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METRONOME

MAGAZINE

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August 2025



Greg Moon



Jennifer Lyn & The Groove Revival



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MetroScene

BANK OF NEW HAMPSHIRE PAVILION **Gilford, N.H.** **(603) 293-4700**

8/1- Chicago
8/3- Outlaw Music Festival: Willie Nelson, Bob Dylan, Wilco, Lucinda Williams & More
8/6- Goo Goo Dolls; Dashboard Confessional
8/7- Little Big Town
8/8- Jerry Seinfeld
8/13- Volbea; Halestorm
8/14- Bailey Zimmerman
8/15- The Black Keys
8/16- Dropkick Murphy; Bad Religion
8/17- The Doobie Brothers; The Coral Reefer Band
8/19- Steve Miller Band
8/21- Neil Young & The Chrome Hearts
8/25- Falling In Reverse
8/29- Indigo Girls; Melissa Etheridge
8/30- Bonnie Raitt; Jimmie Vaughan & The Tilt-A-Whirl Band

BLUE OCEAN MUSIC HALL **Salisbury Beach, MA.** **(978) 462-5888**

8/1- AM Gold Yacht Rock
8/2- Phantom Planet
8/8- Joanne Shaw Taylor
8/9- Robert Jon & the Wreck
8/14- Summertime Blues Festival
8/15- Icons & Divas ft Jenene Caramielo
8/17- Bob Marley Comedian
8/22- Rodney Atkins
8/23- Juston McKinney
8/27- The B52's Kate Pierson
8/28- The Weight Band
8/29- Steve Earle
8/30- Pink Talking Fish

BRIGHTON MUSIC HALL **Allston, MA.** **(617) 779-0140**

8/1- Sematary; Ghost Mountain; Hackle; Anvil
8/2- Mustard Service; Strawberry Milk Cult
8/9- Shut Up & Dance
8/10- The Word Alive; TX2; Unwell
8/13- Penelope Road; Tyler Ballgame
8/16- Justin Clancy
8/17- Eyehategod; Crowbar; Colin of Arabia
8/23- Hermitage Green
8/29- Zane Christopher

BULL RUN RESTAURANT **Shirley, MA.** **(978) 425-4311**

8/1- Monster Mike Welch
8/2- Dueling Pianos
8/3- The Shaelyn Band
8/15- The Busted Jug Band
8/17- DizzyFish & The Uptown Horns
8/23- Luna Liz: Private Astrology Reading; Little Lies Fleetwood Mac Tribute
8/24- Luna Liz: Private Astrology Reading

CAPE COD MELODY TENT **Hyannis, MA.** **(508) 775-5630**

8/1- The Concert: A Tribute to ABBA
8/2- Pink Martini featuring China Forbes
8/3- Flatland Cavalry; Alex Lambert
8/8- The Marshall Tucker Band
8/9- Chris Botti
8/10- "Perfectly, Frank!" with Sal Viviano performing Sinatra classics
8/14- Cohasset Youth Theater presents "Cinderella"
8/15- Chase Rice; Wade Bowen
8/16- Kathleen Madigan
8/17- Lee Brice; Grace Tyler
8/19- Train; Edwin McCain
8/21- Changes in Latitudes: Jimmy Buffett Tribute
8/22- Tyler Hubbard; Brandon Wisham
8/23- Almost Quen: A Tribute to Queen
8/24- Get The Led Out - Tribute to Led Zeppelin
8/28- Boston Comedy Blowout
8/29- Face 2 Face: Elton John and Billy Joel tribute
8/30- Brett Eldredge
8/31- The Broken Hearts: Tom Petty tribute

CHAN'S RESTAURANT **Woonsocket, R.I.** **(401) 765-1900**

8/1- Scott Brown & Friends
8/2- Darrell Nulisch Band
8/8- Brandon Santini
8/9- Duke Robillard All-Stars
8/15- James Montgomery Blues Band
8/16- Sugararray Rayford
8/22- Jeff Pitchell And The Texas Flood
8/23- Danny Klein's Full House
8/29- Popa Chubby
8/30- Shawnn Monteiro

CITY WINERY **Boston, MA.** **(617) 933-8047**

8/1- No Static
8/2- Reckoners; Root Fiyah
8/3- Crazy in Love: Beyonce Tribute
8/6- marQ
8/7- Aloe Blacc
8/8- Sole Ties Live
8/9- AJ Ghent & His Singing Guitar
8/10- The Machine performs Pink Floyd
8/11- TU-NER featuring King Crimson's Pat Mastelotto plus Trey Gunn and Markus Reuter
8/12- I Think Not! Live - The "Drove All Night" Tour
8/13- Vinofile Plus Pick Up Party; The Holdup: Acoustic Greatest Hits Tour
8/14- Elle Varner ; Phillip-Michael Scales
8/15- Mighty Mystic "Walk Tall" with Al's Hwy 50; Shane Guerrette
8/16- Boy Band Brunch; Santiago Cruz
8/17- Dwayne Dopsie & The Zydeco Hellraisers
8/18- Rose Alley
8/20- Martha Wash
8/21- Iris DeMent
8/22- Lucy Darling; Mark Ettinger; Chris Cafero
8/23- Syleena Johnson; Comedy and Cabernet
8/24- Draw The Line - Aerosmith Tribute
8/25- The Traveling Wilburys Revue
8/26- Friend of The Brothers w/Jaimoe
8/27- Bossa Nova Noites featuring Monique Elen & Larry Williams with Special Guests Najee and Frank McComb
8/28- The Lightfoot Band
8/30- And Then We Had Sex
8/31- A Tribute to Amy Winehouse & Adele

CLUB PASSIM **Cambridge, MA.** **(617) 492-7679**

8/1- Alice Howe & Freebo
8/2- Billy Novick & Guy Van Duser
8/3- Dead to the Core
8/5- Stillhouse Junkies
8/6- Elijah Wald
8/7- The Henry Girls
8/8- Ellis Paul
8/9- Lloyd Thayer; Arthur Terembula
8/10- Katie Dahl and Grace Morrison Album release
8/11- Andrew Victor and Victoria Cardona
8/13- Kyshona
8/14- Goldpine & Sam Robbins
8/15- Golden Shoals
8/16- Laura Cortese Summer Sing-Along
8/17- Bronwyn Keith-Hynes
8/18- Ragged Union
8/19- The Carroll Sisters Trio Album release

8/20- Heartwood Trio
8/21- Abbie Gardner; Ryan David Green
8/22- Kissing Other PPL w/Rachel Baiman; Viv & Riley
8/23- Rev. Robert B. Jones, Sr.
8/24- Jenna Moynihan & Mairi Chaimbeul
8/26- Ollella & Noble Dust

THE CUT **Gloucester, MA.** **(978) 515-0000**

8/1- Roomful of Blues
8/2- Captain Jack & The Strangers
8/3- Reset Button
8/8- Donna The Buffalo
8/9- Frank Santorelli
8/10- Sounds of Summer
8/13- The Dirty Dozen Brass Band
8/14- DJ Logic and Friends; G. Love
8/15- Heavy Metal Horns
8/16- Reprise: Recreating Iconic Phish Shows
8/21- Line's End
8/22- Robert Ellis Orrall; Funbucket
8/23- Tom Cotten
8/29- Fabiola Mendez
8/30- Back to the 80's
8/31- Duane Betts & Palmetto Motel; Wood & Bone

HOUSE OF BLUES **Boston, MA.** **(888) 693-2583**

8/1- Shrek Rave
8/2- The Struts
8/16- Architects
8/18- Fitz and the Tantrums
8/22- Randy Nota Loca; DJ Adoni
8/23- Dareyes de La Sierra

JIMMY'S JAZZ & BLUES CLUB **Portsmouth, NH** **(888) 603-5299**

8/3- Terence Blanchard
8/6- The Rumble
8/7 & 8- Chris Botti
8/9- Eric Johanson
8/10- The Orchestra On The Hill
8/11- Psycodelics
8/13- Eddie 9V
8/14- Ron Blake
8/15- Sue Foley
8/17- Gary Hoey
8/18- Memphis Lightning w/Alex Lopez Xpress
8/20- Paul Hughes Celebrates The Rat Pack
8/22- Devon Allman's Blues Revival
8/24- Ruthie Foster

All Things Music Since 1985!



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8/27- Magnolia Boulevard
8/28- New Breed Brass Band
8/29- Mindi Abair

LEADER BANK PAVILION
Boston, MA.
(617) 728-1600

8/2- Chicago
8/3- The Fray
8/8 & 9- Yacht Rock Revue
8/15- Rob Thomas
8/16- Cody Jinks
8/28- Jessie Murph

MGM MUSIC HALL
Boston, MA.
(617) 960-8333

8/1- Bret Michaels; Vince Neil; Stephen Pearcy
8/3- Lord Huron
8/9- Colin Jost
8/15- Ben Rector
8/16- The Black Keys
8/21, 22 & 23- Widespread Panic
8/24- Chevelle; Asking Alexandria; Dead Poet Society
8/25- Rupaul's Drag Race Werq
8/26 & 27- James Taylor
8/28- Gronk & Jules
8/29- Simple Plan
8/30- Coheed and Cambria

THE MIDDLE EAST
Cambridge, MA.
(617) 354-8238

Upstairs

8/2- The Baxbys; Moravian; Pat Kennedy; Grand View Point
8/3- Charlie Burg
8/6- Ellise; Ella Red
8/7- STL GLD; B.Dolan; Noel Pancho And Rain
8/8- Ista; Tea Eater
8/9- Papercut
8/10- Zyclone; Rejekts; Funerary Spell; City Kings; Phantom Rider
8/12- Ani Mari
8/13- Open Mike Eagle; Oceanator; Esh & The Isolations
8/14- Conor James; Talk Bazaar; ToriTori
8/15- TREE; The Outlourdes; Mollusk
8/16- Carver Commodore; Ruby Plume; Elysium
8/17- Haiden Henderson; Hayes Warner
8/21- Girl Ultra; Petite Amie
8/22- Damag3; Figgy Baby; \$leazy EZ; Shno Xavier; K-Presto
8/23- Caskey; ClickKlack
8/24- Zep-Alive: The Led Zeppelin Tribute Show
8/29- Goolagoon; Zinc; PAGEANT; Retract
8/30- Pink Turns Blue

Downstairs

8/8- Xmortis
8/9- Daft Punk Night

8/14- EKOH; Arankai & Guests
8/24- Barrington Levy
8/31- AJ McQueen

MIDWAY CAFE
Jamaica Plain, MA.
(617) 524-9038

8/1- Hippie Hour with the Owsley's Owls; A Monthly Vintage Drag Show
8/2- Robopumpkin; Cat Crash; Lions & Lavender; Cricket; River Sang Wild; Gold Star Blvd; Verona Rose; Sound Advice
8/3- Martin Morell Fredette
8/4- Chamber
8/5- Bars Over Bars Hip Hop Showcase
8/6- The Velvet Dirtmunchers; Lenny's Funk Club; Vyshnavi
8/7- Mitski Tribute Drag Show
8/8- Uncle Johnny's Band; Reggae Dancehall Night
8/9- The McGunks; Voice of Dissent; The Graniteers; Ragz to Stitchez
8/10- Erking; Rocket Gods; Already Dead; Fire, Escape
8/11- Bad-ass Burlesque Punk Rock Dance Party; Topical Popsicle: Improv Comedy Show
8/12- The Inkwell Open Mic
8/13- Fully Celebrated Orchestra; New Mexican Standoff; Pop Into The Chemist
8/14- Frisky's School of Bad Bois
8/15- Promised Land
8/16- Ol' Brandon; Lost My Balance; Tusken and the Raiders; Big Rav
8/17- Trick Attack; Around My Apartment; Isaac Groove; Burrows
8/18- Toadpatrol; Ice Lemonade & The Apple Snaps; Max Bartos; Jim & Matt
8/22- Uncle Johnny's Band
8/24- Midway or the Highway Open Mic
8/25- VeggieTales Served! (drag/burlesque)
8/26- Rhizaria; Guppy;Sordid Spell; Blessed Be
8/27- Diamond Blues Jam
8/29- Hippie Hour
8/31- Nicole Dobberpuhl; CK Jamieson; Katie & The Kites; Ben Shaw; Mae Valerio

THE MUSIC ROOM
West Yarmouth, MA.
(508) 694-6125

8/1- Confounded Bridge
8/2- 19th Nervous Breakdown
8/3- The Fools
8/8- Scott Brown & The Diplomats
8/22- Playing Dead
8/23- Corky Laing's Mountain
8/29- Ayla Brown & Rob Bellamy Full BandA
8/30- Edwin Pabon Orchestra; Tito Puente Jr.
8/31- Viva Las Elvis

NORTH RIVER BLUES FESTIVAL
@ The Marshfield Fair, MA.
(781) 834-6629

8/23- Southern Hospitality; John Nemeth; Blackburn

Brothers; Billy The Kid & The Regulators; 21 Grams More; Steve Todesco & Friends (Side Stage); MC Holly Harris
8/24- Larry McCray; Billy Price's Soul Summit with Mighty Soul Drivers; The Dominos FX; One Dime Band & Friends; The Rampage Trio; Sam Gentile & Basic Black (Side Stage); MC Holly Harris

PALLADIUM
Worcester, MA.
(508) 797-9696

8/1- Keith Wallen; Levels; Major Moment; Silent Season
8/2- Mickey Avalon; Bill Rich; Kaseek Ortiz; Jaize
8/9- Charlotte Sands; Taylor Acorn; Rain City Drive; Arrows in Action; If Not For Me; Beauty School Dropout
8/14- In This Moment; Wargasm; The Pretty Wild
8/23- The Acacia Strain; On Broken Wings; Bodysnatcher; Ingrown; No Cure; Tribal Gaze; Missing Link; Age of Apocalypse; Mongrel; Gigen Animal Thugs
8/29- Thousand Below; Aviana; True North; Dreamwake

PARADISE ROCK CLUB
Boston, MA.
(617) 562-8800

8/3- The Expendables
8/9- Bumpin Uglies; Kash'd Out; The Rins
8/14- Jake Scott; MaRynn Taylor
8/16- Cousin Stizz
8/23- The Starting Line; Oso Oso; Macseal

SINCLAIR
Cambridge, MA.
(617) 547-5200

8/1- The Glitter Boys
8/2, 9, 23 & 30- fruitstand TART
8/8- Sabin Rai & The Pharaoh; The Glitter Boys
8/12- John Moreland; Jared Hart
8/13- Counterfeit Madison
8/14- The Armed; Prostitute
8/15- Ramirez; Jason Joshua; Soulzay
8/16- Harbour; The Orphan; The Poet
8/17- Vincent Neil Emerson; Kassi Valazza
8/18- Midrift; Febuary; I Promised The World
8/21- The Smiths Tribute (NYC); Staring at The Sea
8/22- Cave In "Jupiter" 25th Anniversary Album Play
8/24- Portraits of Past; Kathryn Mohr
8/28- Hotline TNT; Sour Widows
8/29- The Glitter Boys

SPIRE CENTER
Plymouth, MA.
(508) 746-4488

8/1- Grace Kelly
8/2- Tomm Cotter; World Gone Crazy comedy band
8/3- Nicole Travolta
8/7- Monica Rizzio
8/8- Eric Johanson
8/9- Roomful of Blues
8/10- Charlie & The Tropicals

8/13 & 14- Glenn Miller Orchestra
8/15- Monster Mike Welch
8/16- Hey Nineteen
8/17- Troy Ramey
8/21- Sarah Martin
8/22- Sugar Ray & The Bluetones
8/23- The YellowHouse Blues Band
8/24- Lori Sheridan & Laura Wooster; Howie Day
8/28- Will Dailey
8/29- J2B2
8/30- Asleep At The Wheel
8/31- Al Stewart & The Empty Pockets

TD GARDEN
Boston, MA.
(617) 624-1000

8/1- Linkin Park
8/8- Katy Perry; Rebecca Black
8/9 & 10- Nate Bargatze
8/12- Stevie Nicks
8/26- Tate McRae
8/29- Nine Inch Nails

THEODORE'S BLUES & BBQ
Springfield, MA.
(413) 736-6000

8/1- Rockin Johnny Burgin
8/6- Tom Whalen and Friends
8/8- Ottomatic Slim and the Deadly Sins
8/9- The Mark Nomad Band
8/13- Tom Whalen and Friends
8/15- The Matt Swanton Band
8/20- Tom Whalen and Friends
8/22- Buddy McEarns
8/23- Barrett Anderson
8/27- Tom Whalen and Friends
8/30- The Next JEN Band

WILBUR THEATER
Boston, MA.
(617) 248-9700

8/7- Sam Morril
8/13- Beres Hammond
8/16- Ashley Gavin
8/23- Pete Holmes
8/24- Twin Peaks
8/26- Katabasis

XFINITY CENTER
Mansfield, MA.
508-339-2331

8/2- Pantera
8/3- Nelly; Ja Rule; Eve
8/6- Lil Wayne
8/8- Luke Bryan
8/9- AJR
8/14- Volbeat; Halestorm
8/15- The Doobie Brothers; The Coral Reefer Band
8/23- Billy Idol

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Jennifer Lyn *and* The Groove Revival

The North Dakota based Jennifer Lyn & The Groove Revival have hit pay dirt with the release of their new album, *Retrograde*. Filled with great, dual guitar work, Jennifer's mighty voice, barrelhouse keyboards and the tightest rhythm section on the planet, this quintet of seasoned veterans proves to be one of the finest bands in the country today. I spoke to Jennifer one day in May and we talked about her love of songwriting, guitar playing and a grandmother that helped change the course of her life...

METRONOME: What brought you to Worcester, Massachusetts when you were younger?

Jennifer Lyn: I went to Worcester Polytech. I'm a WPI grad. I got my Masters from Worcester Polytechnic in fire protection.

METRONOME: Are you still in the profession today outside of music?

Yes, I'm a college professor. I teach engineering when I'm not doing music.

METRONOME: What brought you to New York City?

Actually, that was when I was an undergraduate. I had an internship out there. I'm also a structural engineer. I worked for a company that was based about two blocks away from the Twin Towers. I was there a year after September 11. It was an interesting time to be in New York.

METRONOME: I dig your new album *Retrograde*. How do you come up with the name for the record?

We feel the music we create is kind of a throwback. We hear from a lot of people that it sounds like music from the 1970s. So we leaned into that, because that's the music that we like to create. The theme is, everyone is going forward and we're paying tribute to the past.

METRONOME: Having your guitar player, Richard Torrance in the band must help a lot. I'm familiar with his work from the '70s and '80s. How did you and Richard meet?

He's originally from Bismarck, North Dakota where we're based out of. When he was done with everything out on the West Coast, he headed back this way to be closer to family.

We've been friends for over 10 years now. I met him when I moved into town. We have a nice community of musicians here that are not only fabulous musicians, but just really supportive people. He was one of the first people I met. We hit it off.

METRONOME: How did you meet Barb Jiskra?

Barb is our keyboard player. She's not originally from here, she's from Washington,

D.C. She's another musician in the community that we really resonate with. She's been a professional player her whole life. She's been a great addition to what we're doing with the band.

METRONOME: How did you meet your rhythm section, Nolyn Falcon on bass and Jim Anderson on drums?

Jim is originally from California. He was a touring drummer. He was part of Tom Johnston's [Doobie Bros.] band when he went out on his own. He's toured with the Pointer Sisters all over the world. He's been there and done that. He's living here now to be closer to his daughter. He and his wife moved here to be closer to the grandkids.



Nolyn is originally from this area and he's a bit of a musical savant. Honestly, I've never met anyone like him in terms of his musical knowledge. He had done some stuff back in the 1990s and now he's with us. It's been really cool.

METRONOME: How long has this lineup been together?

We've been together for about two years.

METRONOME: Was everyone onboard for the recording of *Retrograde*?

Yes. Richard and I basically did all the songwriting and compositional work. Our drummer, Jim has been a mainstay in the band now for many years. We added the other two members about two years ago. They're both up for the long-haul. They're all good people. We don't have any divas in the band (laughs).

METRONOME: Did you grow up in a musical family?

Not really. I would say I grew up in a family of music lovers. No matter where I went, it

seemed like every house I went to in our family had music playing. Both sides of my grandparents were absolutely awesome. I was fortunate to spend time with both sets of them.

In my Mom's parent's house it was anything from Hank William, Sr. to Motown and a little bit of everything. The other side of my family was older. World War II/Great Depression era, so everything I heard there was Big Band and Jazz. I had a nice roots based upbringing you could say. There was a lot of good music being played in those homes.

METRONOME: How did you catch the performance bug?

It actually started with songwriting. I used to write a lot of short stories when I was a kid. I'm an only child. Growing up in Minnesota is no different than Massachusetts where your winters can be brutal with snow, so I grew up writing short stories.

I remember being snowed in as a teenager with nothing to do, and I was watching VH1 back when that was cool. I saw this documentary on Bruce Springsteen. I was like, Do you know what? I want to do that. I want to tell stories through songs. As a result of that, I picked up the guitar and was absolutely horrible. I put it aside when I went off to college.

Then I got back into music about 15 years ago. My grandmother was battling cancer and was at about the end, where she was going to lose her fight with cancer. She pulled me aside and said, "You know, you used to write all these songs and you have such a great voice, why don't you sing anymore." She really inspired me to get back into

music. She said to me, "Even if it's for your own pleasure. You've been given a gift, you should share it with other people. It makes people happy."

I took the ball and ran with it. I picked up the guitar again and started learning how to play lead guitar. I haven't been able to put it down since.

METRONOME: How old were you when you picked it back up?

I was in my 30s, so I'm a late bloomer here to the party (laughs).

METRONOME: How long did it take to record the album?

The whole process from songwriting to completion was around five months. We do everything in house, which is really nice. We do the recording in my home studio. I mixed and mastered the albums.

METRONOME: Is that where the engineering degree comes in handy?

Actually, that's a result from the Covid lockdown. I was bored out of my mind, so I learned how to do all that and it stuck. It's something that I've taken the ball and ran with it. I've been constantly trying to refine my mixing and mastering abilities. We're at the point now that this is probably the way we're always going to do it. It gives us creative freedom.

METRONOME: Do you use ProTools?

No, I'm a Logic user. I really love that format. I started out on Garage Band because it came stock with my Mac. If I was sharing songs with Richard or my bandmates, I would do it on there, but when lockdown hit, I really got into Logic and the rest is history.

METRONOME: Did you buy all the equipment during Covid and learn how to use it?

I bought a really nice mixing console that I have set up here in my home studio. I bought it, no joke, three months before Covid blew up in the states. I couldn't have timed better an impulse purchase. Then I had nothing *but* time to learn how to use it.

I mixed and mastered our album, *Nothing Holding Me Down*, then I really got into it and actually took classes through Berklee College online. So there you go. Another Massachusetts connection.

METRONOME: How long was the course?

I took basic recording techniques, mixing, mastering and a couple of other classes, just to fill in some gaps. It was so well done. For my recording class, I had the former Department Chair of their recording program. For the mixing course, I literally had the current Department Chair. They did a very good job of making sure the online students were treated just like their campus students,

which was very cool.

METRONOME: Did you communicate with them through Zoom?

They have an online learning platform and they would have a weekly meeting session through Zoom. Everyone in the course had the option to participate and ask questions of the professor that was teaching the course. I would take advantage and go every week. If nobody would ask questions, the professor would dive a little deeper into the topic. I learned a ton. It was a little bit though like opening up a fire hydrant and sticking your head in front of it. There was so much information coming at you. Once you had time, you could dive into it more in a hands-on setting. Luckily, I had music to record, mix and master. It's been a fun journey.

METRONOME: How did the songwriting process work for you and Richard?

I call Richard the riff master. He is ridiculously proficient on the guitar. Whenever we need some inspiration, we will usually just start riffing. I'm more of the melody and the lyricist. Once the song gets off the ground, it becomes a truly collaborative process. Between he and I, we work really well together. We cracked out this last album in about three weeks. It just came together. There weren't a lot of revisions in the songwriting.

METRONOME: I want to talk about some of the songs on the album. I loved the opening track, "Light The Fire." What

inspired the writing of that?

We were not going to pigeonhole ourselves and say we need a 1-4-5 traditional Blues song on this album. We were going to write the songs that we enjoyed and let the cards fall where they may. For "Light The Fire" we had the idea for the lyrical concept. For whatever reason on every album that we've done, there's always one song on there that has an inspirational, go-for-your-dreams kind of theme to it. This song definitely has that messaging to it. We knew that we wanted it to be in-your-face. That's where that intro came from which, for me, is really kind of an attention grabber with the two guitars. For us, it also felt a little like a Led Zeppelin vibe. The whole topic matter and guitar heaviness gave us that inspiration.

METRONOME: Have you and Richard been nurturing the twin guitar thing for a while?

It's been happening since the very beginning. I do enjoy playing the guitar. I like doing it as a complementary soloing technique. When you have someone like Richard in the band, if there's going to be one guitar that's going to solo, it should be him. He does such a great job communicating through his guitar. You can feel his emotions coming through.

Whenever we hear something that sounds like we should have a more layered guitar feel, we add an additional lead instrument. That's where I get to go to town. We just enjoy taking up a lot of the guitar frequencies

and making it feel like those '70s big rock anthems. It's the vibe we like to shoot for.

METRONOME: I love the song, "Sucker For The Pain." It was a great, roadhouse rocker. How did that come together?

That was completely the vibe we were going for. I'm a huge Rolling Stones fan. As soon as we came up with that riff, we were off and running. With everything going on in the world right now, we get so upset about things that we knew were going to happen. As the title says, we're "suckers for the pain."

METRONOME: "Refuge" was a great tune. It reminded me of an arena rock ballad. What inspired that?

That's exactly the vibe we were going for. I was joking with Richard and said, I grew up in the 1980s. In the '80s we still had roller skate parties. They were real roller skates, not roller blades. I said, Let's write a ballad that would bring you back in time to have some kind of roller skate party with all of your friends. That was definitely the vibe that we were going for.

METRONOME: I really liked "Baggage." Richard killed it on the slide guitar. How was that song born?

Our drummer is a student of his instrument. He's constantly learning and constantly refining. He's been that way his whole career. He just loves the drums. We had a rehearsal and before we even started, he was playing a second line groove. Richard and I asked, What is that? He said, "I've been taking lessons from a guy down in New Orleans."

He had that second line groove and it inspired Richard and I. So we wrote a song that would feature that. Barb is a boogie-woogie keyboard player, so for her that song was really cool. You can hear a lot of her in that tune paired with Richard's slide guitar work. It's got a cool, New Orleans kind of thing happening.

METRONOME: The album closer "Do It All Again" was a great song. What was that about?

My band is all older. That song came from conversations from people in their age group. When you have less in front of you than you do behind you, you start to think about these things. "Do It All Again," is looking back on life and saying, You know what, it didn't work out exactly as I had planned, but I wouldn't change anything. I would do it all over again.

Richard came in with the concept of it, then we really went to town on the lyrics. The final verse of that song is a nod to the things we don't know. We went a little deep with that one and wanted to have feature that anthem vibe again.

METRONOME: How often are you performing?

We're performing in the upper Midwest right now. We're playing in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Touring nowadays can be a real challenge though because we're competing against Netflix (laughs).

-- Brian M. Owens



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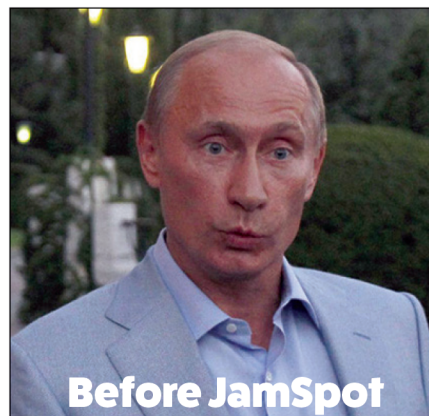


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Top 5 for August 2025

(In NO Particular Order)

- Backward Hats
- Terry Hanck
- Raymond Gonzalez
- Dave Spector
- All Things Swamp

BACKWARDS HATS MOONWATCH 15-SONG CD

- JEALOUS OF THE MOON
- REASONS WHY
- I'M GONNA WAIT FOR YOU
- OH LORETTA
- RIVER
- ROLLERCOASTER
- YOU AND ME ON THE ROCK
- BEGGARS AND BANKERS
- QUITE EARLY MORNING
- SHE CAME DOWN
- THE BEEKEEPER
- YOUR BODY IS A WONDERLAND
- SOUTHBOUND PASSENGER TRAIN
- WILD MOUNTAIN THYME
- PANCHO AND LEFTY

Originally a family band, Chris Isaacs, Livi Arnold and Jerry Arnold began exploring vocal harmonies to accompany their tunes in 2002. Rehearsing in the ensuing years, the sessions brought many musicians together that recently include bass player McGregor 'Mac' McGehee and multi-instrumentalist/mandolin-player Doug Ambos.

With a collection of wonderful songs, the band entered Club 39 with producer/engineer Bill Smith and fleshed out the songs for this new album, Moonwatch. Dealing up beautifully crafted folk, rock, and Americana, Backwards Hats sound like no other group on the local scene. Instead, they forge a familiar musical path with contemporary verve and well-crafted vocals. It's a joy to experience and most likely even more fun to play.

Joyous tracks include the jangle of "Reasons Why," the James Taylor inspired lyrics of "I'm Gonna Wait For You," the magnificent Bill Staines song, "River," the uplifting "You and Me On The Rock," the excellent McGehee penned, "Beggars and Bankers," the vocal rapture of "Quite Early Morning," and the outstanding interpretation of John Mayer's "Your Body Is A Wonderland." This recording is a

must have for aficionados of well-crafted American music. Good stuff! [B.M.O.]

Contact-- www.backwards-hats.com

TERRY HANCK GREASE TO GRAVY 12-SONG CD

- DON'T LET THE GREEN GRASS FOOL YOU
- IF A POLITICIAN WAS A DOCTOR
- BEST YEARS OF MY LIFE
- COME BACK BABY
- GOIN' WAY BACK HOME TONIGHT
- OVERALL JUNCTION
- RUN RUN BABY
- SICK AND TIRED
- GOING DOWN SLOW
- WHEN I GET MY SHIT TOGETHER
- PINS AND NEEDLES
- MIDNIGHT ON THE REEF

Musician Terry Hanck is one heck of a singer and an equally talented saxophone man. His songwriting is top-notch as well as he proves it on his outstanding new album, Grease To Gravy. Teaming up again with old friend, Chris "Kid" Andersen, the duo plots out the recording of these twelve songs with a musical savvy that's hard to resist.

Enlisting his usual band on the recording: Johnny "Cat" Soubrand on guitar, Jon Otis on drums and Tim Wagar on bass, Hanck augments the lineup with keyboardist Jim Pugh, Lisa Leuschner Andersen on vocals, J.P. Soars on guitar, D'Mar, June Core & Butch Cousins on drums, Chris Peet on bass & drums, Endre Tarczy on bass, and Chris Burns, Mitch Woods and Mark Doyle on piano to round out the tracks.

Swing, uptown blues and rockin' soul are all in Hanck's wheelhouse and he spins it with great proficiency. Radio friendly tracks include "Don't Let The Green Grass Fool You," the soul-drenched Ray Charles number, "Come Back Baby," the bouncing "Goin' Way Back Home Tonight," the frankly humorous, "When I Get My Shit Together," and the soulful instrumental "Midnight On The Reef." Good stuff! [B.M.O.]

Contact-- www.terryhanck.net

ALL THINGS SWAMP DRESSED 8-SONG CD

- SIDEWALK STRUT
- BAH-DUEY-DUEY
- DANCING MACHINE
- MERCY MERCY MERCY
- ROCKING CHAIR
- BLUES FOR BEN
- HOW MUCH FUN

• TAKE IT TO THE STREETS

All Things Swamp is a nine piece group of musical pros who get together on their days off to play funky music for their enjoyment. Finding common ground in the music of New Orleans, Dressed captures the sessions between these fine players. Featuring tuba player Luke Kirley, saxophonist-guitarist Dean Parks, saxophonist Aaron Lington, singer-keyboardist Tim Hockenberry, trombonist Dan Gordon, singer-pianist Dillon O'Brian, trumpeter Brian Switzer and drummer Gary Novak, All Things Swamp pursue an infectious groove throughout Dressed that's sure to get the sullenest of folk in good spirits. Outstanding! [B.M.O.]

Contact-- www.littlevillagefoundation.com

TAD ROBINSON SOUL IN BLUE 10-SONG CD

- KEEP IT IN THE VAULT
- OUT OF SIGHT AND OUT OF MIND
- SOMEWHERE THERE'S A TRAIN
- (I'm) DOWN TO MY LAST HEARTBREAK
- DEEPER THAN YOU THINK
- IT'S PRIVATE TONIGHT
- KEEP YOUR HEART OPEN FOR LOVE
- UP IN THE AIR
- FORGIVE AND FORGET
- THIS TIME

Singer-harmonica player Tad Robinson has one of the finest voices in contemporary soul-blues music. He tours in the U.S. and has played in over 20 countries worldwide with performances at some of the world's most renowned Blues festivals. After being recruited by guitarist Dave Spector to join his Chicago band in the 1990s and record the studio album, Blueplicity as well as a "live-in-Europe" release, Tad never looked back. In 2004, Robinson signed with Severn Records, which positioned him into the blues spotlight.

On his latest album, Soul In Blue, released on the newly resurrected Delmark label, Robinson waxes soul-stirring vocally while giving guitarist Paul Holdman plenty of space for stretching out. Other fine players are included in the recording like bassist Steve Gomes, guitarist Dave Spector, organist Roosevelt Purifoy, Jr., bassist Larry Williams and others. It's a joyful recording and a welcomed return for Robinson since his 2019 release, Real Street. Tracks of note: the well-penned "Out of Sight and Out of Mind," the soulful "(I'm) Down To My Last Heartbreak," the bustling "Keep Your Heart Open For Love,"

and the well intentioned "Forgive and Forget." Welcome back... [B.M.O.]

Contact-- tadrobinson.com

RAYMOND GONZALEZ WHERE THIS ROAD GOES 11-SONG CD

- HIGHWAY 5
- A NATION
- WHERE THIS ROAD GOES
- THE GREY SPARROW
- CAN THE MOON FIND ME
- THERE'S A WOMAN ON A ROCK
- JUST ANOTHER CLOUD
- WHEN IT RAINS
- NEREID
- SHOW ME THE SEA
- ANA CHRISTINE (On The Day After Her Graduation)

You never know what you're going to get when you receive a package from singer-songwriter-guitarist Raymond Gonzalez. Will it be electronic orchestra music, singer-songwriter tales, classical compositions or something that challenges the musical imagination? In any case, it will be inventive and highly entertaining.

On his latest singer-songwriter album, Where This Road Goes, Gonzalez returns to his roots and pulls out guitars, the piano, banjo, mandolin, bass guitar, keyboards and percussion along with his voice to deliver a marvelous collection of originals that span from ballads to instrumentals to wonderfully-crafted love songs. His lyrics are masterful while his playing throughout is commanding. 11 well conceived songs with lots of imagery.

Best tracks: the imaginative "Highway 5," the beautiful "Where This Road Goes," the bluesy sentiment of "Just Another Cloud," the intrepid "Show Me The Sea," and the joyous banjo instrumental "Ana Christine (On The Day of Her Graduation)." This is Raymond Gonzalez at his very best. Bravo! [B.M.O.]

Contact-- raymondgonzalez.net

DAVE SPECTER LIVE AT SPACE 13-SONG CD

- RUMBA & TONIC
- ALLEY WALK
- HOMEWORK
- BLUES FROM THE INSIDE OUT
- ON YOUR WAY DOWN
- MARCH THROUGH THE DARKNESS
- CHICAGO STYLE
- SAME OLD BLUES
- THE STINGER
- DEEP ELEM BLUES

- BLUEBIRD BLUES
- PONCHATOU LA WAY
- RIDIN' HIGH

Dave Specter is one of the premier guitar talents on the Chicago music scene. Since 1985, he's performed at top venues and festivals throughout the USA and toured internationally to 19 countries. Before forming his own band in 1989, Specter toured extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe behind blues greats like Son Seals, Hubert Sumlin, Sam Lay and Steve Freund. He's also performed/recorded with such artists as Buddy Guy, Junior Wells, Otis Rush, Jimmy Rogers, Robert Jr. Lockwood, Kim Wilson, Tad Robinson, John Primer, Mighty Joe Young, Magic Slim, Lonnie Brooks, Otis Clay, Pinetop Perkins and Jorma Kaukonen.

His new release for the newly resurrected Delmark Records label (which he has recorded 13 other albums for) is a live album recorded at his club in Evanston, Illinois on March 19 of 2024 called SPACE.

Joined on stage by singer-keyboardist Brother John Kattke, bassist Rodrigo Mantovani and drummer Marty Binder, Specter and company deliver 7 well-penned originals alongside songs from Dave Clark/AI Perkins, Allen Toussaint, Don Nix, Bob & Joe Shelton, Sonny Boy Williamson and Magic Sam. Throughout

the setlist, the band is tight while Specter's guitar work proves to be incendiary song after song. The SPACE crowd was truly treated to a master lesson in Chicago blues by one of its own that night.

Radio friendly tunes include the outstanding Specter penned instrumentals, "Rumba & Tonic" and "Alley Walk," the Clark/Perkins rave up "Homework (made famous by The J. Geils Band) the two-steppin "Blues From The Inside Out," the uptempo guitar hook of "Chicago Style," the playfulness of "The Stinger," the uptempo "Ponchatoula Way," and the album's closer, Magic Sam's "Ridin' High." An outstanding record not to be missed. [B.M.O.]

Contact-- www.davespecter.com

RUSTY ENDS & HILLBILLY HOODOO ROADHOUSES, JUKE JOINTS AND HONKY TONKS 15-SONG CD

- BAD LIKE BILLY THE KID
- THE SAME THING
- HONKY TONK MAN
- LOST IN THE BLUES
- ROCKABILLY TRAIN
- ANGELS SING THE BLUES
- A LITTLE MIXED UP
- THE WORM'S TURNED
- MIDNIGHT SCREAMS
- LINDA LU

- LIE TO ME
- THING CALLED LOVE
- WHEN A GEEZER PLAYS THE BLUES
- BOURBON MOON
- NIGHT LIFE

Rusty Ends is a true link between the rock and blues of the 50's and 60's and the contemporary music. He learned his craft as a teenager playing in the bars and taverns up and down the Dixie Highway between Louisville and Fort Knox, Kentucky. Soldiers, bikers, laborers, hustlers and working ladies all listened to Rusty as he played a combination of blues, soul and country with a beat that allowed the topless dancers to keep gyrating.

On his new album, Roadhouses, Juke Joints and Honky-tonks, Rusty and the band, Dave Zirnheld on vocals & bass, Gene Wickliffe on drums, Roosevelt Purifoy on piano & organ and Wayne Young on guitar offer up a mix of covers and originals that include Rockabilly, Blues and Soul. It's what Rusty likes to call Hillbilly Hoo Doo.

In 2010 Rusty disappeared from the music scene. It was rumored he lived in the Everglades and studied Native American mysticism but Rusty has never confirmed or denied this. It was also said that he was first mate on a shrimp boat, however Rusty stressed that he would never work that hard. He reappeared five years later when

friend and singer-bassist David Zirnheld asked him to play at church services with him. They played a unique blend of hymns and originals, and Rusty was back.

Songs of note include the bouncing "Rockabilly Train," the telling "A Little Mixed Up," the upbeat "The Worm's Turned," the revealing "Thing Called Love," and the moody instrumental "Bourbon Moon." [B.M.O.]

Contact-- www.rustyends.com

THE 7CS RAMSHACKLE 4-SONG CD

- AFTER THE SUN GOES DOWN
- ILLUMINATION
- EVERY WAKING HOUR
- LOVE WILL PULL YOU THROUGH

Boston's own The 7CS band returns with a great sounding 4-song CD featuring singer-guitarist Jack Kelleher, singer-bassist Chris Schena, keyboardist Don Wink and drummer Glen Johnson along with musical guests Matthew Alexander on lead guitar and Jim Riley (of Rascal Flatts fame) on drums.

Recorded at Woolly Mammoth, the EP features four well-crafted tunes that show

Continued on next page >>>

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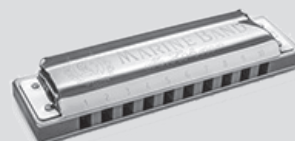
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off the band's taut grooves and musical savvy. Kelleher's voice is great throughout and propels the songs while the band create safe haven for his vocal excursions. Check out the buzzing "After The Sun Goes Down," the uptempo "Illumination," the rowdy "Every Waking Hour" featuring a great guitar solo by Matt Alexander, and the revealing "Love Will Pull You Through" and see if you don't agree this is a great sounding offering. Good stuff! [D.S.]

Contact-- <https://the7cs.bandcamp.com>

THE SECRET GOLDFISH EMPTY HOLSTER 12-SONG LP

- HOLIDAY HYMN
- GET ON BOARD
- SOMEWHERE IN CHINA
- THIS ARSEHOLE'S BEEN BURNED TOO MANY TIMES
- ELEVATOR
- HEY MISTER
- STOP THAT GIRL
- DIAL F FOR FAKE
- MOSCOW
- LOUCHE LIFE
- 22 BLUE
- BIG SUR

The Scottish band centered around singer Katy Lironi since about 1996 seems to collect the Highlands' music royalty for on and off sessions over a decade and includes a good number of covers from this very same gene pool.

You get the slightly twee and jazzy "Holiday Hymn" at a very high pitched voice and a perky beat. "Get On Board" is pure jangly pop with tasteful production and some nice backing vocals. Lironi then covers the Shop Assistants for the smooth and sentimental "Somewhere In China." The band can actually rock as they prove on the grungy and convincing "This Arsehole," which instantly puts an impish smile on your face, especially as it echoes the New York Dolls' "Personality Crisis."

The ensemble slows right down for the soft and moody "Elevator." I keep expecting them to break into VU's "Pale Blue Eyes," but they carefully avoid the obvious. Instead they borrow other riffs for the captivating "Hey Mister" for a perfect club night. One of the boys takes over the microphone for the perky "Stop That Girl," but Katy chimes in from the side to allow a smooth transition. They decorate it with jazzy keyboards.

"Dial F for Fake" has this mysterious low keyboard buzz going on while Lironi takes up the higher frequencies on this slow burning classic from label mates Port

Sulphur. There's a new wave Devo element in "Moscow" that is contrasted by the light-hearted poppy delivery and subliminal kazoo solo. Another lad sings "Louche Life" as they praise Caledonia with some weird twists.

The garagy "22 Blue" has our band leader sound a bit like Debbie Harry, but the riffs also have a strong VU vibe. However it's sadly over in less than 2 minutes. Last but not least, Brian Wilson has to provide the content of "Big Sur" which sounds completely different with a woman singing it. Do they Surf in Scotland. I guess they do now. [Gecko]

Contact-- thesecretgoldfish.bandcamp.com

RAVAGERS ON THE LOOSE 10 - SONG CD/LP

- PUBLIC HELL
- RAZOR LOVE
- TOTAL CRIME
- DOGS
- NO TOMORROW NO PROBLEM
- POISON RITE
- NIGHT OF THE BASTARD
- RIGHT TO KILL
- MEET YOUR MAKER
- WICKED BONES

Baltimore, Maryland's Ravagers seem younger than your average rockers these days, but still bring the right bravado and authenticity to the table. "Public Hell" is a real stomper and takes us back to the late 1980s where their punky gang shouting would have made a contender in the old Los Angeles scene. "Razor Love" is slower and delves on elements of debonair decadence. "Total Crime" almost sneaks in under the radar only to burst forth after the first verse with a bombastic chorus.

They give us a bit of a break with the rather mid-tempo "Dogs," which still convinces with the in-between chanting. Downshifting "No Tomorrow No Problem" to begin with, only to rev-up with contagious hooks was a sound strategy. The middle eight and end convince us this wasn't a fluke. The acidic, "Poison Rite" was just the ticket to snap a few vertebra or at least get us back in the mosh pit.

While still being heavy, "Night of the Bastard" has an elegant agility and poppy appeal despite the sneering delivery of singer, Alex Hagen. The bass intro of "Right To Kill" catches our attention right off while Hagen manages a nonchalance until he breaks his entry into the fray. On "Meet Your Maker," the emotional fervor

and melodic structure reminds you of a mix of Vain and Bang Tango back in the day. The guitar work builds a great tune for the otherwise somewhat paced "Wicked Bones," but the singer keeps bursting out of their containment to make this memorable until the end. [Gecko]

Contact-- www.ravagersgang.com

CROSSWORD SMILES CONSEQUENCES & DETOURS 11 SONG CD

- COUNTING BY FIVES
- FALLING ALL OVER MYSELF
- GIRLS CLUB
- MILLICENT
- NIGHT TRAIN
- TYPICAL WAVING GOODBYE
- NAVIGATOR HEART
- ONCE OR TWICE
- FAKE A SMILE
- KISMET
- THE NEVER SEENS

Big Stir change their formula from picking tuneful power pop bands, to taking a risk on 2 blokes, Tom Curless and Chip Saam, with acoustic guitars. This comes out quite folkly to begin with on the likes of "Counting By Fives" which takes us back to early 1970s radio fare. There's a sort of dark and grating post punk mixed with Jazz vibe to "Falling All Over Myself." "Girls Club" could be a bit of Bossa Nova if you took the latin out of it and added orchestral parts to it. Meanwhile, "Millicent" sticks a little to the campfire folkly approach.

Admittedly, Curless often beats the drums while Saam occasionally dabbles in bass for a less folkly feel, like on the ska inspired, "Night Train," where horns mentally outflank us.

They remind you of a less New Wave Marshall Crenshaw on "Typical Waving Goodbye" but the song veers back into a remorseful poppy ballad. They perk up on the upbeat "Navigator Heart" which is nicely boosted by tasteful lead guitar, yet ease off around the half way mark. "Once Or Twice" meanders in a sensitive, slower than mid-pace manner. The minor notes prevail on "Fake A Smile," but there is an uplifting, hopeful feel on the chorus.

The lads build up different sections with completely different time and key structures for "Kismet" which actually defies explanation. New age Jazz perhaps. The rock intro of "The Never Seens" bodes well as they explore a heavier sound, albeit with constant key and tempo changes. This didn't turn into Simon & Garfunkel MKII as the duo proves to be extremely

multi-faceted. [Gecko]

Contact-- bigstirrecords.com/crossword-smiles

LOS PEPES OUT OF THE VOID 12 SONG LP

- THOUGHTLESS BOYS
- MOLLY CODDLE
- NEW CHRISTIANS
- PARADISE
- SWEET APPEASEMENT
- FUTURE HISTORY
- FOREIGN BODIES
- ABOVE AND BEYOND
- SHORT TERM SOLUTIONS
- UNDERCOVER
- ALL I GOT IS TIME
- TOMORROW AND TODAY

This multicultural London band reference the former enemies of drug lord, Pablo Escobar, and put on a better party. In any case, the single "Thoughtless Boys," has a sneering intensity where the punk outweighs the pop, while maintaining a cerebral edge and then works itself to anthem for the chorus. "Molly Coddle" emanates a Buzzcocks vibe underlined by a good dose of minor notes. They vent their spleen on religious and political extremists with "New Christians" amid a driving beat that delivers the message. The beat gets turned up another notch for the poppier "Paradise" where trebly lead guitar underlines the softer melody. By Los Pepes standards, "Sweet Appeasement" could be defined as a ballad where subliminal keyboards support the guitars.

Various movements give "Future History" a dynamic beyond that of the usual poppy garagy fare. Ben Perrier's high voice gives the likes of "Foreign Bodies" a certain pathos. They push the drama element on "Above And Beyond" where they reach a level of intensity amid the relentless bass and drums onslaught. They let out some more frustrations and anger on "Short Term Solutions" and "Undercover" which seem harder than the rest of the record. The vocal melody and determination makes "All I Got Is Time" another standout while the lead guitar work reaches a higher fervor. The pure sugar and spice pop melody and keyboard accompaniment shows you they can cross over. They work in a psychedelic interlude. At the end, the garage rock aficionados get their money's worth on the well done "Tomorrow And Today."

[Gecko]

Contact-- <https://lospepes.bandcamp.com>

Cardinal Black

Cardinal Black is a Welsh band formed in 2020. The origin of the group goes back ten years to when singer-bassist Tom Hollister, guitarist Chris Buck and drummer Adam Roberts formed a blues-based trio.

All these years later, a renewed Cardinal Black is set to introduce themselves to the world through their brand new album, *Midnight At The Valencia* and summer tour of America and Canada.

I spoke to frontman Tom Hollister one day in May and with a decisive Welsh accent, Tom explained the origins of the band and their plans of unveiling their music to the world...

METRONOME: How long has Cardinal Black been together?

Tom Hollister: We've been together probably since 2020, but we've knocked around as mates probably 10 or 12 years before that. Cardinal Black itself though, four years.

METRONOME: You've known each other for a long time?

Yeah, too long you might say (laughs). We were mates first, which is great. We knocked around in a little trio back in the day and got off the ground, but died just as quickly. We stayed together and figured it was probably something in the songs we had written originally. So we tried to get it back underway.

That culminated in a 2020 release of the first record. That seemed to do okay. We got a decent response from it and thought, Let's keep going and do it again.

METRONOME: How did you originally meet your bandmates, Chris and Adam?

You could throw a blanket over all of us. We live very close to each other. Chris and I went to the same school and Adam went to a school right up the road from us. My now brother-in-law at the time was dating my then girlfriend's sister, if that makes sense? He was in the same class as Chris. He said, "You've got to hear this guy play guitar." I thought, I've been told that a few times before.

Even at that young age, I realized there was something special about Chris. So we joined forces as soon as he would allow me to do so. We were looking for a drummer, and Adam was the obvious, good-looking choice. We knocked around in different cover bands together and it didn't take long for us to find each other.

METRONOME: What year are we talking about?

2010. 2012 I guess.

METRONOME: You started as a cover band?

At first, we played as a blues trio. Originals music. We had a modicum of success. Steve Winwood came to our first ever gig, which was nerve racking to say the least. That seemed to have a little steam, so we played together for 18 months to two years as the trio and then, I wish we could call it

rather than a standout guy.

I grew up influenced by American songwriting: James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Carol King and Paul Simon, so our newest record is especially a step away from the bluesy stuff and more in to, dare I say, Americana. It struck me only recently how much there are massive similarities between working class Welsh valued life and mid-town America. Instead of cattle wrangling, its



an acrimonious split, but we all needed each other for a covers band. So as much as we hated each other at that moment, we would be playing weddings with each other the next Saturday.

Looking back, the sound that I always longed for is the sound that we now have. So it took us a little while, but we're there now.

METRONOME: What made you switch from blues-based material to the songs you're playing now?

We were working with a manager at the time, Alan Niven who was managing Guns 'N Roses through all their high times and stuff. He really liked Chris. I think the push was to make a more rocky, blues trio and have big solos and what not. It really wasn't my vibe at the time. It's probably the end reason we ended up with no band.

Full circle now, Chris would be the first person to say he wants to be more of the anonymous kind of person in a band, in a collaborative, in a group, in a gang as it, were

sheep farming, I guess, or coal mining, but there are a lot of similarities there.

I like that kind of writing first and foremost. The trouble is when you've got someone as great as Chris on the guitar, you've got to let him shine a little bit as well. It's never going to be an acoustic singer-songwriter thing unfortunately with Chris in, but I'll keep him near me.

METRONOME: How does the songwriting process work for you guys?

Fundamentally, it's probably me in terms of complete songs that I come to the table with. Chris definitely does a lot of writing as well and Adam has written too. I think we're as strong as the sum of the parts in terms of building a song and arranging the music. If someone comes in with a new idea, we all get around that.

We've played together for so long. It's quite a fluid, speedy process to be honest because we can already see where we want to end up in the early start of it.

I think that any band that tells you they go in all as equal partners and everybody miraculously writes the perfect song together... there's always going to be someone that comes up and says, Oh, I've got these lyrics or this melody.

METRONOME: Do you handle just the vocals or do you play an instrument as well?

I tend to just stick to my vocals. I can play enough of guitar and piano and bass to get me through writing, but I would never dare play them live.

METRONOME: On your new album *Midnight at The Valencia*, there are a lot of layered tracks. There's a lot going on. It's not drums, guitar and your voice. The song "Ride Home" had flute in it. Who played the flute?

The core of the band at that time was essentially guitar, bass, drums and vocals. That's how we were writing. That song in particular is a bit of a funny story. We were recording in Switzerland just outside Zurich in a place called Power Play. It was probably the least written song when we went into the studio, but we really liked it. It's quite a fun song. We took an 8-bar loop of the drum track and looped it the whole way through... done. We wanted it to have that staccato, rough feel to it almost. We came to the solo part of the song and it deserved more than just another guitar solo. I came up with the idea of bagpipes, but obviously we didn't

know any bagpipe players, but I did know one guy.

There's a podcast that all of us listen to called, The Rest Is Politics, which is a major podcast here. One of the hosts is called Alastair Campbell who was Tony Blair's head of press for a long time. He's a huge kind of character over here in the political scene. He happens to play bloody bagpipes.

We dropped him a message on Instagram thinking he would never respond. Lo and behold, we're in a studio in North London recording bagpipes with Alastair Campbell. Crucially, a guy named Finley McDonald, his pipes teacher, turned up with some Celtic pipes and all different things in his bag of tricks. That's what you hear on the record. It's a Mellotron piece I think and then some flute stuff over the top of it.

METRONOME: Let's take a step back... How did you guys meet Steve Winwood?

Well, that's the early days. I was in University in Gloucester and I was studying

music. Part of our dissertation piece, our last project, was to put together a band or just perform one original song in a sellable event. Adam, Chris and I had started knocking around about a month before this and had written one song. We thought, Why stop there? While every other student did one song, and then some covers, we did a 12-track set of original music. I didn't know Steve Winwood was coming, but we actually did, "Give Me Some Lovin." You could imagine the nervousness.

The story goes, I used to go and have a couple of beers with my lecturers, and friends of theirs would join us in the bar sometimes. A guy that came to join us a few times is a guy named James Towler who is Steve's front-of-house producer and manager. We just struck up a friendship. He's a lovely guy. He had told Steve roughly around that time and came to our first show and then invited us to his personal studio which is this amazing place in the English Cotswolds. We've been up there a handful of times. It's a magical experience. He's a super lovely guy and very supportive. **METRONOME: Midnight at The Valencia is not a live album. How did you come up with the name and what does it mean to you?**

We sat around a table and we were trying to come up with a name for the record. It was a very personal record. We wanted to encapsulate our story over ten years of cover bands and dive bars and the ten thousand

hour struggle to get to this point. We definitely didn't have a name or an album cover for it. Adam, the drummer, had received in that moment, an Instagram follow request from a drummer in California. He liked his drumming. Adam scrolls through his Instagram and one of the first photos this guy had taken was essentially the photo that you see on the cover of the record. It was a picture of the Valencia which is a genuine club in California. The truth is, we have never been there, but we would like to right that wrong. It seemed to be the photograph encapsulation of what we were trying to say at the time.

METRONOME: I really liked your song "Breathe." What was that song about?

That was an example of a song that Chris and I had written together. From a lyric standpoint, I try to write about small moments in time. I don't like to write about broad themes: love and loss and what not. Instead, I like to inject myself into a moment.

I guess most of them are rooted in my personal truth, but this one is actually not. It's about two illicit lovers meeting. The whole song is about one small embrace. They're both from loveless marriages, trying to get out from behind that. That's all really. "Breathe" is about the one breath they take in that moment. For me, it's one of the strongest tracks on the record.

METRONOME: I really liked "Morning Light." It was a very moody song. What inspired the writing of that?

"Morning Light" is one of several songs about the same guy. He's a really close friend of mine. He's the same guy that is the reason behind "Ride Home." That tells the story of my friend, this guy who goes off to join the Army at 16 and kind of never coming back. By the way, he's a live. I don't mean he died. He went away from the area.

The same guy went through a divorce. I used to live with him. We used to have many sleepless nights righting the wrongs of the world in wing-backed chairs drinking whiskey. That song is about that. It's about wanting to do that again and having the space to do it. I see him more than I ever wish to which is lovely. He lives really close to me. **METRONOME: This is a very personal album for you isn't it?**

It's all about that really. Whenever I'm asked about this, I always relate it back to an artist I've loved all my life called John Martin. He's a Scottish guy. There was a BBC documentary about him before. The guy who is introducing the documentary said, "Most people keep diaries, John Martin wrote songs." I think that's probably a little bit of me. I don't know any other way than to write personal stuff.

METRONOME: I really liked the tune, "Holding My Breath." There was something very hypnotic about that tune. What did that song mean to you?

"Holding My breath" is quite personal. I think it was definitely a time in our lives, me

and my partner, my wife. We've been together since we were 14 or 15 years of age. We've been together a long time. We've spent much more time in each other's lives than not if that makes sense. We've been through everything that two people that have been together that amount of time can experience. Some of that isn't great at times. "Holding My Breath" is about that. It's about two people trying to get it together at the right time and struggling a little bit. Luckily, we've managed to get over that. Sonically, there's something a little repetitive about it, a little dancy about it, but still dark. I like it. It's one of my favorites.

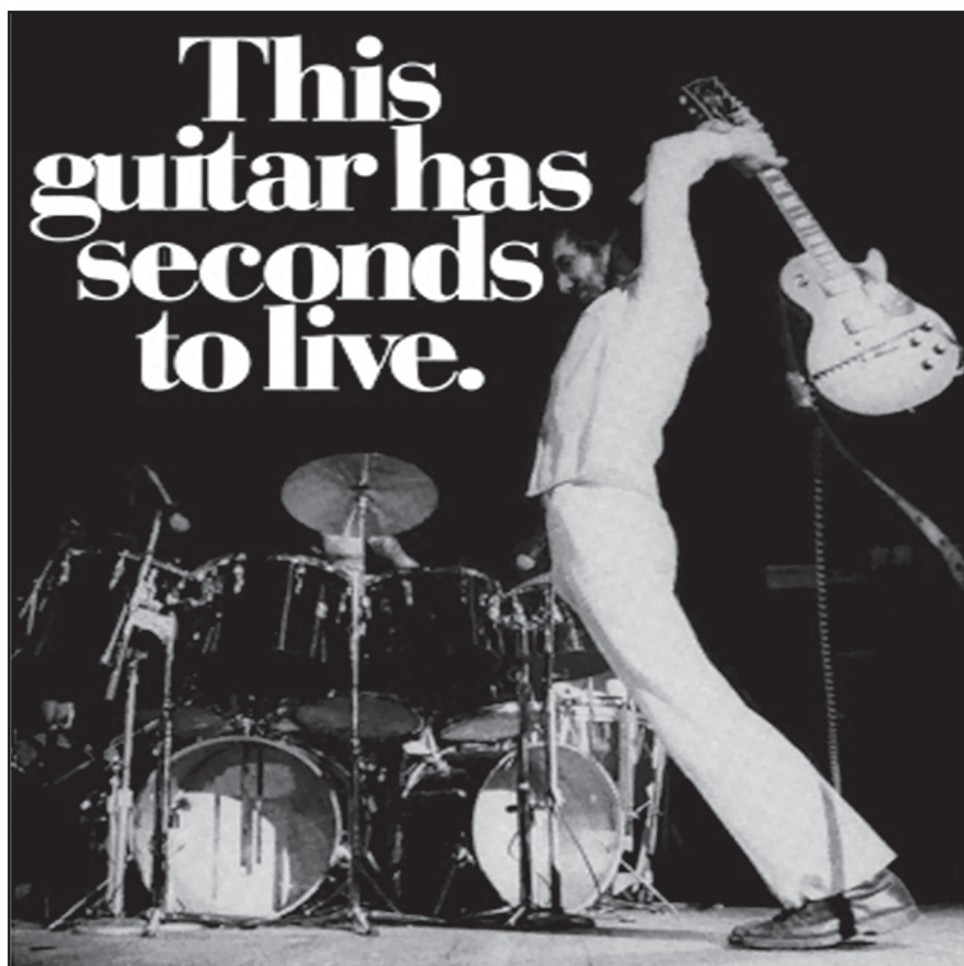
METRONOME: I really dug the song "Adeline." Can you tell us more about creating that?

Adeline is my daughter's name. She turns five in August, the day we play Nashville. So I won't be there again for Addy's birthday. That song is kind of about that. As sweet as it hopefully is, it's bittersweet. It's a song about questioning whether I am a good enough dad. Music is bittersweet when you're doing it professionally.

METRONOME: Are you looking forward to coming to America to play?

Can't wait mate. It's incredible to see that the shows are very much on target to set up before we even wheels up for the U.S. There's about 12 shows we're looking at. We can't wait to come out mate. We love your country.

-- Brian M. Owens



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The Time Machine

Jon Butcher Axis

Photo circa: 1981

Band Members L to R: Derek Blevins (Drums), Chris Martin (Bass), Jon Butcher (Lead Vocals & Guitar).

Musical Achievements: The Jon Butcher Axis formed in 1979 with Butcher on vocals & guitar, Sandy Higgins on guitar, Chris Martin on bass and Johanna Wild drummer Derek Blevins. Soon, Higgins left to be the front man for Balloon, while Charlie Farren fronted the lineup of The Joe Perry Project. 1983 saw the release of their first album, *The Jon Butcher Axis*. It reached #91 in the Billboard Album chart while the band's second album, *Stare at the Sun* (1984), reached #160. In 1985, the band signed with Capitol Records and released *Along the Axis*. The song, "The Ritual" earned the band a Grammy Nomination for Best Rock Instrumental Performance. "The Sounds of Your Voice" (written by Thom Gimbel) was the only single to hit the Billboard charts Hot 100. The band ended its run in 1991.

Where Are They Now: In 1994, Butcher formed Barefoot Servants. The band included Leland Sklar on bass, Ben Schultz on guitar and Ray Brinker on drums. In the mid 1990s, Butcher would release two solo blues albums, *Positively the Blues* and *Electric Factory*. In 1998, Razor & Tie released *The Best of Jon Butcher-Dreamers Would Ride*. In November 2000, Butcher released a CD exclusively through his web site *A Long Way Home*. A *Stiff Little Breeze* was released on Atom Records in 2001 while 2002 brought an additional Jon Butcher Axis release, *An Ocean in Motion-Live in Boston 1984*. Butcher just released his new album, *Nuthin' But Soul*. Most of the instrumentation was played and recorded by Jon with help from Danny Borgers & Sandy Macdonald on keys, Allan Estes on mandolin and Chris Pierce, Debby Holiday and Renee Dupris on vocals.



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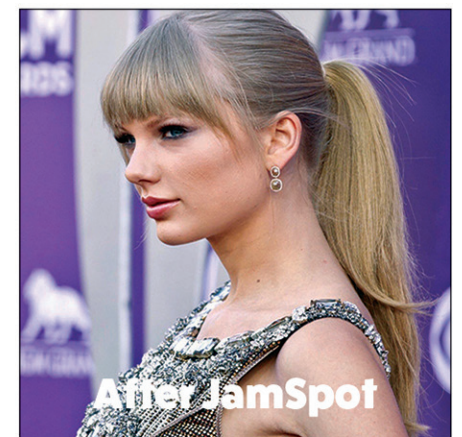
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Reid Parsons

Reid Parsons is a sweet, talented, earthy gal. Her love for music is equaled only by her love for farming. In a perfect world, Reid would do both with equal aplomb. Saving her money through food service work and farming, Reid was able to fund her outstanding new album, [Back To Back](#), bringing years of her songwriting to fruition. I spoke to her one day in May and we talked at length about her music and life in Vermont. Read on. You'll love every word...

METRONOME: Your new album sounds great. It sounds like Vermont.

Reid Parsons: Thank you. I've been working on it for a while.

METRONOME: What made you get into music? Did you grow up in a musical family?

Yes, my Dad is a musician, so that was a big part of it. My mom also loves music. I grew up with a lot of music around me.

My family is really into music and my Dad and his Mom, my Grandmother, is also really musical. My older sister and I would always be practicing harmonies (laughs).

My dad would be driving down to New York for work and it was a six hour ride. He was driving in the front seat and would be playing the harmonica. We would play a game and sing back the line that he would play.

I was also very lucky to grow up in a place that had really good public schools and specifically got lucky with having a lot of good teachers and a good music program.

METRONOME: Did you start singing in your teenage years and buy a guitar? How did that all work out for you?

I had a really crappy nylon string guitar as my first guitar. I taught myself how to play and at summer camp I played a lot of folk songs. I really fell in love with it as a tool for writing. I was really into writing poetry and fiction growing up because I love to read. I had a lot of time to entertain myself growing up. Music was a very good form of self entertainment.

METRONOME: What were some of the things that would inspire you to write a poem?

I was inspired by a lot. I come from a family with lots of big feelings. I feel things very strongly, so it literally could have been anything that happened to me.

METRONOME: Did you join a band while you were in high school?

Yes. I joined a couple of bands when I was in high school. There used to be this club in Burlington, Vermont called 242 Main. It was underneath Memorial Hall. 242 was an underage club. When I was fifteen, I started playing in Burlington. I was in two different bands, and genre-wise, they were all over the place. There are still people in Burlington that I play with that I went to high school with.

I went to college and continued playing in bands throughout college. I just love playing music with other people. It's so much fun performing live.

METRONOME: Were you singing, playing guitar, or both?

I was singing and playing the saxophone because saxophone was my primary instrument. I studied the saxophone and played a lot of jazz and

blues. Singing and the guitar came later.

METRONOME: Were you in a horn band?

In high school, I had a band with a trumpet player. Two horns. It was really fun. In college, I was in a Motown band with a three piece horn section.

METRONOME: Did you take saxophone lessons as a kid?

Yes, that was a way to learn music. I still play saxophone today. It helps me with writing and understanding and fleshing out the details of a song. I'm really glad I have that.

METRONOME: What did you do musically when

you got out of college?

Actually, I went to France on a music fellowship. I was in Paris for half a year. I was basically alone. I wasn't affiliated with the university. I was doing solo research.

METRONOME: How did that happen for you?

I applied and I got the fellowship. It gave me more flexibility before having to go out and find a real full-time job.

METRONOME: Can you read and write music?

Yes. Plus, a lot of the work that I had to do in school for music was writing about music and



studying about the music culture. I wrote my thesis on Bluegrass and Americana music. Then I moved back to Vermont to help my family with some family stuff and have been here ever since.

METRONOME: When did the singer-songwriter thing kick in for you?

I really have been writing music since I was thirteen. I never really played out, though. I didn't know how to put it all together live. I would go to open mics, but I really didn't know what to do after that. I don't think I started playing seriously until I got into college. When I came back to Burlington, I really started playing more seriously in the scene and focusing on my songwriting.

A year before I graduated college, I spent the summer on campus completely alone. I've had a lot of time in my life where I've been completely alone, and that's where that voice becomes full of music. At the time I wrote a ton of songs and started getting obsessed with thinking that it was really cool.

When I went back to Vermont, I moved to this tiny town near where I grew up. I didn't have any friends. I thought it would be a good idea to move to a town of about 700 people and live by myself. Again, I became obsessed with songwriting because there was not a lot of other stuff going on. I was focused on creating art. That was also the way that I got into recording music. My first EP was recorded because I won a singer-songwriter competition in Burlington. In Vermont, there are a lot of opportunities for musicians.

METRONOME: Were you working during the day in the small town?

Yeah, I was working in an apple orchard on the southern most part of Lake Champlain. It was an hour and a half south of Burlington. Then I would be driving up to Burlington on the weekends to play. I would be falling asleep on my way home, so I ended up moving to Burlington two years later. I wanted to be closer to the scene and get a band together. I didn't want to keep doing this by myself.

METRONOME: How did you find success in Burlington?

I lived two blocks away from this place where I did an open mic every Tuesday. It was right next to Nectars. It doesn't exist anymore. A lot of places closed down because of Covid. It was a great way though to have some routines in songwriting. Every week, I would show up to this open mic with a new song.

The club, Radio Bean, is a total staple in Burlington. It's been around for about 30 years. It's one of these places that has music every single night. There's a lot of opportunity for people just starting out, cutting their teeth. So many people go to play there.

I released my EP, and then I had a band which was really fun. We were playing a lot of shows, and then Covid hit. I went back to writing music again. I was forced back into isolation, but fortunately out of that I got an album. That's when I started recording my album because I said, I can't play live. I was going crazy, not being able to support myself or practice my craft. It was really, really hard.

I started writing a ton and at the end of 2021, I tracked my songs at Tank Recording Studios where I ended up recording the album. With recording we

had to have so many people come in at different times because of the schedule, so we kept working on it slowly and that's what I did.

METRONOME: How did you meet your engineer, Ben Colette?

I was talking to one of my friends who had an album coming out that I thought sounded really good. I asked them, Where did you record this and what was your experience like? They said, "We recorded at Tank and it was awesome." His studio is in an old bike shop that he renovated. It feels like a barn on the second floor. It was only a seven minute drive from my house.

METRONOME: How long did it take you to record the album?

I think it was about 2-1/2 years. We were doing it really slowly. I was using all my own funds and I was really having a good time doing it. I wanted it to go on forever (laughs). I took my time and then worked on mixing and mastering and getting it all finished. It was ready in August 2024, but I wasn't ready to release it yet. I wanted to sit on it for a little while.

METRONOME: I like the fact that you funded the project yourself. You got funds together from your farming and food systems work. What did you do in Food systems?

I worked on a farm for a year, and before that I was working for a food distribution hub. I worked in an orchard, and I worked in a bakery. I love food. Food and music are intertwined because restaurants and bars are the places that have music. There are so many musicians who also work in the food scene in Vermont. We're an agriculture focused state. I've always loved farming and my first job was on a farm. My ideal world would be just being a farmer and a musician.

METRONOME: I want to talk about some of the

songs on the album. The opening song, "Back to Back" was beautifully constructed and your vocals had a very laid-back lilt. What inspired the writing of that?

I wrote that song in a really different arrangement when I first was writing it. It was one of the first songs I wrote on my computer. I bought a MIDI keyboard controller and used the piano instead of a guitar. I think it had a really big influence on the song because I could make a groove rather than just have a singer- songwriter vibe. I think I wrote a lot of these songs to calm myself down because going through Covid was really stressful.

My boyfriend and I have been together for seven years. I wrote that song about the ease and comfort of knowing that someone is there for you. Living with someone and having this quiet support. I wanted to stay with that relaxed energy on my voice because it was in such sharp contrast to my music before showing off my range and power. I didn't want to make it too complicated.

The reason I named the album, Back To Back, is because it's the best representation of the album as a whole. It was also the first song on the album that just felt like it came together naturally and was done even though we were working on all of them at the same time.

METRONOME: You got more adventurous with the song "Get Out of Bed." There was a lot of nice horn work in that tune. Did you play the saxophone in that song?

No, but I played the demo horn and wrote all the lines. I hired my friend, Connor, and my other friend Avery, who are really good musicians, to play the horns. I love Connor's tone. He's such a good trumpet player.

METRONOME: I really like the song "Lightbulb." That was one of those tunes that reminded me



of Vermont. What influenced you to write it?

I love that song. The melody just moves all around the place. I love the movement. I wrote that song really fast. It's also another song that was written for my partner because he hates his birthday. He never lets me celebrate his birthday, but I wrote him the song and made him a cake.

It was another very deep, Covid-era song. It was like the same day we were living over and over again. It makes you really appreciate what you have and I was so glad to have a job. I also felt really lucky to be in Vermont during Covid because at least I could go outside and go for a walk.

METRONOME: "Show Me You Love Me" was a bouncing number. What was that about?

I was saying to my partner, Do you know that the entire album is about you? When you've been with someone for a while, you end up writing a lot of songs about them. That song was also about my partner, but it was also about when you're a musician and you have to keep grinding all the time. Why is the audience not giving me anything back?

It's a perfect show when you give 100% and they give 100% back. Everyone is there and the energy is amazing, but there are other shows when you're like, Are you kidding me? Honestly, it was more about this general frustration with that.

METRONOME: You did a nice job with Springsteen's, "I'm on Fire." What made you choose to do that song?

I just love that song. The lyrics are amazing. I honestly did the song as a challenge because it's been done so much. I just wanted to do one cover. I never used to like covering songs, but I very much changed my tune on that. I just love that song.

METRONOME: You waxed sultry on the song, "Figure It Out." That was a sexy tune. What made you write it?

I wrote that when I was on my fellowship living in Paris. I met some people over there and wrote that song about one of them. I was thinking, Why am I sitting on this song for so long, it needs to be recorded. It's one of the songs that's been consistently in my live shows and I felt it was time to give it a chance to shine.

METRONOME: Are you playing regularly now?

Yes. I'm playing solo when I do small tours and playing with a band when I'm local. It's easier to tour when it's just one person. When I play with the band, I have strings and a pedal steel player. It's been really good for me.

-- Brian M. Owens



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Metronome Madness

Hello friends of **Metronome** and welcome to the **August** installment of **Metronome Madness**. It's summertime and there's lots of music in the air. So fire up the grill, pour yourself a cold one, and do read on... An architect of the blues, a craftsman of the building blocks that laid the foundation for today's modern R&B, the multi-GRAMMY Award winning blues icon **Buddy Guy** is here to tell the masses that he **Ain't Done With The Blues** through his brand new album to be released on Silvertone/RCA Records on July 30, his **89th birthday**. "This album is about where I've been, it's about where I'm going, and the people I learned everything from," shares **Buddy** on the LP. "...Muddy, Wolf, Walter, Sonny Boy, BB, I could go on and on. Before they passed, they used to say, 'Man, if you outlive me, just keep the Blues alive,' and I'm trying to keep that promise." He continues, "Now, I can't kick my leg up high as I used to, or jump off the stage like I did in my 20's and 30's, but I'm going to give you everything I got as long as I got it." You can catch **Buddy Guy live**: 7/13- Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, Hampton Beach, NH. 20 years after his passing, Rock & Roll Hall of Famer **Johnnie Johnson**, whose piano work graced so many of **Chuck Berry's** classic recordings, will have a new album, **I'm Just Johnnie**, releasing August 1st on Missouri Morning Records, featuring special guests including **Bruce Hornsby**, **Bonnie Raitt**, **Johnny Rivers** and **John Sebastian**. The two-CD set also includes a second disc of interviews with **Johnson** and Radio Hall of Fame and SiriusXM DJ **Pat St. John** discussing **Johnnie's** career in one of the last interviews before his passing on April 13, 2005. Among the many classic **Chuck Berry** rock 'n' roll records **Johnnie Johnson's** piano playing can be heard on include, "Maybellene," "Roll Over Beethoven," "Brown-Eyed Handsome Man," "School Days," "Almost Grown," "Back in the USA," "Carol," "Wee We Hours," and "Too Much Monkey Business." **Johnson** and **Berry** started playing together in late 1952. The two collaborated on many of **Berry's** songs, and the song "Johnny B. Goode" was reportedly a tribute to Johnson. **Berry** and **Johnson** played and toured together until 1973. Legendary rockers **STYX** and **Kevin Cronin**, the iconic voice and writer behind **REO Speedwagon's** greatest hits, wrapped up hugely successful sold-out residencies at The Venetian Theatre earlier this year. For the first time in their 50-plus-year career in Las Vegas, NV, **STYX** performed 1977's **The Grand Illusion** in its entirety, while **REO Speedwagon** performed 1980's **Hi Infidelity** in its entirety. Due to the overwhelming response from both residencies, **STYX** and

The Kevin Cronin Band are bringing these album shows for the first time, plus their hits, to the amphitheaters and arenas this summer as part of their **"Brotherhood of Rock"** tour. In **STYX** news, they released a new album, **Circling From Above**, on May 28 that's available for sale as CD and vinyl at all their tour stops. It's also available to stream and download on digital outlets. **Circling From Above** features contributions from all seven members of the band, including founding guitarist-vocalist **James "JY" Young**, guitarist-vocalist **Tommy Shaw**, original bassist **Chuck Panozzo**, longtime drummer **Todd Sucherman**, keyboardist-vocalist **Lawrence Gowan**, guitarist-vocalist **Will Evankovich** and bassist **Terry Gowan**. The album was produced by **Evankovich**, who also helmed the band's previous two records before becoming an official member in 2022. All 13 songs were penned in various combinations by the band's songwriting triumvirate of **Shaw**, **Evankovich** and **Lawrence Gowan**. Referencing the trio's creative spark, **Lawrence Gowan** says it's not a simple case of majority rules, but rather a true collaborative endeavor. After 50 years, **John Fogerty** of **Creedence Clearwater Revival** fame fully owns his songs again, recording them anew with backing from his sons **Shane** and **Tyler** on a new album coming in August. The powerful new 20-track album from **Fogerty** arrives August 22, 2025, featuring newly recorded versions of his most beloved songs from "Proud Mary" and "Bad Moon Rising" to "Fortunate Son" and "Have You Ever Seen the Rain," marking both a celebration of an iconic catalog and a personal reclamation of artistic ownership. **Helloween**, the legendary German Metal band with 21 Gold and Platinum awards and over 10 million records sold, will release their highly anticipated new album, **Giants & Monsters** on August 29 via Reigning Phoenix Music. **Helloween** will celebrate four decades of metal mastery with a global 40th anniversary tour later this year. The European leg begins in mid-October, with initial dates selling out quickly and additional shows in Madrid and Bochum already on sale. **Helloween** step into their fifth decade, proving once again why they remain one of the most influential and beloved bands in heavy metal. Nola Blue Records, announces the signing of **Mud Morganfield**, son of Blues legend, **Muddy Waters**. He will release his label debut, **Deep Mud**, on September 26th. Recorded at JoyRide Studio in Chicago, **Deep Mud** is real, honest, unvarnished blues from front to back, the way **Muddy** himself. "Listen, man, it's Chicago blues. No blues-rock here for **Mud**," he states. I talk and I sing about

real things, real live people, real situations, things that people go through, from falling in love to beautiful women. So, it's Chicago blues at its best. They ain't trying to do that no more, but that's what it is." Mud's originals dominate the hard-hitting set. As usual, his studio cohorts were the cream of the crop: guitarists **Rick Kreher** and **Mike Wheeler**, keyboardists **Roosevelt Purifoy** and **Sumito "Ariyo" Ariyoshi**, bassist **E.G. McDaniel**, and drummer **Melvin "Pookie Styx" Carlisle** lay down tough, uncompromising grooves loaded with timeless Windy City tradition. Harpist **Studebaker John** filled multiple roles as Mud's producer and arranger, with trumpeter **Phil Perkins** arranging the horns. **Muddy** would be proud of the way **Mud Morganfield** is carrying on the family tradition. "That was my main goal, just to do that," **Mud** says. "I didn't get a chance to really show him because he had passed, but I hope if there's a place we go when we leave here and he can still visualize or see us back down here, I want him to say, 'I'm proud of him!'" Drummer-producer-songwriter **Tom Hambridge** will release his new studio album **Down The Hatch** on August 29th. This marks his 2023 followup to the critically acclaime **Blu Ja Vu**. The album demonstrates the sheer joy **Tom** receives from creating music. "It is me being me," says **Tom**. I love the blues, I love rock 'n roll, I love **Willie Dixon**, I love **Buddy Guy**; this album is me doing what I love. It's what I do; it's in my blood." **Tom** hand-picked a stellar group of talented musicians for this album: **Rob McNelley** (Bob Seger), **Tom Bukovac** (Joe Walsh), **Bob Britt** (Bob Dylan) and **Buddy Guy** on guitar; **Glenn Worf** (Mark Knopfler), **Tommy MacDonald** (Johnny Winter) and **Anton Nesbitt** (BeBe & CeCe Winans) on bass and **Mike Rojas** (The Black Keys) **Kevin Mckendree** (Brian Setzer) and **Noah Forbes** on keyboard. **Tim Lauer** (The Smashing Pumpkins) contributes on accordion with **Tom** on drums, vocals and percussion.

PASSING NOTES: **Sly Stone** of **Sly and the Family Stone** fame died June 9, 2025 in Los Angeles of COPD. He was 82. He played a critical role in the development of psychedelic soul and funk with his pioneering fusion of soul, rock, psychedelia, and gospel in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1993, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of the group; **Brian Wilson**, the genius behind The Beach Boys songcrafting and vocal harmonies, died on June 11, 2025 from respiratory arrest in Beverly Hills, California. He was 82. Wilson was one of the most innovative and significant musical figures of his era. His work was distinguished for its high production values, complex harmonies and orchestrations, vocal layering,

and introspective or ingenuous themes. He was also known for his versatile head voice and falsetto. He is considered the first rock producer to apply the studio as an instrument and one of the first music producer auteurs. Wilson's talents will continue to influence acts for years to come; Guitarist **Mick Ralphs** of **Mott the Hoople** and **Bad Company** died June 23, 2025 in England from complications of a stroke. He was 81. Ralphs spent the final years of his life bedridden after a stroke. He died at a care facility in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.

VIDEO PICKS OF THE MONTH: **Nonnas**- After losing his beloved mother, a man (Vince Vaughn) risks everything to honor her by opening an Italian restaurant with actual grandmothers as the chefs. A heartwarming movie; **Trainwreck: The Astroworld Tragedy**- On November 5, 2021, **Travis Scott** stepped on stage to perform his set at Astroworld. What would have been the best night of the festival-goers lives quickly turned into a catastrophe that left 10 dead. This film takes an exclusive look at that night, told from the perspective of the survivors, paramedics, Scott himself and security staff that were at the center of the catastrophe; **Dirty Pop: The Boy Band Scam**- This documentary captures the rise and fall of **Lou Pearlman** - the music mogul who created and exploited some of the biggest boy bands of the '90s including Backstreet Boys, NSYNC, and O-Town; **Justin Willman: Magic Lover**- Magician Justin Willman combines performing magic tricks with delivering comedic commentary in this hilarious special; **The Magic Prank Show with Justin Willman**- Magician Justin Willman uses his amazing skills to pull off hilarious pranks on real people; **La Dolce Villa**- A successful businessman (Scott Foley) travels to Italy to stop his daughter (Maia Reficco) from spending all her money to restore an old villa, but Italy has other plans for him; **Operation Fortune: Ruesse de Guerre**- Super spy Orson Fortune (Jason Statham) must track down and stop the sale of a deadly new weapons technology wielded by billionaire arms broker Greg Simmonds (Hugh Grant). Reluctantly teamed with some of the world's best operatives (Aubrey Plaza, Cary Elwes, Bugzy Malone), Fortune and his crew recruit Hollywood's biggest movie star Danny Francesco (Josh Hartnett) to help them uncover the plot. Hey now friends and fellow musicians, that's all for now, but we'll be back next month with more tales from the world of music. Until then, stay safe, be happy and keep making, listening and supporting beautiful music. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY LEO, YOU LION YOU**. Thanks for reading.

--Compiled by Brian O.

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Greg Moon

As the drummer-singer for the Worcester-based quintet, Comanchero, Greg Moon keeps a busy musical schedule. Nominated for a 2025 Worcester Music Award, being recognized as Relix Magazine's "Jam Off" winner, and recently releasing his new solo album, Blue Rust, Moon is busy indeed. So it was only fitting that we query him about what's going on musically. Are *you* ready?

METRONOME: Where are you based?

Greg Moon: I live in Wakefield, in Eastern Massachusetts, North of Boston.

METRONOME: What made you want to be a drummer?

When I was a kid in the 5th grade, the music teachers show-cased instruments to students to see who might sign up for band or orchestra. My older brother played guitar and told me to choose the drums, arguably to have someone to play with. That panned out – but later. Anyway, they didn't show the drums and when I came home from school, I told my mom that they were signing up kids for band and I wanted to sign up for drums, but didn't think they had that as an option.

She called and found out that they didn't show drums because every kid would sign up and they wouldn't have much of a band. However, it was an option, so I signed up. It wasn't more than two years before I was borrowing my brother's guitar and teaching myself that instrument as well.

METRONOME: Who are some of your musical influences?

The Band, Tom Petty, Weezer, Cake, The Meters, The Eagles, Little Feat, Lyle Lovett, Elvis Costello, David Bowie, Rage Against the Machine, Bob Marley, The Beatles, Taylor Swift, Jesse Welles, John Prine, Tom Waits, Soul Coughing, Phish, Paramore, Grateful Dead, Led Zeppelin, The Who, Bob Dylan, My Morning Jacket... I'm a fan of all kinds of music.

METRONOME: How long have you been playing drums with Comanchero?

20 years

METRONOME: How did you first connect with them?

Sam Margolis is the nephew of the bass player Marty Lynch who was in a band with my brother and myself called Free Lunch. When Marty moved to Maine, I was thinking I was going to call it quits on music altogether. Then I saw Sam's band, Purchase Order play. I thought they were good, but it was obvious the drummer was out of his depth. Sam asked me to join, and we re-formed as El Gringo adding my brother on lead guitar.

METRONOME: How did the band come up with the name Comanchero?

We were releasing our second record, Americana Nueva, and we were mailed a cease-and-desist letter from a dude calling himself El Gringo who played 50's songs, sung in Spanish with cheesy Casiotone keyboard sounds, out of Arizona. Rather than fighting this hombre for the name, we decided to re-name. We had a bunch picked out and it came down to Horse Fuel or Comanchero. Given the number of misspellings and mispronunciations we probably should have gone with Horse Fuel (laughs).

METRONOME: How many albums does Comanchero have out?

Four. Dead Gringo, Americana Nueva, The

Underserved and Thrown. Plus a bunch of singles. All streaming on all the services.

METRONOME: Can you tell us about some of the awards the band has won?

Not really. Have we won awards? If so, it doesn't really register for me. I'm not in this for the glory. I'm just in it for the music.

METRONOME: Who is currently in Comanchero and what instruments does everyone play?

First of all, everyone in the band sings. I'm the drummer and play Banjitar and keys. My brother Bob Moon, who plays in Ripple Effect and Nasty Habits, is on lead guitar. Sam Margolis plays the acoustic guitar, electric guitar, harmonica, and ukulele. He is also in

a side band called Ghost Creator. Andrew Kramerson plays the bass and mandolin. Jim Levin is on percussion. He also plays with the band Waves. We do lots of vocal harmonies when we're not jamming.

METRONOME: Who are some of the group's musical influences?

When we formed, we had the goal of writing music that had a country twang and a Latin thing *and* swampy drums. It's as if Santana and Willie Nelson formed a band and asked the Nevilles to be their rhythm section. So, it includes this wide swath of Americana music with the south of the border included as well. Tumble weeds and stampedes. Those musical influences are really the same as mine minus a few and probably adding more jam bands like The Dead, Gov't Mule, Goose, Billy Strings, Allman Brothers, Galactic, Umphrey Magee, etc.

METRONOME: You have a new solo album out. What is the name of it?

Blue Rust.

METRONOME: How did you come up with the name for the album?

I was going to call it Driving in Circles and have a photo of me in a cool vintage pickup truck. Then I realized it was too on-the-nose and went with something more poetic. I always liked the photo I ended up using, with me in a barn behind a drum set playing the banjo. I kept thinking of that image and gave the tracks to a friend of mine, Adam Milsky, who helped me narrow it down to Rusted (something) or (something) Rust.

I was leaving the city traffic of Boston behind and on a rare day, saw blue sky driving out of the Zakim. "Blue Rust," I thought. Then I thought how much that says in just two short words. It poetically encapsulates the lyrical theme of the record and its sonic quality as well. That was a lucky break. Glad it wasn't driving in circles.

METRONOME: Where did you record it?

In the corner of my cramped basement.

METRONOME: How long did it take to record?

4 months including mixing.

METRONOME: Did you write all the material for it?

Yes, I did.

METRONOME: Did you use any unusual instrumentation for the recording?

Not really. The banjo is a six string banjitar, so I didn't need to learn a whole bunch of new chord shapes. While that's unique/unusual it doesn't really sound any different. The keys are Hammond, Wurlitzer, Clav and Rhodes sounds all from a Yamaha mofx8. Lots to choose there, but I went with the classics. Cowbell, Vibraslap, Tambourine,



and reversed cymbals add the extra rhythmic color.

METRONOME: Who played on the record with you?

Just me. However, "Woke Up" is a duet where Krysten Muldoon sings and on "Prodigal Son" she has a solo at the end. On the streaming services I put, "featuring Comanchero, Jay Buckley, Muldoon & Moon and Billy Graham" on various songs, just to try to boost the listens through reference. Every sound you hear besides the Billy Graham sample and Krysten's vocal parts is played by me.

METRONOME: If someone was unfamiliar with you, how would you describe your music to them?

Ah. The \$64,000 question. I would say it's honest and catchy, with hooks galore and hard-hitting drums. '70's singer-songwriter on steroids. Acoustic, organ, bass and Telecaster with funky drums.

Folks I've asked have a hard time describing it. They say it sounds like Comanchero or me, but I've heard Cake, Susto, Dawes, Warren Zevon, Deer Tick, Tom Petty, Neil Young, Counting Crows, Wilco, Geese, Dr. Dog, JW Francis and MJ Lenderman. I don't think you can really say it sounds like anyone.

It's wild how original and unique it came out. I wasn't ever trying for a sound. I was just responding to what each song wanted. I stuck with roughly the same instrumentation and so when writing the parts, they needed

to fit together without stepping on one another, sometimes in unison, other times contrapuntal. The collection of songs seems to hang together in a nice way.

METRONOME: Let's talk about some of the songs on your new album. What inspired the writing for "Spinnin' In Limbo?"

I literally woke up on New Year's Day and said to myself, "Well it's a New Year, whattya got. In about 20 minutes I had a song. Hit me like lightning. It describes how a lot of people feel after a disappointing year. Like you're getting nowhere. I hope it's not too whiny.

Less than a week later I had "Runnin Out of Road." Then songs kept hitting me and I already had "Nerve" recorded from last year and "Bold" and "Chinatown" demoed from years earlier. 5 new songs later, I had an album. I had the duet I had written as well, but never sang with Krysten. I sang her parts and showed up one day on her doorstep and asked her to sing them. She obliged and added a femininity that's very impactful. **METRONOME: How did you come up with the concept for "Rollin' Up in Vegas?"**

My wife planned a bucket list trip for us to the Grand Canyon. All the things I describe in the song came from that trip. At first, I had a lot of imagery but little story. Jerome is a cool artist town with Maynard Keenan from the band Tool's winery there. Willams is a weird shrine to 50's bikers. So, after a fair amount of effort, I weaved a tale with heavy poetic device to fill up a road song about

a couple who find each other, marry, and find themselves in a life less epic than the journey there.

METRONOME: Who sang with you on "Woke Up?"

That was Krysten Muldoon. She's a great friend of mine who I collaborated with on a 6-song EP called Muldoon & Moon, that is also streaming everywhere. Muldoon & Moon is more keyboards and dorm rock than anything else I've done, but it still has a country pulse. "Woke Up" is really just a simple, catchy song with a happy message amidst everyday gripes and obstacles.

METRONOME: "Nerve" was a real rocker. What fueled the writing of that song?

This took the longest of any song I've written. I had pieces that I played over and over again and none of them worked with anything, but I eventually was able to stitch them together in a way that was musical.

A lot of that had to do with the drum part. I felt so triumphant. I wanted it to have an uplifting lyric, but I could never find the "How Do you Do" positivity, so it just came out as a flurry of cynical lines that went on way too long. What you hear are just the ones I thought worked the best. There's a pile of lyrics on the cutting room floor on that one.

I think the "rationalize-fashionable eyes" came during a very long swim. And that middle 8 is total overkill, but I had this prog-rock thing that just needed its spot and there it is in "Nerve." I guess I have a lot of Nerve, and I don't take my own advice: "When you think MORE is the answer, it won't help at all." Oh, the musical irony.

METRONOME: Are you going to do any shows for this release?

I play all the songs when I do solo shows on acoustic, or with my other side project: Acoustic Duo Mick and Moon. I'm sure some will sneak into some Comanchero sets soon.

METRONOME: Have you shot any videos for the songs?

Yes. Acoustic live versions. I do have a very artistically poor video for "Nerve." Not sure it's worth watching. Videos are way more difficult than you'd think.

METRONOME: Is there something you'd like to add before we close out?

I really hope people listen to this record and feel something. I've had more than a few folks say it describes them - really speaks to them.

It's the most personal record I've made to date and I hope it encourages folks to think about things from the middle. There's a lot of division in this country and the algorithms would have us believe the chasm is immense, but if you look past the sensationalism, I think you'll find we're all a lot closer to each other than it seems. A lot of the arguments I hear are just semantics, where both parties agree on the basics, yet inflate the subtleties. If you feel you've been forgotten or left behind because you can't wave the flag of the extremes, well, welcome to Blue Rust

-- Brian M. Owens

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