

LIVING THE BLUES LIFE

HOW THE BLUES FOUNDATION HELPS MUSICIANS

BY JACK HADLEY

I hope my friend “Bad” Bobby Walker doesn’t mind me talking about him just a little bit. As many of you may know, Bobby is dealing with a health problem that is keeping him from performing for a while. I have no doubt he will come out on top of this fight.

One of the things I learned was that Bobby has received help from the Blues Foundation. That’s right. The same group of blues fanatics who are responsible for the International Blues Competition, the Blues Music Awards and so many other great opportunities and events for the blues community. They actually HELP musicians, too.

I didn’t realize how many resources were available for working professional musicians through the Blues Foundation. Please visit their website for more information if you need assistance: <http://blues.org/hart/additional-resources/>. Here is a partial list of health and financial resources from the Blues Foundation:



“BAD” BOBBY WALKER

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Continued on page 7

IN THIS ISSUE

1 LIVING THE BLUES LIFE
3 SHOUTIN’ THE BLUES
4 A MIGHTY LONG WAY
6 BMA WINNERS

9 BMA SUBMISSIONS
10-13 BLUES ARTISTS
14-16 CD REVIEWS
17 MOJO & BUSINESS MEMBERS

18 BLUES ACTS
19 BLUES RADIO
20 MEMBERSHIP



WHAT IS BLUE STAR CONNECTION?

The Blue Star Connection (BSC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing music into the lives of children and young adults who are fighting cancer and other life-challenging situations. We also work with musical therapists in various hospitals and clinics. We also host fundraisers and benefit concerts in many cities around the world.

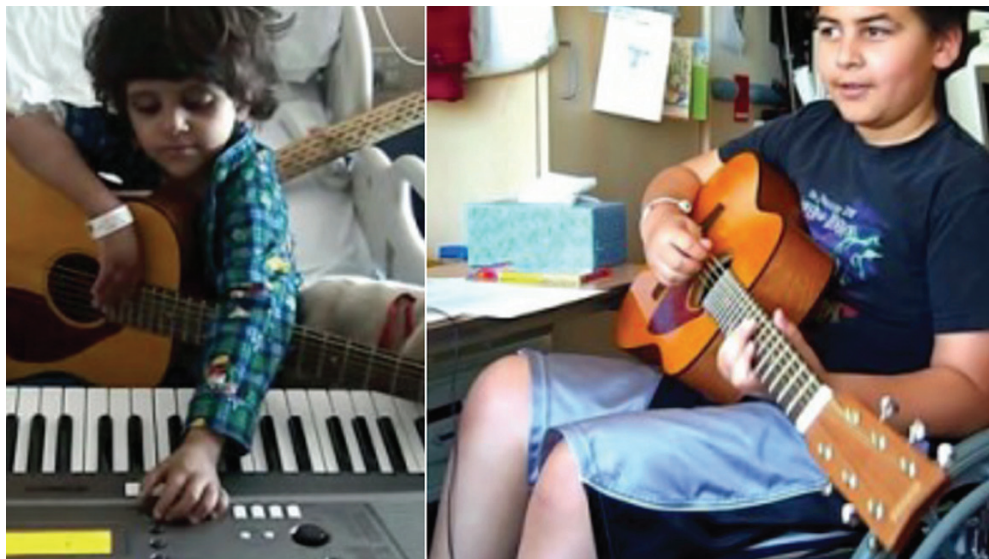
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The Blue Star Connection mission is to provide access and ownership of musical instruments for children and young adults with cancer and other serious life challenges. To date we have reached hundreds of kids and have donated musical gear to over 25 Children's Hospital Music Therapy programs, as well as several other community programs.

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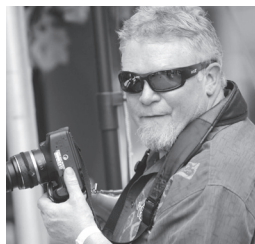
The Colorado Blues Society is a proud supporter of Blue Star Connection. Donate to Blue Star today!



CHILDRENS HOSPITAL OAKLAND

SHOUTIN' THE BLUES

BY TARRY UNDERWOOD



It is hard to believe that the Summer has come and gone! Summer is my favorite time of year, mostly because I love to see live music outside in the fresh air and sunshine. This year we got to explore some festivals that we hadn't attended before as well as some we've been to most years. The return of the Trinidad Festival was definitely a highlight for me. It was good to see familiar faces and enjoy Southern Colorado's beautiful setting. The staff at the La Quinta made us feel especially welcome by playing blues music in the lobby as we checked in. The Friday night Pre-fest party at the Brix with The John Weeks Band opening for Chubby Carrier was a great start to the weekend. I couldn't help but think of our friend Frank "Trinidad". We miss you, buddy! If you haven't made it to Trinidad in the past, I recommend you put it on your calendar for next year!

I want to thank all of our volunteers who work in the merchandise booth all summer long as well as the other volunteers who help in other areas. Jennifer Underwood works hard coordinating all of the volunteers for the various events. After too many years to count, our main man, Jim Primock, will be stepping down as merchandise manager. Jim, words cannot express what you have meant to all of us involved with the Colorado Blues Society. Your work as former president, Blues in the Schools Coordinator, merchandise manager, editor of the Holler and every other thing you have done is appreciated. I look forward to seeing what you will do next!

We are still collecting CD's for entry into the Best Self-Produced Compact Disc Competition for the Blues Foundation. So far there have only been five entries, so be sure and get yours sent in! Congratulations to all of the winning acts for the International Blues Challenge! Colorado is going to give them something to talk about in Memphis!

Get off your butts and support live music!



THE COLORADO BLUES SOCIETY
was formed to create a greater awareness and wider appreciation of the American indigenous art form, the BLUES.

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- 2. Acoustic Artist: DOUG MACLEOD**
- 3. Album: BORN TO PLAY GUITAR – BUDDY GUY**
- 4. B.B. King Entertainer: VICTOR WAINWRIGHT**
- 5. Band: VICTOR WAINWRIGHT & THE WILD ROOTS**
- 6. Best New Artist Album: THE MISSISSIPPI BLUES CHILD – MR. SIPP**
- 7. Contemporary Blues Album: BORN TO PLAY GUITAR – BUDDY GUY**
- 8. Contemporary Blues Female Artist: SHEMEKIA COPELAND**
- 9. Contemporary Blues Male Artist: JOE LOUIS WALKER**
- 10. Historical: Soul & Swagger: BUZZIN' THE BLUES BY SLIM HARPO (BEAR FAMILY RECORDS)**
- 11. Instrumentalist-Bass : LISA MANN**
- 12. Instrumentalist-Drums: CEDRIC BURNSIDE**
- 13. Instrumentalist-Guitar: SONNY LANDRETH**
- 14. Instrumentalist-Harmonica: KIM WILSON**
- 15. Instrumentalist-Horn: TERRY HANCK**
- 16. Koko Taylor Award: RUTHIE FOSTER**
- 17. Pinetop Perkins Piano Player: ALLEN TOUSSAINT**
- 18. Rock Blues Album: Battle Scars – WALTER TROUT**
- 19. Song: “GONNA LIVE AGAIN” WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY WALTER TROUT**
- 20. Soul Blues Album: THIS TIME FOR REAL – BILLY PRICE & OTIS CLAY**
- 21. Soul Blues Female Artist: BETTYE LAVETTE**

LIVING THE BLUES LIFE

HOW THE BLUES FOUNDATION HELPS MUSICIANS

BY JACK HADLEY

Continued from pg. 1

HEALTHCARE BLUEBOOK

Its free Fair Price™ search tool makes it easy to find the price you can expect to pay for medical services in your area. With answers at your fingertips, you can now make fully-informed decisions to get the right care at the right price – whenever you need it.

JAZZ FOUNDATION

The Jazz Foundation of America with its Musicians Emergency Fund provides help for elder Jazz and Blues Musicians in the form of rent, utility and food assistance. It also partners with Englewood Hospital in NJ to provide free medical assistance through a pro bono network of physicians and specialists.

MUSIC MAKER RELIEF FOUNDATION

Music Maker Relief Foundation helps the true pioneers and forgotten heroes of Southern music gain recognition and meet their day to day needs. We present these musical traditions to the world so American culture will flourish and be preserved for future generations. Our criterion for recipients is they be rooted in a Southern musical tradition, be 55 years or older and have an annual income less than \$18,000. Its programs include: Musician Sustenance – grants to meet basic life needs and emergency relief. Musical Development – grants and services for recipient artist professional development and career advancement. Cultural Access – supports the preservation and proliferation of American musical traditions. New Orleans Musician's Fund – assistance to musicians affected by Hurricane Katrina.

MUSICARES

MusiCares (part of the Grammy Foundation) provides a safety net of critical assistance for music people in times of need. MusiCares services and resources cover a wide range of financial, medical and personal emergencies, and each case is treated with integrity and confidentiality. MusiCares also focuses the resources and attention of the music industry on human service issues that directly impact the health and welfare of the music community.

THE MUSICIANS FOUNDATION

The Musicians Foundation helps professional musicians by providing emergency financial assistance in meeting current living, medical and allied expenses. We serve deserving musicians by providing financial assistance to those who need help in meeting current living, medical and allied expenses. Rising costs rob our recipients of the basic financial freedom they deserve in their time of need. Financial help is viewed as an opportunity to say “Thank You” to those who have given so much to enhance the quality of musical life in our land.

SOCIETY OF SINGERS

Society of Singers benefits the health and welfare of professional singers worldwide. Grants may be provided to singers who have needs resulting from personal, family or medical crises. Applicants must have derived their primary income from singing for at least five years to qualify for aid. Scholarships are also granted to Masters students attending vocal arts programs at accredited universities nationwide.

SWEET RELIEF

Sweet Relief provides financial assistance to all types of career musicians who are facing illness, disability, or age-related problems. Established in 1994, Sweet Relief has helped preserve our

most profound art by becoming music's most compassionate and generous charity. Chances are, we have touched the life of someone you know. □

*“...Financial help
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opportunity to say
“Thank You”
to those who have
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The 2017 Blues Music Awards Submission Process is now open

Music released between November 1, 2015 and October 31, 2016 is eligible for consideration for a 2017 Blues Music Award. There are three options for your CD to be included in the BMA submission process:

- 1. As soon as your music is released, send at least one copy of your CD to The Blues Foundation, 421 South Main, Memphis, TN 38103-4464. The earlier you do this the better. It informs The Blues Foundation staff that your CD has been released and allows us to log it for future BMA related Communications. All music submitted this way will automatically be considered for BMA nomination.**

- 2. Formally submit your release via our online service. There is no charge for this service, and upon receipt of your submission, your CD will be added to our master log for consideration by our anonymous nominators.**

- 3. To guarantee that your music reaches our nominators' ears, complete the "Ship to Nominators" process when you submit via our online service. You will be required to ship 105 copies of your CD to The Blues Foundation and you will be charged a submission fee for this service, based upon when you complete this portion of the submission process:**
 - August 16- September 5, 2016 – \$155 per submission**
 - September 6 – September 30, 2016 – \$180 per submission**
 - October 1- October 24, 2016 – \$225 per submission**

- 4. The submission process officially closes on October 24, 2016. Your discs MUST be received by The Blues Foundation no later than OCTOBER 24 to be forwarded to the BMA nominators.
To submit your music for consideration, you can go directly to this link:
<http://www.shopbluesfoundation.org/blues-music-award-submission/>**

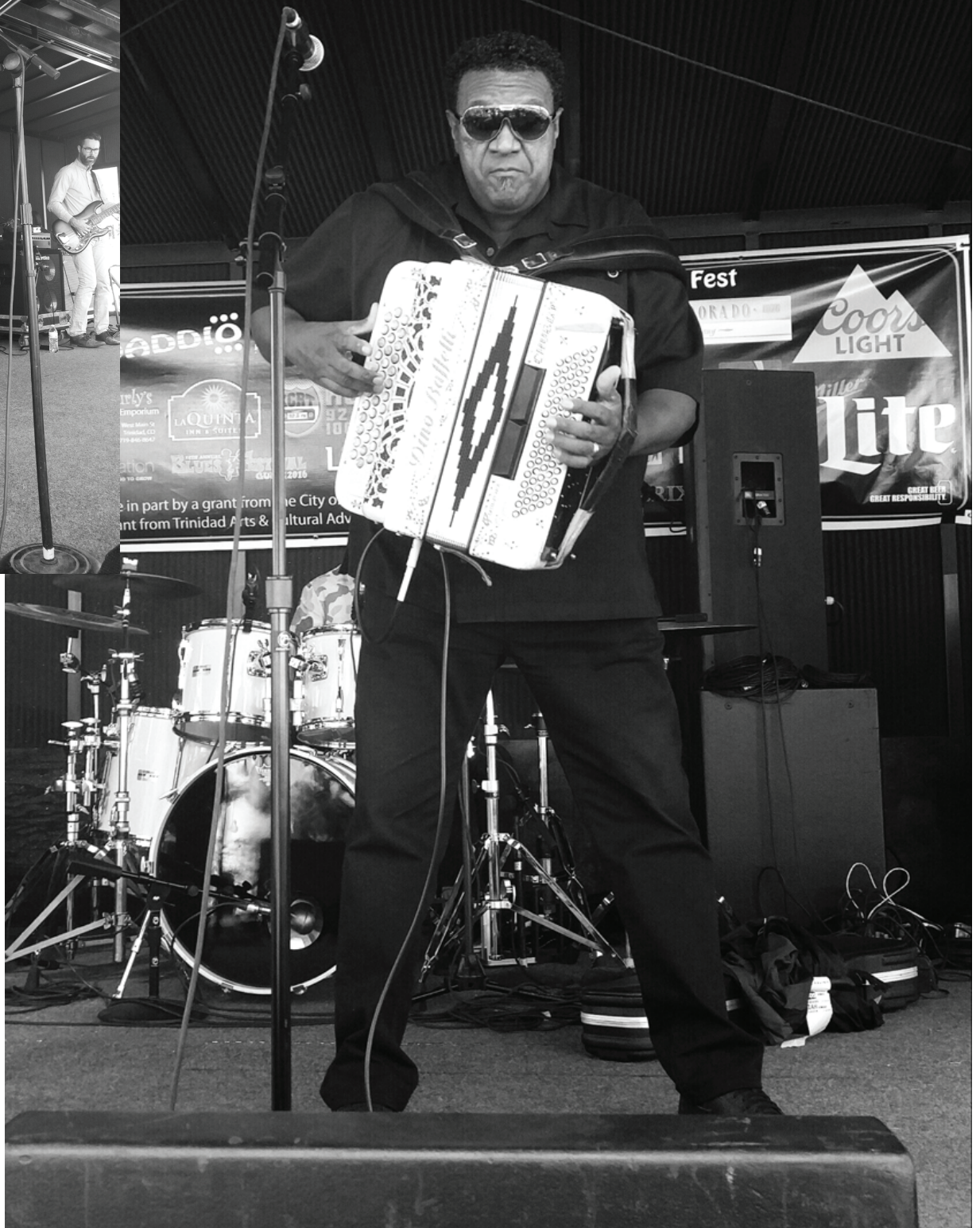
2016 BLUES ARTISTS



LAREA EDWARDS AT ZIGGIES.

PHOTO © JERRELYN CORRAGIO

2016 BLUES ARTISTS



**LEFT: LIONEL YOUNG & CURTIS HAWKINS, TRINIDADDIO BLUES FESTIVAL
RIGHT: CLIFTON CHENIER, TRINIDADDIO BLUES FESTIVAL**

PHOTOS © JERRELYN CORRAGIO

2016 BLUES ARTISTS



JOHN WEEKS BAND, TRINIDADIO BLUES FESTIVAL

PHOTO © JERRELYN CORRAGIO

2016 BLUES ARTISTS



TOP LEFT: KING STAN BAND, IBC AT BUFFALO ROSE
RIGHT: DEEP POCKET THIEVES, MHBC IBC AT ZIGGIE'S

PHOTO © JERRELYN CORRAGIO

REVIEWS

Johnny Johnston
COLORADO BLUE
Johnnyjohnston.com

Despite winning the Telluride Acoustic Blues Competition and more recently competing in the Colorado Blues Society's International Blues Competition, Fort Collins bluesman Johnny Johnston remains one of the hidden treasures of the Colorado Blues scene. On his second disc *Colorado Blues*, Johnston creates an identity of what an indigenous Colorado bluesman should be like on this all original affair that extols the virtues of the Centennial State. Three songs contain the word Colorado in the title; "Goin' Back to Colorado" and the title track "Colorado Blue" bookend the proceedings. Several more reference various locales, aspects or historical chapters around the state.

Better yet, this finger-pickin' feast of epic proportions feels as if it came from Gold Hill in the early 70s when then resident Stephen Stills used to ride his horse across the countryside. Johnston is a master finger-style guitarist, creating an infectious rocking rhythm on a wood-bodied resonator (a 1930's National Trojan/Supertone) and breathtaking instrumentals ("Sweet Solei") on an acoustic Martin. As a vocalist, Johnston sings with a slightly raspy voice resembling that of an old soul, conjuring the image of a long-bearded hermit tucked away in a rustic cabin in the isolated high country. Though it's mainly a showcase of his immense talents, Johnston is joined on select tracks by Felonius Smith (slide guitars, mandolin), Brent Hawley (mandola), Papa Juke's 'Mad Dog' Friedman (harmonica) and Dan Crecco (percussion). Nic Clark and Ronnie

Shellist also contribute harmonica on one track each.

If things don't feel mountain enough, Johnston goes further into the woods by playing banjo on two tracks for a change of pace. There's a certain twisted irony in "When Daddy Plays the Banjo." The song opens with a child's tormented memories of his father playing banjo. He can't sleep because his dad's banjo playing is so loud and wall-rattling. Finally, after Smith's fitting lap slide guitar solo, the child falls asleep and dreams of seeing 10 million devils playing banjos in a fiery hell. The song then wittily concludes with 'When I wish upon on a star,



I wished my daddy played slide guitar.' Sounds like something from a guitarist's perspective.

- DAN WILLING

BLUES CALENDAR AVAILABLE for all Blues Musicians and Venues

Did you know you can have your gigs posted on the Colorado Blues Society Calendar?

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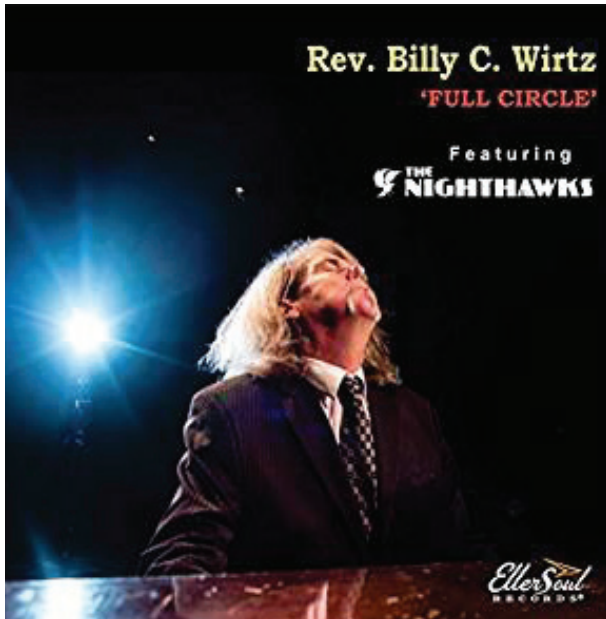
The Colorado Blues Society (CBS) is dedicated to increasing awareness of and appreciation for the Blues as an indigenous American Art form (and the wellspring from which all contemporary popular American music originated).

The Colorado Blues Society is a 501(c) (3) organization.

www.coblues.org

REVIEWS

**Rev. Billy C. Wirtz featuring
The Nighthawks
FULL CIRCLE
EllerSoul Records**



Like the Reverend Billy C. Wirtz, Oscar Levant (1906-1972) was an American pianist, composer, author, comedian and actor. With that said, they have much more in common than that. You see, Oscar was the person who proudly proclaimed that "There is a fine line between genius and insanity and I have erased the line". Now Billy may not have erased the line but he sure does cross it a lot.

On "Full Circle", Billy's twelfth release and first on EllerSoul Records, the legendary wild man is joined by the legendary Nighthawks as well as several other stars. The complete ensemble consists of: Reverend Billy on vocals and piano; Bob Driver on guitar and vocals; Steve Riggs on bass and backup vocals; Lil' Ronnie Owens on harmonica and backup vocals; and a bunch of amazing artists you know as the Nighthawks: Mark Wenner on harmonica and backup vocals; Mark Stutso on drums and backup vocals; Johnny Castle on bass and backup vocals; and Paul Bell on guitar and backup vocals.

Living not all that far from Billy, I'm occasionally able to catch some of his live shows. However, the times I have, those shows have always been solo. When I heard that the guys at EllerSoul teamed Billy up with this stellar lineup I immediately thought this was genius... or insanity...at work. Either way, I knew it would be a hell of a good time.

The CD opens with one of Billy's originals, the classic and rockin' "Too Old". Although what I'm listening to totally contradicts him, Billy seems to think he's "too old to rock and roll but he's just right to sing the blues". "Bull Shit, Billy. With that Jerry Lee thing you've got goin' on piano; the Chuck Berry thing Paul's got goin' on guitar; the way Mark's wailing on harmonica; and some of the rocking-est rhythm these ears have heard coming from Mark S. and Johnny; this is rock 'n' roll at it's very best".

Because his zany antics and hilarious lyrics usually command most of my attention, it's on an instrumental where I get to fully appreciate the maestro that Billy is on the piano. On "Smokie Part 2", a Bill Black song, the Reverend's sounding as good as any of those players who's names I keep seeing on "piano player" award ballots.

So with Johnny Castle co writing "Rockin' Up To Gloryland", it's quite obvious Reverend Billy's bizarreness can be contagious. On this smoker it's Saint Peter putting on his blue suede shoes, Sodom rolling over and telling Gomorrah the news and a whole lot of shaking in the angel band. This is exactly what you'd expect from this match up....The Nighthawks crankin' out the straight up kick ass blues they're know for and Billy killing it on piano while belting out witty and wacky lyrics.

On an absolutely beautiful rendition of Floyd Cramer's "Your Last Goodbye", the insane guy took a break while the genius returned to the stage. The difference between these two altar egos is staggering. This instrumental features Mark S. and Johnny laying down a very

relaxing rhythm while Billy and Mark create an amazingly enchanting sounds on the piano and harp.

One of the best parts of this song is the story Billy tells about how he came to write it. There's a waitress in Billy's favorite dinner who always likes to tell Billy stories about her father, who was also in the music business. Upon seeing her after not having been there in awhile, Billy asked about her father. Her reply was "Daddy Passed Away" and she continued on to say "then mama turned gay". Of course, Billy saw this as "Neon sign saying write a song Billy"...which he apparently did. Enough said, you'll just have to listen for the rest of the story.

Although he didn't write this one, I'm sure some of the crazy lyrics Billy did write were while under the influence of a little too much "Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee". Thankfully, those days are long gone. Since the wine drinking being done on this one takes place in N'awlins, Billy does lay down some wickedly wild honky-tonk piano licks. And as they get in some ferocious licks of their own on harp and guitar, by no means are Lil' Ronnie and Paul being left behind. Another smoker for sure.

"Mennonite Surf Party" is another furious and chaotic track. It's indeed a party song and the guys sound like a choir singing some kind of a drinking song. On the other hand, the middle third of the song features some of the discs best instrumentals. Billy, Mark and Paul take turns doing piano, harp and guitar leads that I literally wanted to go on forever.

Other tracks on this sometimes wacky but always entertaining album include: "One Point Five", "Mama Was A Deadhead", "Breakup", "Who Dat? (The Rev's Theme)", "I'm A Senior", "Daddy Was A Sensitive Man", "The Hand Of The Almighty" and "Reprise (Smokie Part 2.5)"

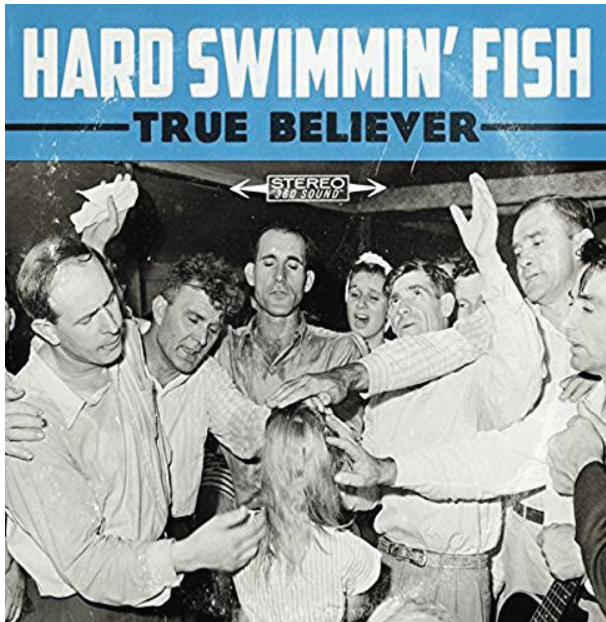
Get in touch with the Reverend Billy C. Wirtz at www.revbillycwertz.com, Facebook, www.thenighthawks.com or www.ellersoulrecords.com.

And please, tell everyone that the Blewzzman sent you.

- PETER "BLEWZZMAN" LAURO

REVIEWS

Hard Swimmin' Fish TRUE BELIEVER



So here it is, some twenty plus years and five CDs in and I'm just discovering Hard Swimmin' Fish. If there was ever a time for a WTF, this is it. That said, better late than never.

Should anyone else need an introduction, Hard Swimmin' Fish are: Demian Lewis on vocals, guitar and banjo; Waverly Milor on vocals and harmonica; Jason Walker on drums and percussion; Randy Ball on upright and electric bass; and special guest John Sharrer on organ. "True Believer", their fourth release, contains twelve tracks of which eight were written by the guys.

The thing that most impressed me with this band was the fact that they reminded me so much of..... absolutely no one. How refreshing! Sure, they have their influences - and they're even mentioned on the one sheet - but musically, they do a good job of not mimicking them. That's originality!

Hard Swimmin' Fish didn't take very long to make me a "True Believer", they did it with the original, opening and title track. The rhythm is rugged, the guitar leads are feisty, the harp leads are spirited and the vocals (Demian) are scrappy. With those descriptions all being synonymous with this word, gritty is the best way to describe Hard Swimmin' Fish.

Don't let the title of this original, "Five Years Hard Labor", fool you. It's got nothing at all to do with breaking rocks on a chain gang. The labor referred to here is a labor of love - in actuality, a lack of it - from the woman Demian spent five, obviously miserable, years with. Another hard driven track sung and performed with the intensity I'm starting to realize I'll be hearing throughout the whole disc.

This Wolf/Willie cover called "Howlin' For My Darlin'" should be a hint as to who those aforementioned influences may be. It features Waverly on the vocals and although he and Demian don't look that much alike, with their gritty and grittier vocal styles, they sound like identical twins. Musically, it's Randy's upright bass and Jason's drum and percussion work that make this one work.

"Ooh, That Was Close", isn't a reference to nearly getting hit by a runaway train, but the song's certainly got the energy of one. With so much musical diversity taking place between the guitar, the banjo, the harmonica and the rhythm & percussion, this is one heck of a genre crossing track.

Hard Swimmin' Fish's technique of incorporating many different styles of music into their recordings is masterful but the guys can surely get up for some low down traditional blues as well. "Love Me Or You Don't" is exactly that. With Randy and Jason slowing down the rhythm groove behind them, it's Demian's soulful vocals and stinking guitar licks along with Waverly's very bluesy harping that highlight this one.

Another of the disc's straight up blues tracks is a cover of "Need Your Love So Bad". For several reasons, this was by far my favorite track: one of those is that with Waverly's powerful and emotional deliverance, along with his broad range and note holding ability, this is the disc's best sung track; another is the fact that Demian, also at disc's best, is just killing it with his down and dirty, string bending attack on his guitar; and lastly, but certainly not least, throw in John - with his mesmerizing organ work propelling this already potent rhythm section up a notch and all I can say is "WOW".

Since I can't stop replaying the above track, I guess this is where I've got to close. The rest of the songs on "True Believer" are: "No Shortage of the Blues", "Come Together", "Get Gone", "Once Upon A Time", "Mess Around" and "Don't Let The Devil Ride".

To learn more about Hard Swimmin' Fish, as I needed to and happily did, just go to www.hardswimminfish.com and you can also like their FB page at www.facebook.com/hardswimminfish. Once you do that, please tell them the Blewzzman sent you.

- PETER "BLEWZZMAN" LAURO

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