

BLUESLETTER

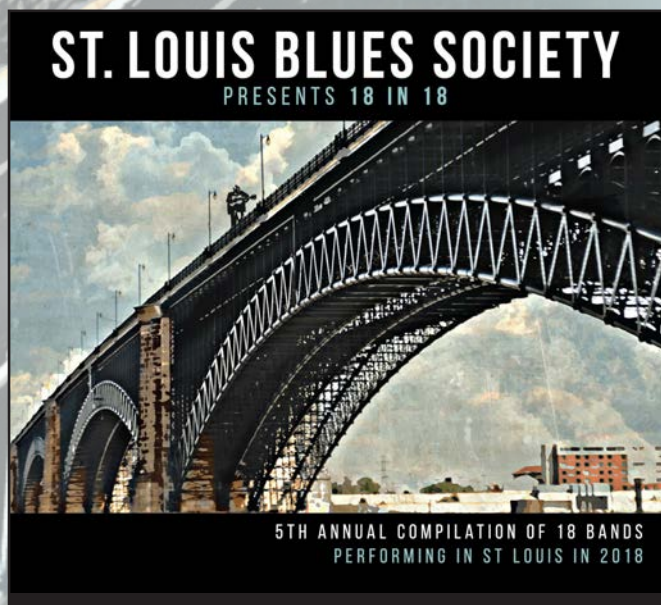
THE BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE SAINT LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY Mar/Apr 2019 Number 95

THE ST. LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY PRESENTS OUR FIFTH ANNUAL COMPILATION CD

FEATURING 18 ORIGINAL SONGS BY

Little Dylan
Torrey Casey & The Southside Hustle
Uncle Albert
Al Holliday & East Side Rhythm Band
Bob 'Bumblebee' Kamoske
Aina Cook
TJ Muller & The Gaslight Squares
Sharon 'Bear' Foehner
Saint Boogie Brass Band
Brian Curran & Adam Andrews
Ms HY-C & Fresh Start
Lobster
Lady J Huston & The Jazz Edge Orchestra
Walter Greiner
Miss Molly Simms
Chris 'Iron Jaw' Taylor & the Alley Tones Blues Band
Daniel 'Ghostleg' Hamm
Charles Hunt

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St. Louis legendary DJ GABRIEL
and we mean the MAN!

PLUS: Profile of Al Holliday - CD Review of the reissue of Henry Townsend's *Mule*



PRESERVING AND PERPETUATING BLUES MUSIC IN AND FROM ST. LOUIS SINCE 1984

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So here it is, the wait is over! Your membership copy of *18 in 18* is enclosed. We have had such good reviews already. I believe this is the most diverse representation of St. Louis Blues on one CD we have produced yet. Big thanks to Paul Niehaus for another great job.

It is official. The St. Louis Blues Society currently has a full Board of Directors and full Executive Committee for the first time in quite a while. I'd like to offer a huge thanks to all the current board members who have their work cut out for them: Lynn Barlar, Michael Battle, Gene Dobbs Bradford, Hound Dog Brown, Terry Hardin,

Lee Howland, Rich Hughes, Erika Johnson, Jerry Minchey, Paul Niehaus IV, Jeremy Segel-Moss, Marty D. Spikener, Mary Kaye Tonnies, Alonzo Townsend, Kelly Wells and Johnny Willis. The Executive Committee for 2019 includes: Chairman: Jeremy Segel-Moss, Vice Chairman: Alonzo Townsend, Treasurer: Jerry Minchey and Secretary: Lynn Barlar. We have a fantastic group of board members and I have high hopes for what we can accomplish!

Hats off to Mike Battle and his education committee for the hard work they've already done in the first few months of 2019. Mike has brought multiple blues groups/musicians to schools this year and the students have really been exposed to some of the true talent in St. Louis. We are always looking for new schools and venues for education programming. If you have any connections or would like to see our Blues in Schools programs at your school please contact Mike at: michael-battle@sbcglobal.net.

The STLBS has been very proud to partner with the Dark Room in Grand Center for Blues Music on Tuesday Nights! Roland Johnson and Soul Endeavor has done a great job kicking off February. Look for new bands hitting the stage and make sure to swing by on a Tuesday for great music and delicious food.

2019 has all of the makings of a great year for Blues Music in St. Louis. We hope you can join us at events, and as usual, if you'd like to be involved please reach out. We need all the help we can get!

Jeremy Segel-Moss, STLBS Board Chairperson



CORRECTION

Last month, in the caption of Baby Blues Showcase photos, we didn't list Aaron Griffin as one of the performers. We apologize to both Aaron and Reed Radcliffe.

If you loved Aaron at Baby Blues, you get another chance to see him perform on Tuesday, March 26 at The Dark Room at Grandal Theatre as part of the St. Louis Blues Society Tuesday Night Blues.

photo by Dana Chapman

E-mail Jeremy I'd love to hear from you!

Please write me at jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org
and tell me your thoughts on the new CD.

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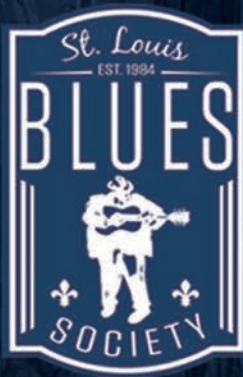
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The St. Louis Blues Society is dedicated to preserving and perpetuating blues music in and from St. Louis, while fostering its growth and appreciation. The St. Louis Blues Society provides blues artists the opportunity for public performance and individual improvement in their field, all for the educational and artistic benefit of the general public.

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Al Holliday: He's Got A Good Thing

story and 2018 Big Muddy Blues Festival photos
by Bob Baugh

It took going to prison to make Al Holliday realize that if he was truly going to be a musician, he needed to do it full time. The prison part came in 2010 when he used his new Parks and Recreation and Tourism degree from the University Missouri to get a job supervising recreation facilities at the Eastern Missouri Correctional Institute. The music part was home grown.

Experiencing Al Holliday and the East Side Rhythm Band for the first time is a revelation. As band members arrive on stage you start counting and begin to wonder when do they stop. When Al yells, "How y'all doin'," and all ten begin to play, my-oh-my. Holliday leads, attacking the keyboard, while the rhythm section pounds out a relentless beat, the horns reply and as his gravelly growling voice ramps up and the backup singers weigh in it's magic. Your body begins to sway, and your feet start moving. It's the eastside kid's calling card.

Maybe it was preordained. Holliday's parents, Jan and Angie, met in a Belleville IL music store. His dad was a singer/songwriter, guitar teacher and engineer. "There was music in our house all the time," according to Al, "there was soul and R&B and a radio dial set on 88.1 (KDHX)." His first instrument was a fifth-grade trumpet which quickly gave way to strings when he got his first guitar at twelve and dad began to teach him.

The first band came at thirteen and by fourteen Holliday was teaching himself the piano. High school brought a three-piece outfit with Holliday playing guitar, keyboard and doing the vocals. he laughs when he says, "the experience taught me that I like to be in charge of my music." The Revolution Sweethearts attracted a local following that included a middle schooler, Caleb Klinger, whose bass now drives the rhythm section of the East Side Rhythm Band. College would provide the skills he uses today in writing and arranging his music.

Holliday arrived at Mizzou in 2006 to find a thriving music scene in Columbia MO. He found kindred spirits and formed Al Holliday and the Lucky Stars. His vision and band got bigger growing to seven members including a trumpet and an alto and tenor sax. While studying for a degree in the School of Natural Resources he also found a music educator who would become a friend and mentor.

"I kind of wandered into the School of Music to check it out because I wanted to learn more about the big band sound. I met Dr. Doug Liebinger the head of the Jazz Studies Department. He welcomed me even though I wasn't a music major. He brought in a group from our band and worked with us as a jazz combo.



Doc taught the toughest course I ever took. It was a year-long study of jazz, harmony and arranging in jazz, soul and R&B world in my junior year. The final exam was to hand chart and arrange and entire big band song. It taught me how to write and arrange music."

Holliday left Mizzou with a degree and his first CD, *Soul Supper*, a seven-song live studio recording with five originals. "The horn section," he said, "it gave it a Booker T and the MGs feel." It was also the end of the Lucky Stars. Going home meant finding a job and hooking up with old Collinsville musicians and friends. He said working at the prison was important: "You learn that inmates are real people like you and me who made mistakes. Working full time made me focus. I realized that I needed to make music my full-time occupation. So, I committed to doing it."

The sound Holliday had been developing blossomed as he wrote and slowly built the East Side Rhythm Band. He said his inspiration comes

continued on page 6

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continued from page 4

from “the regional and R&B sound and artists that do their own natural thing.” Leon Russel, Joe Cocker, Allen Toussaint, Bonnie Bramlett (Delaney and Bonnie) and Taj Mahal are on that list. But the eastside holds a special place in his heart because it is the place Ike and Tina Turner defined soul and R&B: “Tina Turner is an inspiration. She is the hallmark St. Louis soul and intensity.” There’s also a dash of New Orleans funk in his inspirational mix.

Holliday fell in with a widening circle of St. Louis musicians like the Funky Butt Brass Band while spending a couple of frustrating years trying to use a digital click track approach to his 2013 CD, *Made it Through the Mill Again*. It led to “a moment of clarity,” he said, “I needed to do this as a live album to capture the energy.” He tapped friends from Funky Butt to put together a six-piece horn section and cut it in one day. Later, through that same group he would find another piece of his band puzzle, Derick Trammel’s baritone sax.

2103 was a pivotal year for Holliday. The cd drew raves and the Riverfront Times named him *Best Male Vocalist* and *Best R&B Artist*. He began a five-year gig at the School of Rock teaching keyboard, guitar, vocals and ensemble. And, he settled into a south St. Louis home with his love Emily Ligon that was perfect for iced tea, critters, and a studio with ample space for band practice and private lessons. Holliday had found

his comfort zone and the songs followed as he began to build a studio.

Holliday wanted to be able to produce his own music because “private studio time and projects cost a lot.” Eventually a 2” analog tape player would join the soundboard, a rescued Wurlitzer Electric Piano, other music gear and the washer and dryer in the unfinished basement. But old gear doesn’t fix itself so he learned how to do that too as he developed his production skills. He said it is all part of his long-term plan to “build a larger studio for my music and others.”



Holliday’s 2015 CD, *Natural Remedies*, was cut live to analog tape at Sawhorse Studios. He loved the old school analog approach and said, “with this one I found a new direction, a voice, a symmetry that went deep on songwriting textures.” The feel of the electricity and soul of the bands live performances was apparent on the CD. “It was,” as one reviewer noted, “made with as much blood, sweat and tears as fried chicken and potato salad.”

By 2016, the East Side Rhythm Band became a unit and the basement was a fully functioning studio. There

had been a lot of band personnel changes over the years. Ryan Torpea (trumpet) Caleb Klinger and Derick Tramel were all veterans of *Natural Remedies*. Ania Cook (vocals), Hilary Fitz (vocals), Jared McFarland (drums), Matt Lyons (guitar), and Zac Minor (sax/flute) had all joined the band. The last piece was the 2016 addition of a tenth member, Alexandra Sinclair, a talented keyboardist/vocalist and fellow teacher at the School for Rock.

They all know their way around the local music scene. Torpea, Klinger, McFarland and Lyons are part of

the rock/jazz group Animals in Hind-sight. Derick Tramel, who has played with Funky Butt Brass Band and Big Mike Aguirre and the Blu City All Stars, loves “the vision Al brings to everything he does and his willingness to take

ideas.” Vocalist Ania Cook, an award winning Madagascar native, came through the Colombia music scene and the Roots N Blues N BBQ Fest. She recorded an original for this year’s St. Louis Blues Society *18 in 18* CD. Sinclair, who also plays with Torey Casey and the South Side Hustle, said, “this experience has been nothing short wonderful to see something come together—we have been together long enough we know what he [Al] wants.”

At Big Muddy 2018 the band was hitting their groove. Their Saturday evening performance mixed new

and old original material with some blues covers. Many in the large Third Street Stage audience had never seen them but the raw energy, funk, soul, and emotion of their performance had the crowd on its feet shouting and dancing. The band tore into each song building and feeding the frenzy. At one point, Holliday was on his feet pounding the keyboard when he grabbed his guitar and began slashing away and belting out lyrics. His face was flushed and body visibly vibrating with so much energy and emotion that you would swear he was going to levitate. It left everyone breathless. They were riding high after the release of their new CD, titled *4963*.

The new songs had been stage tested at previous shows, the analog tape machine was fixed, and studio was ready. Holliday knew what came next, “You gotta put a deadline on it. So, I set a release date before we started. A May 2018 date made us focus.” When they started, he realized the piano was bleeding into the other mikes so they moved it upstairs. “No problem,” was Holliday’s take, “I just ran a mike wire through the floorboards to the basement.” “Although,” he admitted, “it was kinda strange to be playing on the first floor

with the rest of the band in the basement but it worked because we are so tight.”

The CD title, *4963*, tells you Holliday is at home, literally. That’s the band in the cover photo standing on his front steps. The full throttled chords, growl and grit of the first song, “Ain’t No One Got a Good Thing,” tells you they got it right. This is an album filled with empathy, love, soul, emotion and all those swirling influences Holliday has crafted into his own unique style.

“Real Good Woman” is down home love song about his life with Emily. The rolling organ chords of “That Bird Has Flown” sets the stage for Aina Cook and Holliday to tell a heart-felt story about her journey here. There’s also direct nod to the east-side in “Time Ain’t Long” that Holliday said is “a funky feeling of the blues 100 percent inspired by Albert King.” Empathy flows like a river through “Lady on the Street.” Holliday chuckles when describing “Little Woman of Mine” as his “best impression of Nirvana Unplugged.”



Social consciousness also weaves its way through the cd. The changing tempos of “Wake Up, America!”, written and performed with the talented Kenny DeShields, speaks frankly to the poverty in our own backyard. “Days (4963)” is an emotion laden song inspired by home and haunted by the police shooting death of Philando Castile. The soft rendition of “No How, No Way,” which Holliday thinks represents his “deepest song writing,” came from “feeling messed up about a messed-up world.”

4963, a masterwork of blues, soul and funk from an evolving singer/songwriter and band that does St. Louis proud won the 2018 St. Louis Blues Society *Best Self-Produced CD* challenge at the Road to Memphis. The work met all the Blues Foundation’s criteria for submission to the International Blues Challenge—blues content, musical performance, audio quality and production value of the recording, professionalism and visual appearance of cover art and design, credits and liner note information—and was entered in the IBC in January of 2019. 🎵





18 in 18: A Blues Tonic to Set Your Head Straight

by Bob Baugh

If you're looking for some great St. Louis music to set your head straight for 2019, the St. Louis Blues Society latest release, *18 in 18*, is the tonic you need. In producing his fourth CD for the Society, Paul Niehaus IV has delivered a tasty mix of tunes that he and STLBS chairperson Jeremy Segel-Moss describe as, "the most stylistically diverse album we've had so far." And, it may be the most complex one to date.

While each CD has showcased some aspect of the local music scene, it always provides a mix of styles. For example, *17 in 17* had a soul emphasis while other years have been more Delta or eclectic blues. Segel-Moss says he's excited about *18 in 18*, "It's a testament to the wide variety of blues and soul in STL today from Walter Greiner's bluesy American folk style to Lady J's full orchestra." Niehaus agrees, "from old time traditional pre-war blues to the cutting edge of contemporary STL blues, it's all represented."

Working in the comfort of his south city wood paneled basement studio, Blue Lotus Recordings, Niehaus puts all the pieces together. "It's like putting a puzzle together," he said, "we identify the artists, schedule studio time, do the recordings, engineer the music and put it in a good running order that takes the listener on a journey from the first track to the last." But each song is a puzzle too. The studio work can vary widely from the five solo/duo songs on the album to Al Holliday's ten-piece East Side Rhythm Band and Lady J Huston's collaboration with the Jazz Edge Orchestra.

Lady J's song, "Hide-Away," was the most complicated recording

challenge Niehaus has faced to date. When she showed up with sheet music and the Jazz Orchestra and its five-piece rhythm section, four trumpets, two alto saxophones, two tenor saxophones, one baritone saxophone, and four trombones including a bass trombone, he was ready. It took a five-hour session to record each section and Lady J's vocals and trumpet solo. The arrangement was an intricate mix of styles and tempos. "The foundation is a blues ballad that expands the standard blues chord progressions," Lady J explained, "and mixes in some jazz elements like Duke Ellington and Count Basie and some up-beat funk."

Lady J fits with Segel-Moss's intent to have "everyone find someone or something on the CD they have never heard before." She's a native St. Louisan who played trumpet and was music director (1980-82) for Albert King until she accepted a music scholarship to Howard University. Life and work would take her to Las Vegas for 25 years where she won awards for Best Blues Band and Best Blues Performer and was heralded as "The Las Vegas Queen of the Blues." A debilitating illness brought her back home in 2013. It wasn't until mid-year 2018 that she was able to return to the stage. She's glad to be back home and performing again.

18 in 18, like its predecessors, is all about introducing St. Louis music to the world and to St. Louis what we have here. This album, the fifth in the series, brings the total to 80 original songs by local artists. One more will bring the Blues Society to a boxed set status. Niehaus is grateful to be part of it: "My ear for engineering and production have improved over the

last four years, thanks in large part to the experience these albums have given me." We thank him for providing us another celebration of the robust music scene and the talented artists that make it so.

As advertised, *18 in 18* represents the broad St Louis blues tradition. You will find Little Dylan, who represents the next generation of blues, kicking off the album with his first recorded original song. There are several quieter more traditional solo numbers from Sharon Foehner, Bob Kamoskee, and Walter Greiner as well as a duo from Brian Curren and Adam Andrews. Tim Albert and Lisa Campbell's sweet vocal and piano interplay on "Telephone" is a winner. The beat picks up with our past IBC contestants: Hy-C and Fresh Start (2019/STL and 2019 IBC winners), Torrey Casey and the Southside Hustle (2018/STL and 2019/ILCentral) and Al Holliday and the East Side Rhythm Band (2017 & 2019/STL Best Self-Produced CDs).

There's some horn infused dance and New Orleans style music from the St. Boogie Brass Band and TJ Muller and the Gaslight Squares. Female vocalists Lady J, Miss Molly Sims and Aina Cook give us three shades of blues. Cook, who is also part of Al Holliday's band, makes an impression with this debut. Lobster and Charles Hunt take us old school with blues and soul. Daniel Hamm shows us some electric North Mississippi blues while Chris "Iron Jaw" Taylor takes us on a slow blues journey with some outstanding harp work.

Yup, *18 In 18* is quite the St. Louis blues journey. It is one that impresses and makes you want to hear more from these talented artists. So we will...

Here is the lineup and some thoughts from each about their song:

Little Dylan Triplett – “The Dog Crawled In”

It's a straight up blues song. I wanted to be on *18 in 18* to be able to do something of my own and show that I can not only execute music at the best level but write my own music as well.

Torrey Casey and the South Side Hustle – “Meet Me in St. Lou”

“This is an anthem and a tribute to our wonderful city. It's a traditional blue shuffle on the beat. It is a song that anyone and everyone can sing.”

Uncle Albert – “Telephone”

“I sat down to write a new song and this one just fell out. The story line is ‘Man falls in love, Girl leaves town, He would walk holes in his shoes just to hear her voice again.’ It's an acoustic Piano/Guitar Blues style. I'm a proud supporter of the Blues Society and to be of the vibrant and nurturing St. Louis blues scene.”

Al Holiday and the Eastside Rhythm Band – “Sad Old Eyes”

“It's about having a relationship with someone that uses your name like it's a curse word. The style is simple, straight forward and inspired by the kind of song Ray Charles would have cut. The beat was taken from a tasty New Orleans R&B record. We cut it live as a group.”

Bob Kamoskee – “Lie, Lie, Lie”

“I play because it's what's inside of me. I'm a songwriter. That's what I do. My whole life is a trigger for every song I write. It's a solo on my 1937 National style resonator guitar. It's blues, old style country, the type I learned from old blues guys.”

Aina Cook – “Unheard”

“It's a little about all the reasons why someone might feel like their voice doesn't count. It does end on a positive note. I wanted to share that with anyone out there who might be feeling the same way. This song is a little between blues and jazz.”

TJ Muller & The Gaslight Squares – “Gaslight Blues #1

“This is an instrumental done in a New Orleans jazz/blues style with a standard blues 12 bar progression. We were happy to have the Gaslight Squares involved with the St. Louis Blues Society.”

Sharon Foehner – “Call the Ancestors Down”

“This is a song about calling/praying to our ancestors to get their wisdom and strength, to get their positive and negative energy and spirit. It is a gospel style solo with my guitar.”

Chris Tomlin of Saint Boogie Brass Band – “Saint Boogie Blues”

“The song is about not being able to dance and finally getting the chance. We wrote it because we are always hearing our crowd talk about it. It's a funk/blues number. We did it for *18 in 18* to give everyone a new song to dance to.”

Brian Curren and Adam Andrews – “Weary Mind Blues”

“The song is about my use or you could say abuse of alcohol to help cope with the stress and anxiety that sometimes goes along with the music business. The style is primarily inspired by Big Bill Broonzy and Lonnie Johnsons recordings. It's truly an honor and a privilege to help showcase what STL has to offer.”

Jacinta Branch Griffin of Ms. Hy-C and Fresh Start – “Memphis Here I Come”

“I wrote this after I entered the regional IBC competition. I think it helped me to win. I have always been a big fan of Koko Taylor. This is the type of song she would sing. It is a Delta shuffle.”

Lobster – “I Don't Need No Police Man”

“The title tells you the story. It's a straight up blues number that I wrote a while ago. I was glad to do it for the Blues Society. I did it with Chris “Iron Jaw” Taylor on harmonica.”

Lady J Huston and the Jazz Edge Orchestra – “Hide-Away”

“My song “Hide-Away” is about moving on with life in another location after the end of a love affair. There are multiple styles of music in this song with the foundation being a Blues ballad. The Jazz Edge Orchestra put their time and talents into this project gratis in support of the St. Louis Blues Society.”

Walter Greiner – “Gabriel's Blues”

“The song is about Gabriel's (KDHX DJ) passing. It's Old School American Church style song with a twist. It presented itself to me while I was playing. It just came. I loved Gabriel. It's in dedication to the man.”

Miss Molly Simms – Complicated Broken People”

“As a songwriter I find inspiration in everyday life. This is a realistic love song born out of an overheard conversation: ‘We're just complicated broken people doing the best we can.’ The style is Americana Soul. Being on this compilation is a cool thing- it's comradery with the other musicians and promoting Saint Louis music.”

Chris “Iron Jaw” Taylor and the Alley Tones Blues Band – “I Don't Feel Sorry”

“This is a low-down dirty blues song about repeat offenders on drugs that you repeatedly try to help. The blues has always been part of my life and my consciousness. Being part of *18 in 18* and the St. Louis Blues Society is an honor.”

Daniel Hamm – “Death at My Door”

“I wrote this song about the struggles with alcoholism and deciding to seek treatment. My style of music for this song is influenced by the north Mississippi hill country. I appreciate the encouragement I received from Paul Niehaus and other musical teachers to be part of this CD.”

Charles Hunt – “Poor Man”

“It's a story that tells you that even if you aren't rich with a lot of money it ain't always bad being poor. This is blues done in a B.B. and Albert King style. When I do my next CD with the Ground Floor Band this will be on it.”



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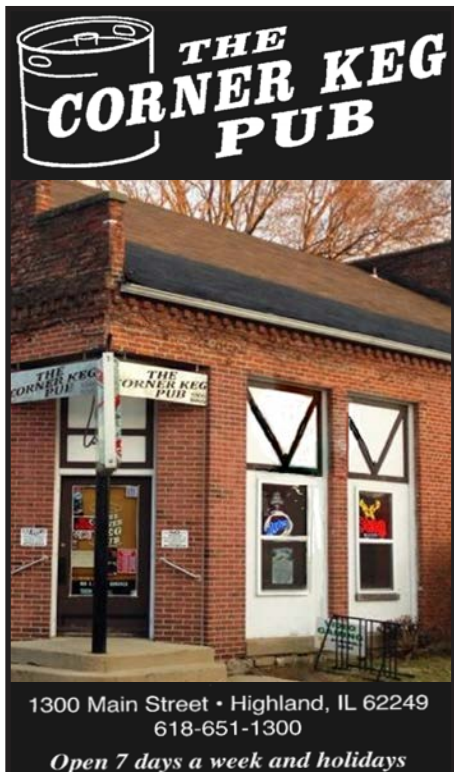
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MARCH EVENTS

MON 04	7:00PM	Lundi Gras Party -STL LIVE OPEN MIC & JAM
TUES 05	4:00PM	Fat Tuesday Celebration with STL Blues Artists
	7:00PM	SHARON BEAR, RICH McDONOUGH, MILES LONG
WED 06	7:00PM	BOB BAKER IMPROV COMEDY CABARET
THURS 07	7:00PM	Blue Lotus Records/STL Blues Society: NICK PENCE
FRI 08	7:00PM	BROTHER JEFFERSON BLUES BAND
SUN 10	11:00AM	Hot Swing Brunch with MISS JUBILEE
MON 11	7:00PM	STL LIVE OPEN MIC, JAM & SOCIAL
TUES 12	7:00PM	BOX OF NERVES St. Louis, MO
WED 13	7:00PM	BRIAN VACCARO TRIO St. Louis, MO
THURS 14	7:00PM	Blue Lotus Records/STL Blues Society: AARON GRIFFIN
FRI 15	7:00PM	JOE METZKA BAND St. Louis, MO
SAT 16	7:00PM	BOX OF NERVES St. Louis, MO
	8:15PM	THE BOB BAND Millstadt, IL
	10:00PM	BURLYQ AND BUBBLY REVUE St. Louis, MO
SUN 17	11:00AM	St. Patrick's Day Brunch with MISS JUBILEE
MON 18	7:00PM	STL LIVE OPEN MIC & JAM NIGHT
	7:00PM	RICHIE CHARLES Austin, Tx AND DANIEL RYLANDER Columbus, OH
TUES 19	7:00PM	PAT JOYCE St. Louis, MO
THURS 21	7:00PM	Blue Lotus Records/STL Blues Society: GENE JACKSON
FRI 22	7:00PM	JANET EVRA St. Louis, MO
SAT 23	10:30PM	THE KINGS COMPANY Bellevue, NE
SUN 24	11:00AM	Hot Swing Brunch with MISS JUBILEE
MON 25	7:00PM	STL LIVE OPEN MIC & JAM
TUES 26	7:00PM	THE COSMIC COLLECTIVE Nashville, TN
WED 27	7:00PM	Mike Neu Quartet featuring MATTHEW CLINKENBEARD & CHRISTIAN HAYDEN
THURS 28	7:00PM	Blue Lotus Records/STL Blues Society: JON BONHAM
FRI 29	7:00PM	MEG WILLIAMS BAND Nashville, TN
	8:45PM	FEYZA EREN TRIO St. Louis, MO
SAT 30	7:00PM	KEITH MOYER QUARTET St. Louis, MO
SUN 31	11:00AM	Hot Swing Brunch with MISS JUBILEE

APRIL EVENTS

MON 01	7:00PM	STL LIVE OPEN MIC & JAM
TUES 02	7:00PM	CARY COLMAN JAZZ TRIO St. Louis, MO
WED 03	7:00PM	HARPER LEE Des Moines, IA
THURS 04	7:00PM	Blue Lotus presents: BOB "THE BUMBLEBEE" KAMOSKE AND PAUL NIEHAUS IV
FRI 05	7:00PM	THE GENTLEMEN'S ANTI-TEMPERANCE LEAGUE Minneapolis, MN
SUN 07	6:00PM	First Sundays: JAZZ TROUBADOURS
MON 08	7:00PM	STL LIVE OPEN MIC, JAM & DRINK
TUES 09	7:00PM	JEFF CHAPMAN (of the Brother Jefferson Band)
WED 10	7:00PM	Big West Music Presents: AUBRYN Nashville, TN
THURS 11	7:00PM	MATT COX Omaha, NE
	9:00PM	SNOOZY MOON SE Idaho
SUN 14	6:30PM	JOE HOLT New York City
MON 15	7:00PM	STL LIVE OPEN MIC & JAM
SAT 20	11:00AM	Central West End 6th Annual Crawfish Boil Festival - BOOGIEFOOT - ROBBIE & THE ROCKIN FOOLS - BLUES CITY SWING, & more
MON 22	7:00PM	EARTH DAY: STL OPEN MIC & JAM
MON 29	7:00PM	STL OPEN MIC, JAM & DRINK

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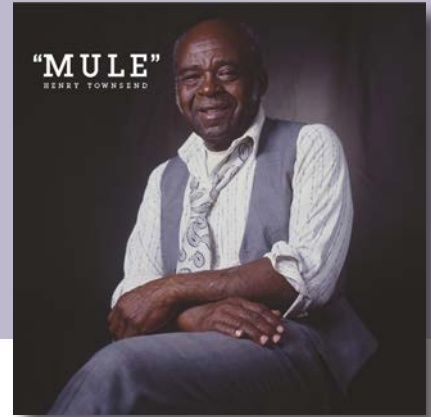
Little Dylan
Torrey Casey & The Southside Hustle
Uncle Albert
Al Holliday & East Side Rhythm Band
Bob 'Bumblebee' Kamoske
Aina Cook
TJ Muller & The Gaslight Squares
Sharon 'Bear' Foehner
Saint Boogie Brass Band
Brian Curran & Adam Andrews
Ms HY-C & Fresh Start
Lobster
Lady J Huston & The Jazz Edge Orchestra
Walter Greiner
Miss Molly Simms
Chris 'Iron Jaw' Taylor & the Alley Tones Blues Band
Daniel 'Ghostleg' Hamm
Charles Hunt

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"MULE"

Henry Townsend
expanded re-issue
Omnivore Recordings, 2018

review by Hound Dog Brown



If you're like me, you have a number of CDs which were hyped as, "Re-issued with never-before heard tracks!" These often contain partial takes, out-takes, and other such material which has very little merit. That is definitely not the case with this expanded re-issue of Henry Townsend's original 1980 *Mule* disc on Leroy Pierson's Nighthawk label. Thirteen tracks have increased to twenty-one, and forty-six minutes of music are enlarged to seventy-seven. For fans of piano and guitar blues, and of St. Louis' patriarch of the same, this is a treasure chest. Leroy Pierson produced all these tracks and shared much information with me, which in turn I'm sharing with you.

All tracks were completed in the same five-day recording session in 1979, which was in St. Louis in a new and well-equipped recording studio. The first day was spent getting acquainted with the equipment and the feel of the studio, doing sound checks, and experimenting with different approaches.

A central element in these sessions was how well both Henry and Leroy knew each other. Leroy's first contacts with Henry were in 1963, when as a young record collector, he found Henry's phone number in the phone book, and called him, and inquired about records Henry had made. Once Leroy got his

driving license, he made frequent visits to Henry's home.

Leroy explains that though Henry was known as both a guitar and piano player in St. Louis, his recordings showcased his guitar talent. As a result, Henry was not well known outside of St. Louis as a piano player. (Henry took his first piano lessons from Roosevelt Sykes, and in turn, Henry gave Walter Davis his introduction to playing blues piano.) Henry and Leroy toured and performed together in the 1970s, with Henry turning increasingly to piano as his instrument of choice. A record collector and prominent musicologist who Leroy knew well, Dick Spottswood (who rediscovered Mississippi John Hurt), heard Henry's piano talent at a festival in St. Louis, and suggested to Leroy that Henry's piano talent be recorded. Henry and Leroy agreed that if they went into a studio to record, they would focus on his piano talent.

Henry had not made any recordings using multi-track, but when they went into the well-equipped studio for these recordings, this was an option. Leroy suggested that Henry record lead guitar and vocals, and then accompany himself on rhythm guitar. Henry was not comfortable with the multi-track idea, and proposed that a

young guitar student of his, Norman Merritt, provide rhythm guitar on several tracks.

Those who are familiar with the 1980 release will know that Henry's wife, Vernell Townsend, sang a duet with Henry, and also one where she took lead vocal herself, adding significantly to the ambience of the album. Also, Henry specified that he wanted mandolin and guitar bluesman Yank Rachell in the studio with them, who along with Johnny Young, defines the sound of mandolin blues. Several of the expanded tracks likewise feature contributions by Yank Rachell.

When these recordings were made, Leroy wanted material which both he and Henry would be proud of for the rest of their lives. They recorded an abundance of material over these days, with the intention of having plenty enough for two albums. This is why there was a great deal of un-issued material which meets Leroy's own high standards. Leroy says Henry was very pleased with the first *Mule* release, with the photography, and with the packaging. Were Henry Townsend still living, I think he would be very pleased with this re-issue with expanded tracks, and I think it will please you as well. Highly recommended. 🎵

St. LOUIS musicians directory

Aaron Griffin
aarongriffinmusic@gmail.com
 314.378.0022

The Bottoms Up Blues Gang
 Jeremy Segel-Moss
www.bottomsupblues.com
 314.482.0314

Brian Curran
www.briantcurran.com
 314.753.1395

Brother Jefferson Band
 Jeff Chapman
www.jeffchapmanmusic.com
 618.292.7196

Bud Summers
budsummers.com
 618.401.5845

Gateway Blues Band
 Jeff Sieth
www.gatewaybluesband.com
 618.830.3347

Jim McClaren
www.jimmccclaren.com
 314.664.3449

Marty D. Spikener's On Call Band
spikemoves@hotmail.com
 314.435.7053

Melissa Neels Band
melissaneels.net
 314.306.8407

One for the Road (solo act)
 Harold Schellenger
a1manband@yahoo.com
 618.791.7106

Paul Bonn & The Bluesmen
bonnblues@gmail.com
 618.632.9420

Paul Niehaus IV
 Blue Lotus Studio
www.bluelotusrecordings.com
 314.397.3823

Raw Earth "Casbah-ssippi"
 Ivan Martin
www.facebook.com/RawEarthNation
 314.605.3474

The Rhythm Section Road Show
 Andy Coco
www.rsrs.co
 314.255.3708

Sins of the Pioneers
 Mark "Sunny Boy" Mason
www.facebook.com/TheSinsofthePioneers
 314.481.3380

Soulard Blues Band
 Art Dwyer
www.soulardbluesband.com
 314.832.4924

Uncle Albert
 Tim Albert
dogschew@aol.com
www.facebook.com/unclealbertband
 618.660.7935

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MUSICIANS ACTIVE IN THE PAST 20
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WILL HIGHLIGHT QUESTIONS OF HOW
POVERTY, GEOGRAPHY AND AGE HAVE
LIMITED THE EXPOSURE OF THESE
ARTISTS, CAUSING THE WIDESPREAD
IDEA THAT THE MUSICAL TRADITIONS
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