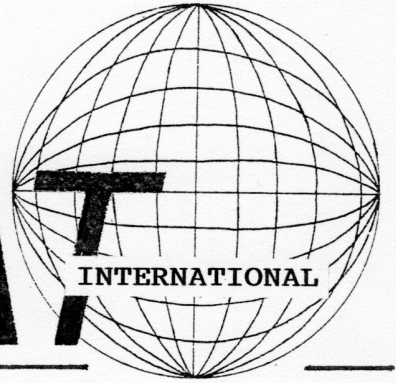


# ROCK BEAT



Issue No. 46 - Winter 2023

FREE

**PROFESSOR  
LONGHAIR**

**GUITAR  
SLIM**



POP ROCK PUNK ROCK GARAGE ROCK ROOTS ROCK SURF ROCK

# NEWS BEAT

## Wilko Johnson

Singer, songwriter, and guitarist Wilko Johnson died on November 21 at age 75. Johnson was best known as the guitarist and chief songwriter for the British pub-rock band Dr. Feelgood.

Johnson was born John Peter Wilkinson on July 12, 1947 on Canvey Island in the Thames estuary. In 1971, he formed Dr. Feelgood with singer Lee Brilleaux (aka Lee Collinson), bassist John "Sparko" Sparks, and drummer the Big Figure (aka John Martin). The group started out gigging around Canvey Island and became known for their intense, high-energy performances. They played hard-driving, no-frills rock 'n' roll and r&b, built around Johnson's slashing guitar playing and Brilleaux's snarling vocals. In contrast to other groups of the time, the band members had short hair and wore rumpled thrift-store suits, which gave them a gangsterish appearance.

In the summer of 1973, Dr. Feelgood landed a gig at the Tally Ho pub in London, which helped them to break into the London pub-rock circuit. The group went on to appear at other London pubs such as the Kensington and the Lord Nelson, and quickly established themselves as the hottest band on the pub-rock circuit.

In August 1974, Dr. Feelgood signed with United Artists Records. The group's debut album, *Down by the Jetty*, was released in January 1975, quickly followed by their second album, *Malpractice*, in

## Dr. Feelgood



## Down By The Jetty

October 1975. The group's third album was a live album entitled *Stupidity*. The album captured the energy and excitement of Dr. Feelgood's live show and is one of the all-time great live albums. *Stupidity* went to number one in the UK in October 1976, making Dr. Feelgood one of the few pub-rock bands to achieve significant commercial success.

Disagreements among band members led to Johnson leaving the group during the recording of their fourth album, *Sneaking Suspicion*. Dr. Feelgood

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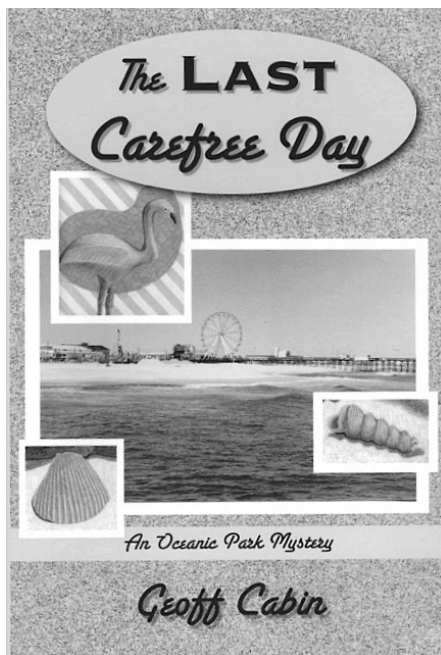
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carried on with new guitarist John “Gypie” Mayo, but the group soon was eclipsed by the punk-rock bands that they had helped to inspire.

After leaving Dr. Feelgood, Johnson formed the Solid Senders, whose self-titled album was released in 1978. In 1980, Johnson joined Ian Dury and the Bockheads after guitarist Chas Jankel departed from the band. Johnson also pursued a solo career, releasing albums with the Wilko Johnson Band, including *Ice on the Motorway* (1981), *Call It What You Want* (1987), *Barbed Wire Blues* (1988), *Going Back Home* (1998), and *Red Hot Rocking Blues* (2005). In 2010, Johnson appeared in the Dr. Feelgood documentary, *Oil City Confidential*.

In January 2013, Johnson was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and given six to eight months to live. He embarked on a farewell tour, a performance from which is documented on the DVD *Live at Koko*, filmed in March 2013. Johnson then teamed up with Roger Daltrey to record the album *Going Back Home*, which featured new versions of songs from throughout Johnson’s career. It subsequently turned out that Johnson’s cancer diagnosis wasn’t as dire as originally thought, and he had a successful operation that allowed him to continue to perform. In 2018, he released what would be his last album, *Blow Your Mind*.

## Welcome to Oceanic Park!



### This winter, escape to the beach with the thrilling mystery novel, *The Last Carefree Day*!

Ned Johnston, a middle-aged attorney, has escaped the grind of a high-pressure job by returning to his hometown of Oceanic Park and establishing a small law practice. He spends his spare time hanging out at Java Joe’s Coffee Cafe, surfing the 21st Street beach break, and listening to music at an old jazz club called the Crow’s Nest.

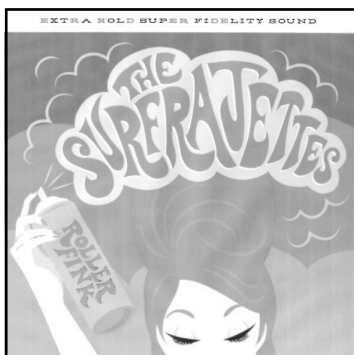
The carefree days of summer in Oceanic Park are shattered, however, when a client and friend of Johnston’s dies under suspicious circumstances. Unsatisfied with the police investigation, Johnston starts his own investigation into the death with the assistance of Sophia Ambrosetti, an investigator and researcher. Their investigation has the effect of stirring up a hornet’s nest and uncovers a web of corruption, deception, and murder.

“Cabin’s novel has all of the elements for a juicy mystery, and the protagonist’s wide-ranging knowledge of jazz and rock music gives the setting an inviting atmosphere.” *Kirkus Reviews*.

“This is a fantastic mystery thriller...Readers feel immersed into the town and culture of Oceanic Park, and a truly memorable cast of characters make this story come alive as the author steadily establishes the setting and tone of the narrative before pulling the rug out from under the readers’ feet, and setting them up for a thought-provoking thriller...a must-read thriller this summer.” *Pacific Book Review*

# Surf Beat

By Terry Wilson



With extensive touring and the release of an EP and a couple of singles, the Toronto-based Surfrajettes have established themselves as one of the leading bands on the contemporary surf-music scene.

They now have released their highly-anticipated first album, *Roller Fink*, and it's strong debut. As demonstrated on the album, the Surfrajettes have a traditional '60s surf sound that is bright, upbeat, and fun. Throughout the album, the band members perform as a tight unit and demonstrate strong ensemble playing.

The album's opening track, "Warm Up" features staccato picking on muted guitar strings alternating with twangy guitar lines over a jaunty rhythm. "Couch Surfing" is a catchy, mid-tempo rocker with lots of twangy guitar. The band's cover of Richie Allen and the Pacific Surfers' "Surfer's Slide," boasts intricate interplay between the two guitars on the song's irresistibly-catchy melody. "Slush Puppy" combines a catchy tune with a propulsive rhythm. The band turns in a hard-driving cover of the Tiny Bradshaw / Johnny Burnette Trio number, "Train Kept a Rollin'," which adds a bit of r&b and rockabilly to their sound. They also cover Blondie's "Heart of Glass," with a chiming guitar playing the vocal lines over a second guitar that lays down the song's distinctive rhythm. The album closes with "Snowball," a moody, atmospheric ballad with reverb-laden guitar over a slow stroll beat.

*Roller Fink* is an outstanding effort and should further solidify the Surfrajettes position at the forefront of the surf-music scene.

([thesurfrajettes.bandcamp.com](http://thesurfrajettes.bandcamp.com) / [hitiderecordings.com](http://hitiderecordings.com))



*Music from the Stars* is the latest album by the Dutch band, the Krontjong Devils. On the album, the band takes disco, ska, and synth-pop songs from the '70s and '80s and transforms them into surf-rock

instrumentals. This may seem like a somewhat gimmicky idea, but the Krontjong Devils have the arranging and playing skills to pull it off quite convincingly. They make even the most unlikely songs sound as if they were meant to be surf-rock instrumentals all along.

The album kicks off with the band's version of Blondie and Giorgio Moroder's "Call Me," which features twangy guitar over a driving beat. The band reimagines Kim Wilde's "Cambodia" as it might have been done by a '60s-era surf band, with reverbed surf guitar playing the catchy melody over a rhythm guitar playing alternating notes in a 1-2 rhythm on the bass strings of the guitar. The band applies a similar '60s surf sound to A-ha's "Take on Me." On their version of the Specials' "Gangsters," the band utilizes echo-laden guitar over a ska beat with organ and fuzz guitar weaving in and out. Nova's "Aurora" is given a space-age sound reminiscent of "Telstar." The band applies the Link Wray treatment to Vangelis' "Chariots of Fire," utilizing fuzzed-out power chords over a slow stroll beat.

This album is a lot of fun and takes listeners on an interesting musical journey.

([krontjongdevils.bandcamp.com](http://krontjongdevils.bandcamp.com) / [doublecrownrecords.com](http://doublecrownrecords.com))

# The History of Rock 'n' Roll: Part 8

By Geoff Cabin

*New Orleans (continued)*

*Lloyd Price*

Following Fats Domino's success on the Imperial label, other record companies came to New Orleans looking for artists who could duplicate that success. In early 1952, Art Rupe of Los Angeles-based Specialty Records came to New Orleans to "find another Fats Domino."<sup>1</sup> Rupe arranged to hold auditions at J&M Studios and, after a disc jockey announced the auditions on a local radio station, a large number of hopefuls turned up to audition.<sup>2</sup> Among them was a 17-year-old singer named Lloyd Price, from the New Orleans suburb of Kenner, with a song that he had written called "Lawdy, Miss Clawdy."<sup>3</sup>

After being impressed by Price's performance of the song, Rupe signed Price to the Specialty label and hired Dave Bartholomew, then working as a freelance producer, to oversee Price's first recording session.<sup>4</sup> That session took place at J&M Studios on March 13, 1952, with Price backed by members of Bartholomew's band along with Fats Domino on piano.<sup>5</sup> The resulting recording of "Lawdy, Miss Clawdy" is one of the classics of New Orleans rhythm and blues. The song kicks off with Fats Domino's rolling triplets on piano and then Price comes in with his powerful, gospel-tinged vocals, while guitarist Ernest McLean, bassist Frank Fields, and drummer Earl Palmer give the song a propulsive rhythmic drive.

"Lawdy, Miss Clawdy" was released in the spring of 1952 and went to number one on the r&b charts, where it remained for seven weeks.<sup>6</sup> Over the next year, Price racked up more hits on the r&b charts with "Oooh, Oooh, Oooh," "Restless Heart," "Tell Me Pretty Baby," and "Ain't It a Shame," but his career was interrupted in 1953 when he was drafted into the army and dispatched to the Far East.<sup>7</sup> Price's career, however, would have a second chapter during the rock 'n' roll era.

*Shirley & Lee*

In 1952, Ed Mesner of the Los Angeles-based Aladdin label also tapped into the pool of talent in New Orleans. After hearing a demo by the teenaged duo of Shirley and Lee (Shirley Pixley and Leonard Lee), Mesner signed them to Aladdin and hired Dave

Bartholomew to oversee their first recording session.<sup>8</sup> That session yielded the duo's first single, "I'm Gone," a piano-driven, r&b ballad, on which the two singers traded verses in a gospel-tinged singing style. The single became a hit, going to number 2 on the rhythm and blues charts in late 1952.<sup>9</sup> The duo did not score any immediate follow-up hits, but their career also would have a second chapter during the rock 'n' roll era.

*Guitar Slim*

Another important figure to emerge from the music scene in New Orleans was Eddie Jones, better known as Guitar Slim. Jones was born in Greenwood, Mississippi on December 10, 1926.<sup>10</sup> As a youngster, he sang in the church choir and his singing retained a strong gospel flavor throughout his career.<sup>11</sup> After working as a blues vocalist, Jones took up the guitar, played in a style heavily-influenced by T-Bone Walker and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, and earned the nickname "Guitar Slim."<sup>12</sup> In the late '40s, Guitar Slim made his way to New Orleans where he formed a band with Huey "Piano" Smith and the drummer Willie Nettes.<sup>13</sup>

Guitar Slim began to attract attention while he and his band worked at the Dew Drop Inn in New Orleans.<sup>14</sup> Guitar Slim's performances earned him a reputation as a flamboyant showman. He wore loud, flashy suits and had an extra-long cord on his guitar that allowed him to play guitar while he was carried on the shoulders of a roadie through the audience, out the door of the club, and into the street.<sup>15</sup>

In 1951, Guitar Slim was signed to the Imperial label and had his first recording session at J&M Studios in May of that year under the supervision of Al Young.<sup>16</sup> The session yielded Guitar Slim's first single, the slow blues "Bad Luck Is On Me (Woman Troubles)."

Guitar Slim next recorded for Jim Bulleit's J-B label in Nashville, resulting in the landmark single "Feeling Sad."<sup>17</sup> The song used the eight-bar structure of gospel, rather than the 12-bar structure of blues, and featured churchy-sounding piano from Huey "Piano" Smith, funereal horns, and gospel-style vocals by Guitar Slim.<sup>18</sup> "Feeling Sad" was one of the first records to combine pure gospel music with secular

lyrics, making it one of the earliest examples of soul music.<sup>19</sup>

Guitar Slim then was signed to the Specialty label by local talent scout and producer Johnny Vincent.<sup>20</sup> Guitar Slim's first session for Specialty took place in New Orleans in October 1953.<sup>21</sup> Ray Charles was brought in to play piano on the session and oversee arrangements for the band.<sup>22</sup> (After working with Guitar Slim, Charles began to incorporate gospel music into his own recordings in a manner similar to Guitar Slim and Charles generally is credited with originating soul music.<sup>23</sup>)

The first single from Guitar Slim's Specialty session was "The Things I Used to Do," a 12-bar blues with Guitar Slim's gospel-inflected vocals and blues guitar backed by a horn section. The song became a huge hit, going to number one on the rhythm and blues charts in early 1954 and remaining there for 14 weeks.<sup>24</sup> "The Things I Used to Do" has since become a frequently-recorded blues standard.<sup>25</sup>

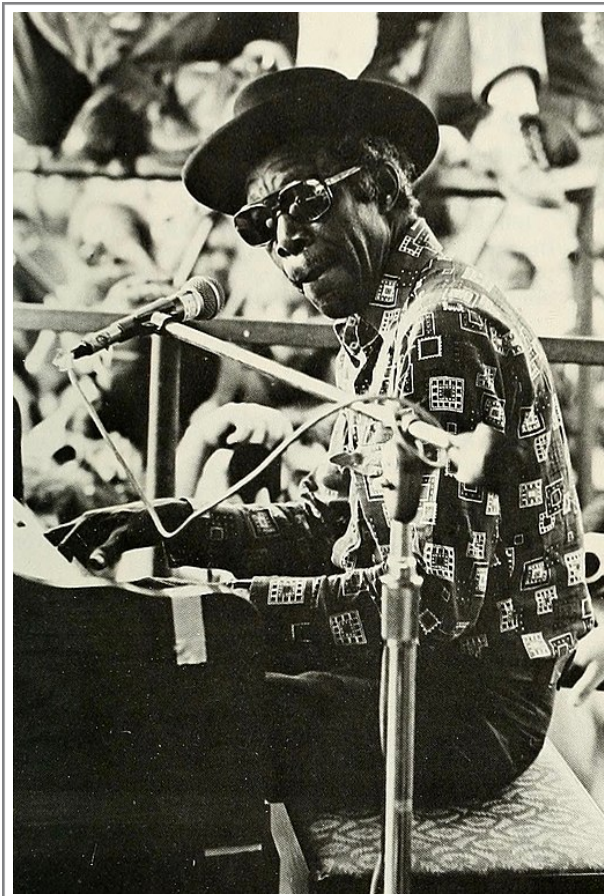
Guitar Slim followed up "The Things I Used to Do" with another remarkable song, "The Story of My Life."<sup>26</sup> The song was a mournful, slow blues number, which opened with wordless moaning vocals and featured some extraordinary guitar playing. On the record, Guitar Slim employed a heavily-distorted guitar sound long before Jimi Hendrix and other rock guitarists began to experiment with similar sounds. Other highlights of Guitar Slim's output for Specialty included the gospel-inflected blues "Trouble Don't Last," the tour-de-force wailing gospel vocals of "Sufferin' Mind," and the rocking "Stand by Me."

In 1956, Guitar Slim signed to Atco, a subsidiary of Atlantic Records, and recorded a series of singles for them over the next couple of years.<sup>27</sup> Highlights of his output for Atco included the r&b ballads "If I Should Lose You" and "I Won't Mind at All" and the gospel-tinged "When There's No Way Out."

Sadly, Guitar Slim's life and career were cut short, when he died of bronchial pneumonia in New York City in February 1959 at the age of 32.<sup>28</sup>

### *Professor Longhair*

New Orleans has a tradition of producing great piano players and one of the best to emerge from the music scene in New Orleans was Professor Longhair. Although he never achieved widespread popularity, Longhair was one of the most influential musicians in New Orleans during the r&b and rock 'n' roll eras and his piano style had a strong influence on other New Orleans pianists like Fats Domino, Huey "Piano" Smith, James Booker, Allan Toussaint, and Dr. John. Longhair had a unique piano style that combined blues and boogie-woogie with rumba and other Afro-Caribbean rhythms.<sup>29</sup>



Professor Longhair at the 1975 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.

Professor Longhair was born Henry Roeland Byrd in Bogalusa, Louisiana on December 19, 1918 and moved with his family to New Orleans while still a youngster.<sup>30</sup> In the late '40s, Byrd began playing around the New Orleans area, formed the Four Hairs combo, and was given the nickname "Professor Longhair."<sup>31</sup>

Longhair's recording career is somewhat difficult to follow since he frequently jumped from label to label, recorded under a number of different names, and often re-recorded the same songs, sometimes under different titles.

Longhair's earliest recording sessions appear to have taken place in mid-1949 for the Mercury label.<sup>32</sup> These sessions resulted in the single "Bald Head," which was credited to Roy Byrd and His Blues Jumpers.<sup>33</sup> An upbeat r&b number with a call and response refrain, "Bald Head" went to number five on the national r&b charts in the summer of 1950 and was Longhair's only national hit.<sup>34</sup>

Another early recording session took place in November 1949 for the Dallas-based Star Talent label and yielded the single "Mardi Gras in New Orleans,"

which was credited to Professor Longhair and his Shuffling Hungarians.<sup>35</sup> "Mardi Gras in New Orleans" featured Longhair whistling and singing an infectious tune backed by a pulsating rumba beat and a riffing horn section. The song is one of the classics of New Orleans r&b and became one of Longhair's signature tunes. Longhair's output for Star Talent also included a new version of "Bald Head" under the title "She Ain't Got No Hair."

In December 1949, shortly after the session for Star Talent, Longhair signed to the Atlantic label and cut a new version of "Mardi Gras in New Orleans," which was credited to Roy "Baldhead" Byrd.<sup>36</sup> Atlantic rushed out the new version of the song in an apparent attempt to undercut Star Talent's release of the song.<sup>37</sup> Longhair's output for Atlantic also included singles under the names Professor Longhair and His Blues Scholars and Roland Byrd.

After his tenure with Atlantic, Longhair did not record again until late 1951, when he cut a session for the Cincinnati-based Federal label.<sup>38</sup> Highlights of Longhair's output for Federal, credited to Roy "Baldhead" Byrd, included the slow blues, "K.C. Blues," the raucous rock 'n' roll number, "Rockin' with Fess," and the mid-tempo blues, "Gone So Long," which featured Longhair singing over rumbling bass notes on the piano.<sup>39</sup>

In 1952, Longhair recorded the song "East St. Louis Baby" for the Memphis-based Wasco label under the name Robert Boyd.<sup>40</sup> The song actually was a reworking of "Mardi Gras in New Orleans," using the same tune and arrangement, but with different lyrics.

In November 1953, Professor Longhair returned to the Atlantic label and recorded the single "In the Night" / "Tipitina," which was credited to Professor Longhair and His Blues Scholars.<sup>41</sup> "In the Night" was rollicking, upbeat number driven by a combination of boogie-woogie and rumba rhythms and backed by riffing saxophones. The mid-tempo "Tipitina" featured Longhair's wailing vocals over his idiosyncratic piano and became another of his signature tunes.<sup>42</sup>

Following his second tenure at Atlantic, Longhair suffered a stroke and did not record again for several years.<sup>43</sup>

In March 1957, Longhair resumed recording with a session for the West Coast-based Ebb label.<sup>44</sup> Highlights of his session for Ebb included the rock 'n' roll number "No Buts No Maybes," the r&b ballad "Cry Pretty Baby," the Fats Domino-style "Look What You're Doin' to Me," and a new version of "Bald Head" under the title "Looka No Hair."

Longhair next recorded for Joe Ruffino's Ron label in 1959 under the supervision of Mac Rebennack, better known as Dr. John.<sup>45</sup> Standouts among Longhair's output for Ron included the r&b ballad "If I Only Knew," and a new version of "Mardi Gras in New Orleans" under the title "Go to the Mardi Gras."

Longhair then attempted to join in on the twist craze with "Whole Lotta Twistin'," recorded for the New Orleans-based Rip label in 1962.<sup>46</sup>

In the mid-sixties, Longhair recorded for the Watch label under the supervision of arranger and producer Wardell Quezergue.<sup>47</sup> The highlights of Longhair's output for Watch included a cover of Big Jay McNeely's "There Is Something on Your Mind," and the Mardi Gras favorite, "Big Chief," which featured vocals and whistling by Earl King.

Following his tenure with the Watch label, Longhair dropped out of music and spent the remainder of the '60s working a variety of other jobs.<sup>48</sup> In 1971, he was invited to perform at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, which led to the revival of his career. Longhair became a regular performer at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and appeared on the 1976 live album of the festival.<sup>49</sup> He also toured in Europe and appeared at the Montreaux Jazz Festival in Switzerland in June 1973.<sup>50</sup> In 1974, Longhair recorded an album, *Rock 'n' Roll Gumbo*, for the French Disques Barclay label, backed by a band that included Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown on guitar. The album included new versions of Longhair's signature tunes "Mardi Gras in New Orleans" and "Tipitina," covers of New Orleans r&b and rock 'n' roll standards like "Junco Partner," "Rockin' Pneumonia," and "Stag-O-Lee," and as well as other numbers.

In 1979, Longhair signed to the Chicago-based Alligator label, which had had considerable success in reviving the careers of veteran blues artists, and recorded a new album, *Crawfish Fiesta*.<sup>51</sup> The album included new versions of songs Longhair had recorded in the past such as "Bald Head," "Big Chief," "There Is Something on Your Mind," "Her Mind Is Gone," and "In the Wee Wee Hours," as well as covers of Fats Domino's "Whole Lot of Lovin'," Muddy Waters' "Red Beans," and Solomon Burke's "Cry to Me." With the new album, Longhair appeared to be on the verge of finally achieving greater recognition and success, but it was not to be - he died in his sleep on January 30, 1980 at the age of 62.<sup>52</sup>

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# REVIEWS



***Saturday's Sons (The Complete Recordings 1964 - 1966): The Sons of Adam***  
(High Moon Records)

By Beverly Paterson

Although The Sons of Adam tend to be best remembered as the crew that featured future Other Half and Blue Cheer guitarist Randy Holden and future Love drummer Michael Stuart-Ware, they were an amazingly good band in their own right and thankfully left behind enough evidence to confirm their mettle.

The roots of The Sons of Adam date back to the early sixties, when Holden resided in Baltimore, Maryland and founded The Iridescent. Late 1963 saw the band move to Los Angeles, where they recorded under the name of The Fender IV and specialized in surf-rock instrumentals. But due to the arrival of the British combos in 1964, the genre was promptly rendered archaic. Effortlessly embracing the revolutionary sounds that altered the music community to seismic effects, The Fender IV changed their handle to

The Sons of Adam and reaped recognition on the local scene.

Along with steady gigs, The Sons of Adam appeared in a movie called *The Slender Thread* and produced a trio of singles. But lack of proper promotion and aborted connections prevented the band from achieving widespread attention. Yet The Sons of Adam have never been totally forgotten.

While the band's music has been revived on numerous occasions, *Saturday's Sons (The Complete Recordings 1964-1966)* indeed serves as the definitive anthology. Not only does the disc contain every surviving stitch of music the group laid down, but comprehensive liner notes, interviews with band members and piles of photos cement the proceedings. Put together by illustrious historian Alec Palao, *Saturday's Sons (The Complete Recordings 1964-1966)* offers many new revelations.

The collection commences with a previously unreleased live performance, recorded August 6, 1966 at the Avalon Ballroom in San Francisco. Contrary to most live tapes of the era, the quality is fantastic, which emphasizes the band's talent, energy and enthusiasm pound for pound. Pitching a strong and animated voice tucked somewhere between Mick Jagger and Arthur Lee, lead singer Jac Ttanna is at the top of his game here. And so is the rest of the band, as instrumentation is tight, loud and blazing with power and purpose.

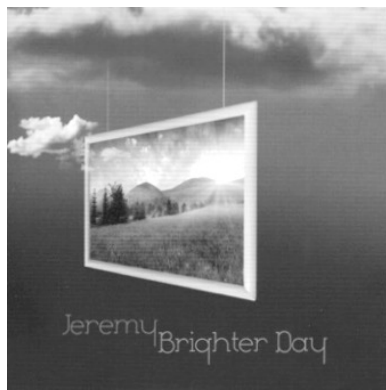
It's no lie to say it is worth purchasing *Saturday's Sons (The Complete Recordings 1964-1966)* for the price of these live tunes alone. Self-composed entries like

the driving acid-tinted snarl of "Mr. Sun," the weighty intensity of "The Long Road" that is heightened by a swaying rhythm and chorus, the gritty "Smokestack Lightning"-inspired blues groove of "Go Away" and the menacing bite of the Yardbirds-flavored "Saturday's Son," which had recently been pressed as a single, keenly expose the group's flair for catchy and innovative songcraft. Seated in the cover corner, Solomon Burke's "Everybody Needs Somebody To Love" romps and rolls to a spunky clip, aided by a bout of improvised riffing, where an extended remake of Van Morrison's "Gloria" involves piercing harmonica drills, punchy jamming and screeching feedback.

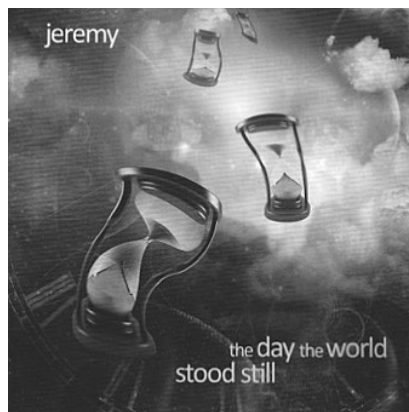
Each side of The Sons of Adam's singles were nothing short of excellent, beginning with "Take My Hand," a sparkling hook and harmony Merseybeat-styled pop rocker. A version of Tommy Boyce and Steve Venet's "Tomorrow's Gonna Be Another Day" bobs to a bluesy pop-rocking pose, and is equally as great, if not better than noted treatments by The Monkees and The Shadows of Knight. The riveting "Saturday's Son" was actually the flip of a choice copy of "You're A Better Man Than I," which also duly flaunted the band's Yardbirds influence. Authored by Love frontman Arthur Lee, "Feathered Fish" is a shimmery slice of psychedelic imagery, complemented by a flash of wiggly guitar work, where the explosive "Baby Show The World" steps in as a fast-paced heavy rock affair.

Studio outtakes of original moody endeavors such as "Without Love" and "I Told You Once Before" reveal an affinity for The Zombies, who The Sons of

Adam pay further homage to on a fine interpretation of "You Make Me Feel Good." Cuts by The Fender IV are additionally heard on *Saturday's Sons (The Complete Recordings 1964-1966)*, resulting in an electrifying and exciting aural adventure designed for multiple encores. Propelling forth with vibrant vocals and raw but razor sharp playing, The Sons Of Adam blended British beat aspirations with an edgy West Coast vibe in a manner that remains timelessly impressive.



***Brighter Day: Jeremy***  
(JAM)



***The Day the World Stood Still: Jeremy***  
(JAM)

By Geoff Cabin

Among recent albums released by the ever-prolific Jeremy Morris are two outstanding pop-rock-oriented albums, *Brighter*

*Day* and *The Day the World Stood Still*.

The first album, *Brighter Day*, features songwriting collaborations with and guest appearances by Randy Massey (Hot Mama Silver), Tim Boykin (Lolas), and Herb Eimerman (Nerk Twins, Hot Mama Silver). Jeremy also receives strong support on the album from longtime drummer Dave Dietrich.

The songs on *Brighter Day* contain all of the hallmarks of Jeremy's sound: catchy, skillfully-crafted songs backed by layers of chiming and jangling guitars, lots of electrifying guitar solos, and top-notch production.

The album's title track provides an excellent example of Jeremy's sound - it features a catchy, harmony-laden tune backed by an array of guitars and driven by a propulsive beat. "Come with Me" is a brief a cappella number with vocal harmonies that are reminiscent of the Beach Boys. The piano-based ballad "What Am I to Do?," starts quietly and builds to a powerful conclusion. "Devil in Disguise" is hard-rocking number that is driven by a catchy guitar riff and concludes with a fiery guitar solo. The upbeat rocker, "Here with Me," has a breezy, buoyant melody framed by chiming guitars. The semi-acoustic ballad "Can't Make You Stay" has a lovely, haunting melody and a melancholy atmosphere. "Identity Crisis" is a similarly strong ballad.

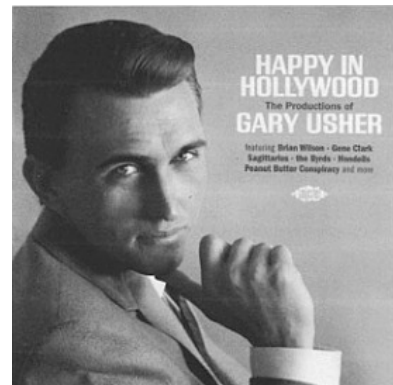
The second album, *The Day the World Stood Still*, is Jeremy's third collaboration with Ken Stringfellow of the Posies and the collaboration again has produced excellent results. As producer and multi-instrumentalist, Stringfellow provides strong sonic settings that showcase Jeremy's songs to excellent advantage.

The album's title track features a spacey, echo-laden soundscape interspersed with sections of heavy, distorted guitar. "Who Holds the Future" has a

similar spacey and psychedelic atmosphere. The semi-acoustic "Celestial Love" adds a bit of country-rock sound to the mix. The brooding "Dark Days and Bright Nights" boasts a memorable refrain and concludes with a dramatic guitar solo. On the ballad, "Hide the Pain," the song's haunting melody is framed by layers of acoustic and electric guitars.

With these two albums, Jeremy continues to ensure that the classic sounds of guitar pop remain alive and well.

(jamrecordings.com)



***Happy in Hollywood: The Productions of Gary Usher***  
(Ace Records)

By Gary Pig Gold

"Like to hear a success story? The subject is Gary Usher, who resigned as a teller at the Worcester Five Cents Savings Bank three years to go to Hollywood to write music. He's now one of the leading rock 'n' roll composers in the country, and his weekly income reaches four figures. He drives a super Cadillac and he owns three houses in Hollywood, the latest of which he bought for \$80,000. Not bad for a 24-year-old who never had any musical education."

So reported the tiny *Worcester* [Massachusetts] *Telegram* 'way back in 1964 regarding its then, and probably to this day most notable former

resident. And while at that point in time fully flush with his early Beach Boys residuals, and busy prepping a Beatles Story docu-disc for Capitol Records to boot, ex-Worcester Usher was in fact helping mold, shape, and force-grow what we can now quite easily recognize as The California Sound ...though admittedly not ever with the caliber of name recognition approaching that of Brian Wilson or even Jan Berry.

But now Ace's exemplary (as always) *Happy In Hollywood* takes two dozen tracks in 63 minutes to offer an intensely revelatory peek into and under the sounds Usher crafted most creatively for both the known (Byrds), should-have-been-better-known (Wackers) and for-some-reason-still-unknown (The Guild) during the man's golden decade. And while I'll admit to never being much of a fan of Gary's – among MANY others' – misguided sub-SMILE potterings (e.g.: Sagittarius' "My World Fell Down"), *Happy In Hollywood* positively overflows with extremely good vibrations:

There's one of my forever-favorite Phil-less Righteous Brothers records (Chuck & Joe's "I Wish You Didn't Treat Me So Well"), Chad & Jeremy's "Sunstroke" from their tragically overlooked *Ark* LP, and The Castells' "An Angel Cried," for those curious as to exactly what The Four Seasons would have sounded like had Bob Gaudio seasoned them out on the west coast.

Then there's The Hondells' "Just One More Chance," sporting surprisingly sophisticated Spanky and Our Gang-like vocals which will undoubtedly delight those more familiar with the band's comparatively little "Honda" style. Keith "Guitar" Allison's "Louise," which to my ears employs the exact same instrumental track Terry Melcher produced for Mark Lindsay's Raiders. The Forte Four's "I Don't Wanna Say Goodnight," which goes out of its

way to not hide its initial incarnation as a Gary Lewis Playboys B-side. And last but surely not least the title track, California's "Happy In Hollywood," which makes me miss all the more a full-blown *Harry and Gary* Nilsson/Usher collaboration.

Of course, for a fresh-from-New-England kid who had the incalculable good fortune to launch his career alongside that of Brian Wilson, there are plenty of often quite plausible Beach Boy knock-offs herein: The Surfaris' "Catch A Little Ride With Me" (also most highly recommended, by the way, is that band's wholly Usher-produced *Hit City '65* long-player), plus "Shame Girl" by The Neptunes, which stretches B. Wilson's "Farmer's Daughter" chorus into a fully-fledged two-minute surf-pop spectacular.

Speaking of whom, also included – and sounding as utterly out-of-place here as it did on the *Police Academy 4* soundtrack – is the Wilson/Usher "Let's Go To Heaven In My Car." As Kingsley Abbott's liners note, and I quote, "The sessions for Brian Wilson's 1988 Sire LP were among the most convoluted and torturous ever undertaken in the name of pop." So, for much, much more information on this most sticky of subjects, I direct the bravest amongst you towards Stephen J. McParland's *The Wilson Project* book/criminal case evidence dossier. Enough said!

From these all and many others as well (did I mention The Sons of Adam's "Take My Hand" or even "Cod'ine" by Sean and the Brandywines??) – many presented in their pristine original MONO mixes – *Happy In Hollywood* makes an absolutely necessary addition to even the most fully-stocked, fully stoked SoCal music collection.

Oh! And while we're at it, don't dare forget Gary's supreme knob-twiddling on none other than The Firesign Theatre's *Waiting For*

*The Electrician Or Someone Like Him*: an Usher opus his *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo* somehow seemed to overshadow back in '68.



**Live in Cleveland '77: Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes**  
(Cleveland International)

By Al Masciocchi

Sometimes the stars align; this album documents one of those times.

While his mega-stardom was still a half-decade in the future, Bruce Springsteen had broken through with *Born To Run* and his coattails began to lengthen. Southside Johnny climbed aboard.

Given the long history and intertwined bands and careers of Bruce, Southside, and Miami Steve Van Zandt, you can easily argue that this wasn't the typical coattail situation. Rather, the spotlight on Bruce shone on his history and development and this naturally led to light being reflected on Southside and Miami Steve.

This live album comes from the era when the spotlight was at its brightest on Southside Johnny & The Jukes. Their first three albums were their best chance to climb the ladder. Miami Steve was the producer and a key songwriter. Bruce contributed songs and various E-Streeters were on board. Sadly, wide success didn't happen.

But, wow, were those albums great. A strong argument can be made that Van Zandt's songwriting peaked with the songs he wrote for the Jukes. If ever there was a blue-eyed (Southern) soul singer, it's Johnny. The band was road tested over many years.

This live album from May 2, 1977 highlights it all. Throw in Ronnie Spector on "Say Goodbye To Hollywood" as the icing on the cake and the stars are all aligned indeed.

([www.SouthsideJohnny.com](http://www.SouthsideJohnny.com) / [www.clevelandinternational.com](http://www.clevelandinternational.com))



## *The Tommy Keene Handbook*

### **THE TOMMY KEENE HANDBOOK**



*A Comprehensive Guide  
to the Music of Tommy Keene*

*Geoff Cabin*

**The Tommy Keene Handbook** is a comprehensive reference guide to the music of underground pop-rock legend Tommy Keene, including:

- **Musical History:** an overview of Tommy Keene's musical career from his days as a member of the Rage, Razz, and the Pieces through his work as a solo artist in 2006;
- **Bibliography:** an extensive listing of articles, interviews, reviews, websites, and other resources regarding the music of Tommy Keene;
- **Annotated Discography:** a comprehensive discography for 1979 - 2006 that covers all of Tommy Keene's work as a solo artist as well as his work as a sideman, producer, and member of Razz and the Keene Brothers;
- **Annotated Gig List:** an extensive list of gigs by Tommy Keene from the debut of the Tommy Keene Group in August 1981 through tour dates in 2006