forget the first time I saw Christina. It was at Liquid 891, at the BSCP weekly jam, over 10 years ago. There she was, on the dance floor, dancing with the abandon that I wish I had. I loved the fierceness with which she danced, as if no one was watching! As we became friends, I found out that's who Christina is – someone who approaches life with a bold passion for everything that's important to her: family, friends, and music. When she told me she was learning how to play bass, being taught by her very capable husband/teacher, I couldn't wait to celebrate that with her, not knowing that she would be performing capably at the jam within a year (not surprising)! Christina is someone I deeply admire and love for her strength, her courage, and her heart. I love my bass sister!

Pete "Cheese" Netznik: I first got to know Christina in 2017 when her husband, Todd, filled in on guitar with my band, Nate Myers & the Aces. Christina went along to many shows and gave a ton of moral support and, in typical fashion, broke the ice by being the first on the dance floor! Not long after, she took her natural ability to "groove" and started playing bass. Sure, she had a great teacher (her husband, Todd), but she picked it up very quickly and became the bassist in The Mighty Klucks. I have been impressed with not only her natural ability but also her growth on the bass. She thinks she's "just a beginner" but she has come a long way in a short time.... a testament to her will and determination! Christina, I consider you a good friend and "bass sister". You are a very strong person and I have a ton of respect for you and your family.



Christina & Todd Klucker

Christina Klucker Continued

Bill Wasch: Christina and I met when Todd joined Rosey and the Naturals. She was outgoing, high-energy, and a lot of fun to be around. Especially if you could keep up! She came to almost all of the shows (maybe all?) and added to the fun in the room with her charm, wit, and dance moves. As we found out, she had been a

gymnast in school and used those skills on the dance floor. We were guaranteed to be amused and amazed at least once a night. As the years went by, Austin and Alex came along and grew into excellent athletes and musicians as well with the encouragement and coaching of Christina and Todd. Christina always wanted to play the

music she so enjoyed dancing to and got to the place in life where time allowed for her to learn from Todd. She attacked this challenge full on just like everything else and progressed very quickly. I look forward to hearing more music and some new dance moves by one of my favorite people.

MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS: Valerie McCaffrey

by Hannah Sherman



Walking a mile to school every day led to a very physical life for Valerie. Attending Steel High, she was proud to be an East Shore girl. She played piano and guitar and was always busy with church activities, cheerleading, dancing and singing in the chorus and with a school girl group called the Nine Notes. Spending summers at her cousin's grandparents farm in Virginia led to a well-rounded and varied life. There they ate what they grew and butchered their stock.

She remembers, "We always had pets. I don't think a house is a home unless you have pets. That is why my house is very hairy, but the animals are happy. I have 3 cats, an Australian Shephard, tropical fish and a female tarantula. I have a lot of land and would love to have peacocks someday. I collect peacock items."

Valerie's main area of interest was academics. She always knew she wanted to go to college. She graduated from Syracuse University and was driven to get her master's at Temple while she was teaching Language Arts. Her parents had supported her at Syracuse but she had to do it all herself at Temple. One of the first things she had to do was to liquidate and ended up selling her guitar.

During our interview Valerie kept saying several times, "I'm a very boring person." I had to disagree but I'll let the reader be the judge. Valerie says, "I always danced. I took tap, jazz and modern in high school and then taught after college. I took lessons again for a long time - at the YWCA, Parks & Rec and was taking belly dancing at a studio. I used to model when I was young and thin and later taught Jazzercise and aerobics. A friend who was a director at Parks & Rec and I developed a program called Aerobics in Motion for Parks & Rec." I had to disagree again that she was boring when she told me she worked as a belly dancer at a Middle Eastern restaurant on weekends while getting her master's. She had a band, a manager, and traveled

to weddings, birthdays, and other events. Maybe some readers have seen her on the cover of Harrisburg Magazine several times as "Xanthe" the red-headed belly dancer back in the day. Most belly dancers have black hair, but Xanthe means "fair head".

Valerie taught Language Arts at Steel High for 18 years, since 1973, while getting her masters, dancing on weekends and danced her last dance in 1979. She married in 1980 and her husband never saw her dance. Her first son was born in 1984 and meanwhile she stayed busy teaching and was 15 times president of the teacher's union and cheerleader advisor. She also studied trivia and provided training to students for Quiz Bowl on tv. Her second son was born in 1989 and about that time she was tapped to teach at Central Dauphin for an alternative program teaching juvenile delinquents who were not allowed at regular school. They were housed separately and mostly had been accused of assault of teachers. She bravely carried on doing that for 10 years. She was also union president at Central Dauphin when they went on strike.

Asking if she had any time for fun, Valerie said she loves craft shows, flea markets, movies and shopping. Their sons played on travel teams in school and they traveled with them to events. After their sons graduated she and her husband traveled cross-country on motorcycles (boring). Valerie's interest in music spiked when she and her husband were on a swimming pool board and to raise money they worked concerts at Hershey Park and the Giant Center. Seeing the Rolling Stones really got her interested but she enjoyed all of the concerts. After losing her husband in 2016 she shut down. A friend told her she had to get out and took her to Champion's for the jam. She was hooked.

Most probably don't know that Valerie used to own a gym and a Curves exercise and dance studio. She bought the Curves around 2010 but closed it because she contracted pneumonia and almost died. She had rheumatic fever as a child which damaged her heart and after 50 years had to have open heart valve replacement in 2019. She retired after 35 years teaching and now works part-time at a boutique dressing people for special occasions and loves it.

Valerie is a huge asset at BSCP, helping in the kitchen and collecting items for door prizes. She enjoys all of our events and never really knew about festivals but is excited to attend more.

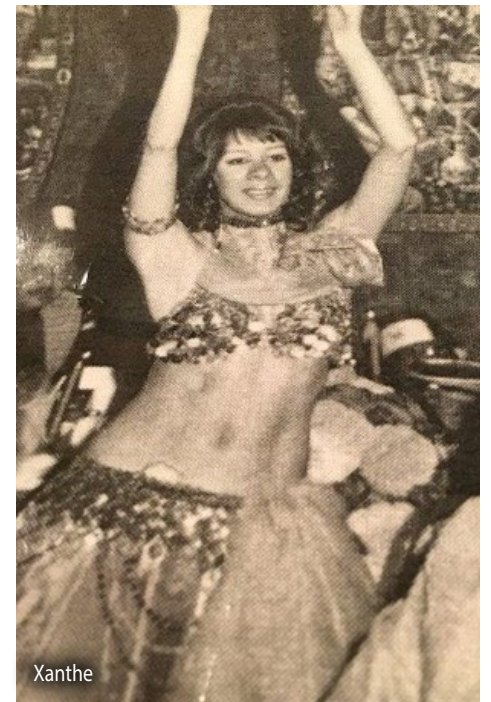
Tom Thomas: Valerie is such an awesome person. She can always be counted on to accomplish any difficult task. She is always great to work with. And when she puts on her "teachers voice," you know she

can do anything. She is wonderful and there is no one quite like her.

Joan Lenker: Val is very generous with her time for the "Blues". Always with a smile encouraging "new guests" to join. Dedicated!

Christy Lerch: Val is definitely one of the kindest people I've ever met, and one of the most dedicated members of the Blues Society! Whether you're at the Thursday jams, the Sunday shows, or one of the annual parties like the Mom I. picnic or Holiday Celebration, Val is sure to be there, often volunteering her time and effort to support the organization! She's an amazing woman and I'm honored to know her through our involvement with BSCP!

Kathryn Gregoire: Valerie is a phenomenal woman, so energetic, creative, resourceful and dependable. As a board member and a member-at-large, she brings her remarkable talents and dedication to BSCP. Warm and personable, she is very effective at spreading the word about upcoming events, obtaining door prizes for events, selling tickets, managing the table at festivals, welcoming visitors, and a myriad of other organization responsibilities. She is a cheerful presence at our weekly jams and various events, greatly appreciated by all who are fortunate to know her.



Xanthe

In Case You Missed It!

FALL SHOW Photos by Larry Fogelson



Vanessa Collier Band
Copyright 2024 by Larry Fogelson



Vanessa Collier



Derek Matteson



Tom Donovan



Tim Perks



Gordon Grottenthaler



In Case You Missed It!

MOM I PICNIC Photos by Larry Fogelson



Bag O'Nails



Blues on the Loose



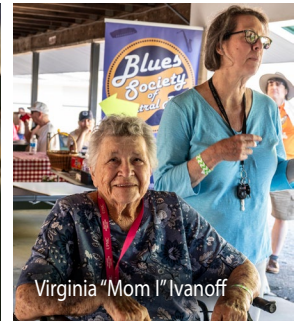
Bobby Gentilo Band



Nate Myers & the Aces



Ol' G & the Moneymakers



Virginia "Mom I" Ivanoff



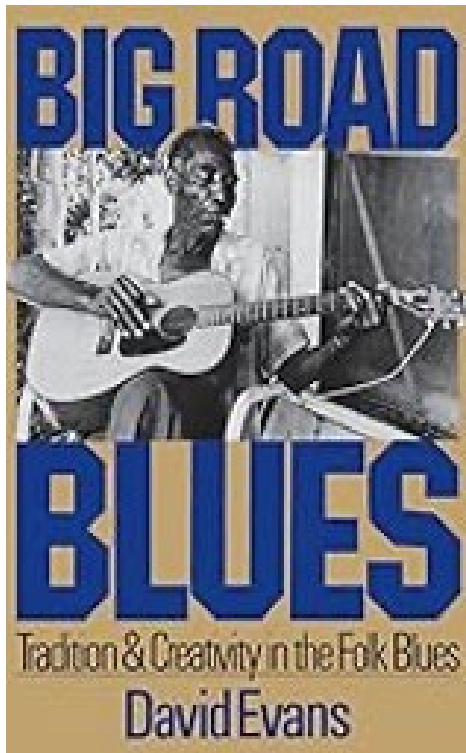
Tom Lowry Blues Band



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BLUES BOOK CORNER

By Kathryn Gregoire



Big Road Blues is one of the most significant research products of the “blues revival” era which was initiated by Samuel B. Charter’s *The Country Blues* published in 1969. Prior to that, little analysis of the blues had been done, with folklorists Howard Odum, Alan Lomas and Paul Oliver being notable exceptions.

Starting with an interview of Son House in 1964, author David Evans conducted an analytical study where he sought to understand the folk blues processes of “transmission, learning, composition, recomposition and handling of repertoire.” To do so, he taped approximately 700 blues performances of over 80 blues musicians concentrating primarily on folk music, which he defines as music transmitted by oral tradition. He used the case study method, applying it to Drew, Mississippi and connected areas.

Evans first reviews the history of

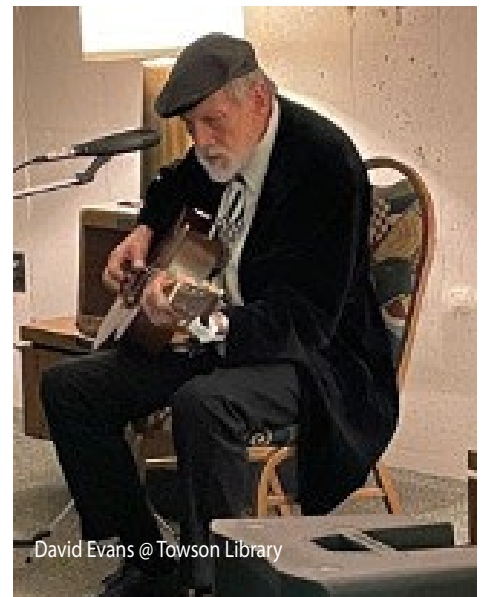
BIG ROAD BLUES: Tradition & Creativity in the Folk Blues (1982) by David Evans

folk blues, noting that it emerged in 1890, created by the first generation of blacks who were not born into slavery, and developed to be a “product of the 20th century.” Using a comparative approach in his study, he writes that blues singers tend to use one of five main types of blues which differ in whether the text is thematic or not and the degree of stability of a piece in the performer’s repertoire.

Evans extensively analyzed the work of Tommy Johnson, who recorded “Big Road Blues” in 1928 and then sold the rights to the song to the MS Sheiks for \$50, providing the core for “Stop and Listen Blues.” Some of the other participants in the study were Mager Johnson, Mott Willis, Charley Patton, Willie Brown, Kid Bailey and Howling Wolf.

For blues lovers, learning more about how blues music is created and performed gives a renewed appreciation of its complexity and beauty. For those who are blues musicians, one can only imagine the excitement of learning from being exposed to the analyses of David Evans.

Book club members not only got to read and discuss this work with each other, but they got to talk with the author who attended the Zoom book club meeting. The book was further brought to life for us by our



David Evans @ Towson Library

own book club members, Tom Cook, Hank Imhoff, and Carl Sherman with their renditions of “Key to the Highway.”

Several members were also able to attend David Evans’s blues performance on May 13 at the Towson Public Library arranged for by our fellow book club member, Bradley Alston.



Book Club Members with David Evans

Music Makers Anthology

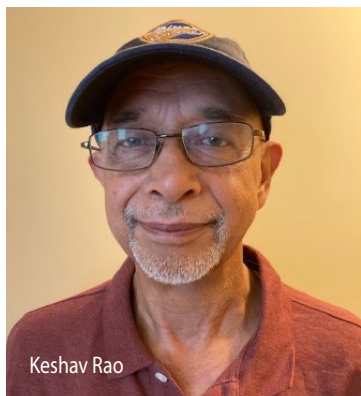
SONG KEEPERS

“To keep a song is to remember and respect its maker.”

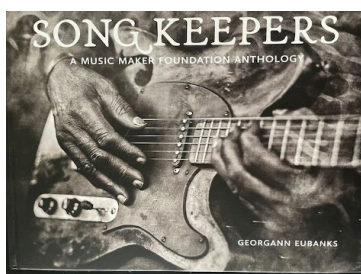
Thank you to our BSCP member, Keshav Rao of Hummelstown, PA, for his thoughtful donation of *SONG KEEPERS A Music Maker Foundation Anthology* (2024) by Georgann Eubanks. The book tells the story of the foundation and the many talented artists it helps support through its Sustenance Program, Performance Program, and Documentation and Education Program. The accompanying photography and CDs enrich the experience. The four CDs include: 1. Snap Your Fingers: Acoustic Blues, 2. Back in Business: Electric Blues, 3. No Ways Tired: Sacred Soul and Gospel, and 4. This Old House: Eclectic Folk.

Tim and Denise Duffy founded Music Maker in 1994 to “preserve and support our nation’s musical traditions by improving the lives of the artists who make them.” BSCP donates annually to the Music Maker Foundation in support of its mission.

If you wish to check out *SONG KEEPERS* and the four accompanying CDs, please email Kathy at bluesmunga@gmail.com.



Keshav Rao



BSCP PARTNERSHIPS

The Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania is committed to working together with other organizations in Central Pennsylvania who are in alliance with our mission to bring more blues education and performances to the area.

BSCP provides sponsorships for several organizations who provide free music events for the public. Most recently on Saturday, June 15, BSCP sponsored the Mikey Junior Blues Band, the co-headliner act for the free Iron Bridge Music Festival. The dynamic band inspired enthusiastic applause and lots of dancing. BSCP is looking forward to our continued sponsorship of the East Petersburg Blues Festival coming up on August 31st and with the Little Buffalo Music Festival in Newport on October 5th.

BSCP promotes blues music by disseminating information about blues events through emails in exchange for ticket price-reduction for current BSCP members. Most recently price reductions occurred at the door for the Robert Kimbrough Sr. Blues Show with Alex Warner band opening on June 8 at Underground Live in Camp Hill and online for tickets for the Shemekia Copeland Show with Ben Brandt’s Soul Miners Union band opening at XL Live on June 14.

BSCP also works jointly with organizations to provide blues events, sharing in the responsibilities. This past year BSCP joined with the Susquehanna Folk Music Society (SFMS) to bring the Piedmont Bluz Acoustic Duo to the Fort Hunter Centennial Barn in Harrisburg for a master class and a performance on January 28. BSCP is currently working with the PA College of Art & Design in Lancaster to bring a book author and blues performer to the college for a public talk and performance on October 4. Look for another joint event in 2025 with SFMS.

The blues are alive and well in Central PA! BSCP will continue to keep you updated on our partnership events through our emails, Facebook postings and website BSCPblues.com.

LANCASTER ROOTS & BLUES RETURNS

September 27-29, 2024



Central PA blues lovers are thrilled to learn that the Lancaster Roots & Blues Festival will return September 27-29 after an absence of one year due to a lack of funding. With a series of misfortunes, the festival has struggled in recent years. Its organizer, Rich Ruoff, continues to believe in its viability. In an act of faith, he sold his house this past year, using the money to pay off any remaining debts from the previous festival and to invest in the 2024 festival.

The Festival features over 80 concerts with artists from around the country playing on 10 stages at 8 venues, all within walking distance of each other. Festival Tee's and posters feature the artwork of Lancaster native Tim Ellis. To volunteer or get on their mailing list, go to lancasterrootsandblues.com. Tickets may be purchased online and at the festival.

NOLA BLUE, Inc. Celebrates Ten Years of Success

by Kathryn Gregoire



Benny Turner and Sallie Bengtson

Central PA is proud to be home to the full-service record label company Nola Blue Inc., owned and operated by Sallie Bengtson. I met with Sallie to reflect on her first ten years of business.

What inspired you to create your business, NOLA BLUE, Inc.?

Believe it or not, Nola Blue Records was inspired by a book! Specifically, publishing *SURVIVOR: The Benny Turner Story* was the impetus for what has now become two record labels, artist management, and the occasional book here and there!

Where does the name and logo come from?

When I needed a name, it was almost too easy to come up with it. Nola Blue represents my two favorite things: New Orleans and Blues music. The two sound

pretty cool together, so I ran with it. I've always loved the fleur-de-lis image, which is also symbolic of New Orleans. Everything just fit.

Who are some of the artists you work with?

Our roster includes blues legacy artists such as Benny Turner, Cash McCall (RIP), Frank Bey (RIP), Trudy Lynn, Lil' Jimmy Reed and more. Others including Clarence Spady, John Németh and Keeshea Pratt are always fan favorites, plus we've just signed the Alexis P. Suter Band. We've recently released a double album honoring the late Matt 'Guitar' Murphy and will soon be announcing a project honoring another musical icon.

I know you received the "Record Label of the Year" in 2020 by the Josie Awards. What have been some of the other highlights for you during the first ten years?

Every milestone and accomplishment for our artists is a proud moment for me. A big part of my mission is to bring recognition and attention to artists who are often overlooked by the industry at large, finding ways to shine a spotlight on their music and their stories. Certainly, all the field research we did in East Texas and Chicago for Benny Turner's book are experiences of a lifetime. The Blues Music Award for John Németh's *May Be the Last Time* album was a first for us. And the posthumous GRAMMY nomination for Frank Bey's *All My Dues Are Paid* was both bittersweet and exhilarating. Now, releasing the Matt Murphy

album with guest artists including Chuck Leavell, Steve Cropper and countless others, is a bit surreal. Sometimes I have to pinch myself!

Could you tell us a little about your experience with the BSCP Backyard Blues CD?

When I first heard the Backyard Blues CD, I was both struck by the caliber of some of our local talent and by the opportunity that BSCP gave those artists to record their own music in a professional studio. It inspired me to extend the experience for those artists by releasing the album for international airplay and review. The performance did not disappoint. In addition to solid airplay and charting, critic gave comments such as "I can't get enough of this album. It's like a breath of fresh air. It's already a strong contender for album of the year, in my opinion," in Blues Matters magazine (UK) were the cherry on top of an exciting project of which we can all be proud.

What do you envision for the next ten years?

The "crystal ball" question always stumps me! Advancements in technology continue to provide both opportunity and challenges to the music industry, making it hard to imagine what will happen next. For me, I hope to find ways to continue supporting and uplifting the artists and the music that does so much to support and uplift me. Buddy Guy said it best: "All that makes me happy is the blues!"

BLUES ROADHOUSE BY JIM WHITE

See more of Jim Whites album reviews at <https://bluesroadhouse.com>.



Nola Blue Artists *Breakin' News - 10 Years of Blues* Nola Blue Records

Blues music has been around for a long time — it's been nourishing souls for well over a century.

Nola Blue Records has been around for just ten years by comparison, but founder/president Sallie Bengtson has already found plenty of great blues to keep that nourishment flowing from her Pennsylvania headquarters.

In celebration of those first ten years, Nola Blue has released a compilation of some of the label's finest

tracks, designed to provide, in Bengtson's words, a "soulful selection of milestones from the past ten years."

It's very fitting, then, that this retrospective feature Benny Turner, whose album "Journey" was the first Nola Blue release in 2014. Not only was "Journey" an auspicious beginning for Nola Blue, it sparked a change for Turner from a sideman who began his career with his brother, Freddie King, into a powerful performer on his own. And Turner immediately kicks the session into high gear with the first of his three contributions here, "Breakin' News," a high-powered shuffle that rocks hard behind tough vocals.

Turner follows in a soulful pairing with the deep blue pipes of the late Cash McCall on the Elmore James classic, "It Hurts Me Too," featuring a wickedly sharp harp intro by Billy Branch's. The track comes from their 2018 joint album, "Going Back Home."

Frank Bey, the Southern Gentleman of the Blues, is featured on the funky soul of "All My Dues Are Paid," a song he co-wrote and won BMA nominations for with the 2021 album of the same name, a year after his death. Another McCall track follows, the easy-rocking "One Who's Got a Lot," powered by a rich vocal turn.

Clarence Spady checks in with a plaintiff request, "If Only We Could," know what the next person knows. Trudy Lynn follows with "Golden Girl Blues," the sassy

title track from her 2022 Nola Blue album, sparked by slick guitar work from Anson Funderburgh and Yates McKendree.

Harp wizard and vocal chameleon John Németh turns up on the next two tracks, first, in his incarnation as a smooth big-band singer crooning "After All," in front of the sparkling Love Light Orchestra. That's followed by a rousing sanctified version of the traditional "The Last Time," recorded while facing surgery to rebuild his jaw that could have (but fortunately did not) end his fine musical career. It's a poignant reminder of just how fragile everything in life can be.

Lil' Jimmy Reed (Leon Atkins) is next with "They Call Me Lil' Jimmy" from his 2023 album "Back to Baton Rouge," featuring that classic Jimmy Reed vibe in the hands of his long-time namesake, with piano by Ben Levin. Turner comes back for the closer, a bluesy paean to some of the music's originators, "Who Sang It First," a plea to remember the blues' origins.

"Breakin' News" is a fine, fun album on its own, filled with emotionally powerful music from rich blues voices. It's also a testament to how a dedicated record label can still find and produce excellent music that represents some of the best of this timeless musical genre.

BLUES ROADHOUSE BY JIM WHITE

See more of Jim Whites album reviews at
<https://bluesroadhouse.com>.



Toronzo Cannon *Shut Up and Play* (Alligator Records)

Toronzo Cannon is making a lot of noise with his music these days.

He's combining his powerful, traditional fiery Chicago blues licks with smart contemporary lyrical themes that pack their own punch. That combination makes for a passionate package of modern blues firmly planted in its primal roots.

The 12-song session, co-produced by Cannon and Alligator president Bruce Iglauer, features a crackling crew of Cannon on guitars, vocals, and percussion; Brian Quinn on electric and upright bass; Cole DeGenova on keyboards and clavinet; Jason Edwards on drums; Phillip "Dante" Burgess, Jr. on drums on "Him" and "Had To Go Through It" and Matthew Skoller on harmonica on "My Woman Loves Me Too Much."

Everything kicks off with screaming guitar and tough vocals lamenting the sentiment of "Can't Fix the World." The scorching "I Hate Love" adds more ferocious guitar solos behind a painful lyric. "Him" shuffles funkily into view, dipping into relationship issues by a former rival.

"Had to Go Through It to Get to It" describes racial barricades to success in a rousing bit of hand-clapping gospel. "Something to Do Man" rocks hard to describe a late-night call from a woman who knows him as her "something to do man" with something on her mind. "Message to My Daughter," turns lyrically gentle with a promise to stick with his daughter despite a broken home. "Unlovable" opens with high-quality blues licks acknowledged by Cannon, who uses the shuffling rhythms and gutty vocals to support his woman though hard times.

"Guilty" is a lilting statement about the role of responsibility in life — "everybody knows they're guilty; guilty for what they say and do." The slyly salacious "Got Me by the Short Hairs" documents the perils of a one-night stand with a surprise twist at the end. Nothing says deep blues like a down-home, back-porch acoustic gem. With Cannon's guitar, Quinn's upright bass and Skoller's elegant harp licks, "My Woman Loves Me Too Much" grins with sexy humor. Tasty keyboards lead into "If I'm Always Wrong," with Cannon admonishing, "If I'm always wrong, then leave me alone."

The musically psychedelic aura of the title track brings the album full circle from the philosophic opener, with Cannon's biting response to the idea that he should forego activism and just "Shut Up and Play."

This is how Cannon explains the personal nature

of songs: "I write what I know, what I feel," he says, "I like to put myself in the shoes of the subjects of my songs. This record is about the things going on in my life since 2019—it's a document of what I've seen and been through, but the stories are universal. And it's my way to get past negative things and keep my own sanity. Listen to the lyrics. I am a black man in America. These are NOT protest songs. I try to create honest, common-sense understanding with my songs."

And the music that accompanies that honest, common-sense understanding is pretty darn good, too.



Jennifer Porter *Yes, I Do* Cougar Moon Music

Jennifer Porter is a superb songstress with a uniquely seductive voice. Her lyrical and musical creativity has allowed her to shape a wide variety of styles, from opera to blues, into her own elegant personal vision.

With her tenth album, "Yes I Do," Porter highlights her ability to create a lyrical masterpiece of bluesy Americana and deliver it in a silky smooth vocal style that underscores the eloquence of her music.

"Yes I Do" follows Porter's success with her 2021 release, "Sun Come and Shine," for which the title track received a We Are the Music Makers award for Best Roots/Americana/Blues song. This latest release brings back the talents of Grammy winner Cindy Cashdollar and Grammy nominee C.J. Chenier.

Porter created six of the eight delightful songs here, and blended her own sparkling style into two traditional blues covers. She handles the vocals in her inimitable honeyed style, and plays piano or Wurlitzer or Hammond B3, sometimes all three, on each cut.

A rollicking "Before we Call It A Day" opens the session, upbeat in mood and lyrics, as Porter blends lead and backup vocals with honky-tonk piano into a vibrant message: "I wanna race the clock, kiss the moon / Kick up my heels, and work the room / And have a hell of a night / Before we call it a day."

The title track, "Yes I Do," follows, mellowing the mood with Porter again singing her own backup in front of her Wurlitzer and B3 lines. Her gentle vocals accentuate the romantic offering: "I'll spend my time just making rhymes into these / Hopeful little lines / And leave this lonely broken heartache behind. / Cause I love you, I love you, yes I do."

"Over You," a softly romantic ballad follows, enhanced by vocals in the upper register that build a haunting love song into an ethereal presence. "All I

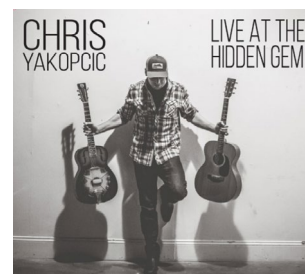
Needed Was You" sparks a lovely sentiment behind Chenier's New Orleans fire and Porter's rousing piano: "For all my dreams to come true / All I needed was you."

"Don't Worry No More" opens with a flourish of horns that leads to Porter's bluesy tale fueled by her piano and B3. Once again, her vocal charms provide a soft counterpoint to the toughness of the lyrical message: "Baby, don't worry no more / See me walkin' out the door."

The Leroy Carr classic 1928 blues "How Long" gets Porter's subtle vocal treatment with her classy piano and a sweet flugelhorn solo adding unique flavor. "Lucky Dust" opens with a Dixieland swagger with Porter and her piano leading the way through a joyous take that ends with another crackling, jazzy flourish.

The sprightly closer feels just right as a finale for this adventurous set; a lighthearted, innovative cover of the 1925 Stuart Balcom and Bessie Smith chestnut, "Good Ol' Wagon," with just Porter caressing the piano and Randy Andos' easy-thumping tuba.

You wouldn't guess it from listening, but among Porter's generous list of accomplishments (actor, screenwriter, composer) is her interest in martial arts. She holds a second-degree black belt in Tai Jujitsu and has advanced training in Kali and Jeet Kun Do. What do they add to this thoroughly enjoyable music? As the legendary lyricist Sammy Cahn once put it: "Ain't That a Kick in the Head?"



Chris Yakopcic *Live at the Hidden Gem* Yako Records

I'm a big fan of acoustic guitar blues.

It's a guitar style that's buried deep in the primeval origins of the blues and carries with it the mystique of those beginnings.

The guitar was no mystery to those who used it to make their music and accompany their lyrics. But to the outside world, it was a little different.

It took the bandleader W.C. Handy to help popularize, or maybe commercialize is a better word, the unique sounds he first heard at a train station in Tutwiler, Miss., about 1903. He heard a man playing slide guitar with a knife and singing a refrain he called "Goin' Where the Southern Cross the Dog." Much later, in his autobiography, Handy would call it "the weirdest music I had ever heard." Handy published an adaptation of this song as "Yellow Dog Blues," and he would become known as the "father of the blues" after he based many of his popular compositions on that

BLUES ROADHOUSE BY JIM WHITE

See more of Jim Whites album reviews at <https://bluesroadhouse.com>.

primitive guitar music he heard in Tutwiler.

So to me, acoustic guitar blues evokes that kind of imagery, along with the music that followed from players like Charlie Patton, Furry Lewis, Tampa Red, Memphis Minnie, Son House, Robert Johnson — and many, many more.

All of that brief history was just my long-winded way of saying how much I enjoy this new (third) album of finely crafted originals and intelligent covers and by acoustic guitarist, singer and songwriter Chris Yakopcic from Dayton, Ohio.

Yakopcic isn't a newcomer. He's been playing his music for years now, and has accumulated his share of honors and awards. Last year he was a winner in the Blues Society of Northeast Ohio Blues Challenge; in 2018 he won the Jim Weber Memorial Award for the Best Guitarist from the Blues Society of Western Pa., and also won their Blues Challenge; he was then a semi-finalist in the 2018 International Blues Challenge in Memphis. To list just a few.

But mostly his magic is in his music. His fingerstyle playing and crisp vocals make for a sparkling contemporary take on this classic blues style.

He gives a solid introduction to all his talents with this live-session opener, his original "Gotta Get Goodbye Somehow," an upbeat foot-tapper with crackling guitar work highlighting the lyrics. Next is a cover of another of those great old-timers, Blind Blake, whose ragtime picking gets an update on Yakopcic's subtly infectious "Chumpman Blues."

"When It All Goes Wrong At Once" is a cleverly penned original whose philosophy is its title, played in a righteously snappy groove. "Traveling Riverside Blues" is a formidable take on the Robert Johnson classic, building from a slow and bluesy start to a wickedly frenetic midpoint before easing back into the drama of the final bars.

"The Hangover" offers another original, gently crafted to avoid headaches on the morning after. Next, Yakopcic reshapes Leonard Cohen's tale of songwriting, "Tower Of Song," into a track that he's absorbed and reintroduced in his own rhythmic structure.

"Kind Hearted Woman" is another Robert Johnson song, elegantly repicked and vocalized in Yakopcic's very personal style. This is probably a good time to point out just how well Chris's vocals work here, on every song, whether he's ripping off in a raucous tempo or eloquently shaping the lyrics to his needs.

The original "Sounds Of The Highway," is a poignant tale of the wandering life, with still more picturesque picking. Next, Chris switches Tom Waits' train song "2:19" onto his own track. His own "Sweet Time Blues" is a sweet blues with down-home flavor and a touch of "St. Louis Blues" midway.

In his final original, "My Last Three Strings," Chris sings gently of times past. His originals are all precisely crafted to speak in the voice of the blues masters, framed by his own special sensibilities.

The rousing closer is the high drama of Robert Johnson's "Preachin' Blues," combining lead and rhythm guitar into one winning hand, as Yakopcic wields wicked chops on the devil's music.

If you haven't already guessed, I think this is an excellent album. It's filled with fine blues interpretations of great musicians, and originals that reflect the impressive talents of their creator. Chris Yakopcic makes this music his own, and owns the music he makes.

Do yourself a favor and give it a listen.



John Primer & Bob Corritore *Crawlin' Kingsnake* VizzTone Records

If you're a true-blues fan, there's nothing quite like a dose of old-school blues to satisfy your soul.

"Crawlin' Kingsnake," the fourth and latest collaboration between harp-master and album-producer extraordinaire Bob Corritore and veteran guitar-slinger/singer John Primer, is so old school that you can smell the eraser dust in the 12 vintage tracks on this outstanding collection of Chicago-style blues.

Primer and Corritore get stellar help from sidemen Bob Stroger on bass, Jimi "Primetime" Smith on second guitar, Anthony Geraci on piano, and Wes Starr on drums. It's a tight and tasty aggregation that cuts right to the blues bone.

It all begins when "Take a Message" shuffles out and rocks hard to break things open, with Corritore's tough harp riffs and Primer's still-potent 79-year-old chops sounding appropriately down and dirty. The title track is next — it's a wicked take on the classic "Kingsnake" blues, with a fierce guitar break that only serves to highlight Primer's surrounding vocals.

"Down In the Bottom" and "Hiding Place" (a Primer original) roll out next, both hard-driving romps teeming with the vitality of the blues. Like all the cuts here, everybody steps into the music, and the results are definitely blues with a feeling. "Chains and Things" slows the pace with a mournful blues lament about a "cold-hearted wrong-doin' woman," teased with a sensuous Geraci piano solo.

"Stuff You Gotta Watch" is the first of three Muddy Waters songs — this one updated with a quicker pace and Corritore's blazing harp work. Next up, Waters' "Rosalee Blues" is a lesser-known tune but filled to the brim with Muddy's spirit by Primer's soulful vocals and stinging slide guitar. Geraci's piano work adds a vital classic element.

"You're the One" lays down a funky feel before the music shifts into the gospel strains of "Bow Down On Your Knees," a brief departure from the "devil's music"

that pays tribute to some of the spiritual headwaters of the blues.

The medium-tempo "This Little Voice" returns to full-throated blues rich with Primer's vocals wrapped in Corritore's passionate harp and swampy guitar riffs. The sturdy shuffle of the gritty "Gravel Road" is a tribute to the infectious music of the great Magic Slim, whose guitar work delivered the blues with powerful simplicity.

The closer is the third Waters' cover, "Feel Like Going Home," a masterful 6 1/2-minute finale to this effervescent set that gives everyone a chance to demonstrate the vitality of this classic music.

"Crawlin' Kingsnake" is simply an excellent album; that rare studio session that captures the attitude of a smoky blues club filled with half-century-old music that remains as vital as ever.

See more of Jim White's album reviews at <https://bluesroadhouse.com>.

BLUES AIRWAVES

WPFW 89.3, Washington D.C.,
"Roots and Fruits"
w/ Bill Wax,
Saturdays: 2:00pm – 4:00pm

WTMD 89.7 (Streaming at wtmd.org),
Baltimore, "The Roadhouse"
w/ Bob Sekinger.
Saturdays: 6:00pm – 9:00pm

WXPB 90.5, Philadelphia, "The Blues Show"
w/ Jonny Meister,
Saturdays: 7:00pm – 12:00am

"The Blues Journey" with Greg Gaughan (aka Greg G) on Radio That Doesn't Suck, Toronto, Canada, Saturday: 9:00am/3:00pm/9pm EST, early Sunday Morning 3:00am EST or On Demand at www.rtds.ca.

Do you know of other blues shows on the airwaves?
Please send info to bluesmunga@gmail.com.





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