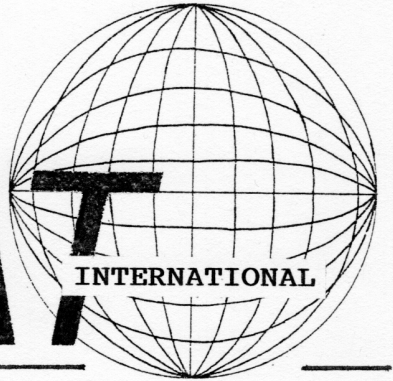


ROCK BEAT



Issue No. 47 - Summer 2023

FREE

**Muddy
Waters**

**Arthur
Crudup**

**Jimmy
Reed**



POP ROCK PUNK ROCK GARAGE ROCK ROOTS ROCK SURF ROCK

NEWS BEAT

Tom Verlaine

Singer, songwriter, and guitarist Tom Verlaine, who was best known for his work with the band Television, died on January 28 at age 73.

Verlaine was born Thomas Joseph Miller in Denville, New Jersey on December 13, 1949, and grew up in Wilmington, Delaware. While attending school in Delaware, Miller met and became friends with Richard Meyers.

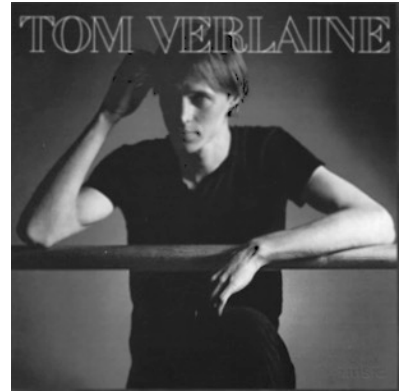
In 1967, Myers moved to New York to concentrate on writing. Miller subsequently dropped out of college and also moved to New York to pursue writing. Miller and Myers initially concentrated on writing poetry, but after seeing the New York Dolls perform at the Mercer Arts Center, they decided to form a band. In the fall of 1972, they formed the Neon Boys, which featured Miller on guitar and vocals, Meyers on bass and vocals, and Billy Ficca on drums. The band went on hiatus in the spring of 1973, but reformed as Television in early 1974 with the addition of Richard Lloyd on guitar. Around this time, Miller and Meyers adopted new names - Miller became Tom Verlaine and Meyers became Richard Hell.

While looking for a place they could play, the band members came across a bar in the Bowery called CBGBs. They convinced the bar's owner, Hilly Kristal,

to allow them to play and were given a regular gig on Sunday nights. Television played their first gig at CBGBs on March 31, 1974. Other bands such as Blondie, the Ramones, and the Patti Smith Group soon

started playing CBGBs as well, and the bar became the epicenter of the New York punk rock scene.

Conflict between Verlaine and Hell led to Hell leaving Television in March 1975. Hell was replaced on bass by Fred Smith, who had been playing with Blondie. After leaving Television, Hell formed the Heartbreakers with guitarist Johnny Thunders and drummer Jerry Nolan, both former members of the New York Dolls. Hell subsequently left the Heartbreakers and went on to form the Voidoids with Marc Bell, Robert Quinne, and Ivan Julian.



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Cover photo: Muddy Waters in Paris, France, November 7, 1976. (Lionel Decoster, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons.)

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In August 1975, Television released a single, "Little Johnny Jewel," on the independent Ork label. The seven-minute song was broken into two parts, one on each side of the single. Unlike many punk groups that favored short songs with minimal soloing, Television played lengthy songs that showcased the guitar playing of Verlaine and Lloyd.

Television began to attract the interest of record companies, and, in August 1976, the band signed a deal with Elektra Records. Their first album, *Marquee Moon*, was recorded in November 1976 at A&R Studios in New York and released in February 1977. *Marquee Moon* received excellent reviews and attracted a lot of attention in the U.K., but failed to chart in the U.S.

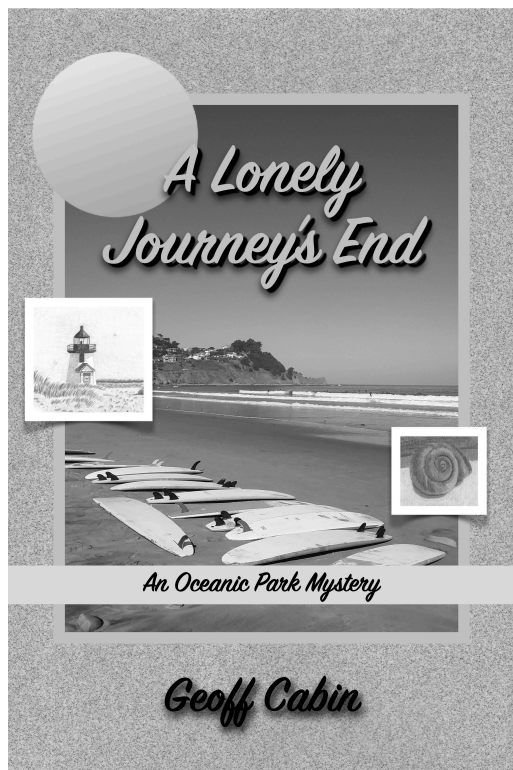
The band released a second album, *Adventure*, in April 1978. The album went top ten in the U.K., but again failed to chart in the U.S. After playing three shows at the Bottom Line in New York in July 1978, the band decided to call it a day.

Verlaine then embarked on a solo career that included the albums *Tom Verlaine* (1979), *Dreamtime* (1981), *Words from the Front* (1982), *Cover* (1984), *Flash Light* (1987), *The Wonder* (1990), and *Warm and Cool* (1992).

In 1992, Television reunited, released an excellent, self-titled album of new material, and embarked on a tour. Afterwards, the band continued to reunite for shows on a sporadic basis.

Verlaine also continued with his solo career, releasing his final two albums, *Songs and Other Things* and *Around*, in 2006.

Now Available: A Lonely Journey's End, the new book in the Oceanic Park mystery series!



A Lonely Journey's End: An Oceanic Park Mystery

By Geoff Cabin

Sun, sand, and surf meet intrigue and murder when Ned Johnston and Sophia Ambrosetti return in the second book in the Oceanic Park mystery series.

It's summer again in Oceanic Park. After the tumultuous events of the previous year, small-town attorney Ned Johnston is back to his summer routine of hanging out at Java Joe's Coffee cafe, surfing the 21st Street beach break, and listening to music at the Crow's Nest. At the same time, Johnston is torn between anticipating and dreading the return of Sophia Ambrosetti, the musician and investigator with whom he had worked the previous summer.

Meanwhile, the summer season in Oceanic Park is roiled by anti-immigrant tensions. A group calling itself the Oceanic Park Vigilantes is conducting an anti-immigrant flyer campaign, and an abrasive talk-show host named Walter Braddock is using his show as a platform for spreading inflammatory anti-immigrant rhetoric. When the anti-immigrant campaign turns deadly, Johnston undertakes an investigation. As the investigation progresses, it reveals that nothing is as it appeared at first and ultimately leads to a series of startling discoveries.

Available in paperback and ebook from amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, and most booksellers.

Surf Beat

By Terry Wilson



Wow! This is an unexpected pleasure - an archival album of previously-unreleased material by Combustible Edison. *Forbidden Isle of Demos* contains 13 home demos that

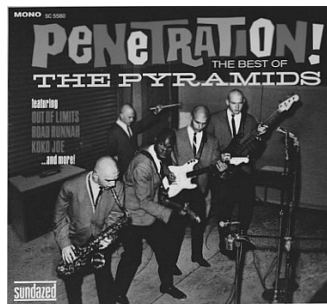
recorded in 1992, which led to the band being signed by the SubPop label. This was followed by the release of their classic debut album, *I, Swinger*, which helped launch the exotica / lounge music revival of the '90s.

Many of the songs contained on *Forbidden Isle of Demos* were re-recorded in a studio for *I, Swinger* or for use as B-sides, but it's interesting to hear the songs in their original demo form. The album also contains some songs that have never been released before by the band in any form.

Combustible Edison's sound drew on musical styles from the late '50s and early '60s including exotica, bossa nova, lounge jazz, and surf and spy guitar. The album kicks off with a swinging, vibes-led version of Nino Rota's "Cadillac," from the soundtrack of *La Dolce Vita*. "Carnival of Souls" is a spooky, atmospheric waltz number with wordless vocals. The band turns in a breezy, vibes-based version of the bossa nova standard "Summer Samba." "Spy Vs. Spy" features twangy, reverbed guitar and sounds like the theme from a spy movie. Also in the spy vein is a cover of Henry Mancini's "A Shot in the Dark." The band's chanteuse, Miss Lily Banquette, delivers sultry vocals on the Peggy Lee hit "Is That All There Is?" "Theme from the Tiki Wonder Hour," "Intermission," and "Breakfast at Denny's" capture the exotica sound of Martin Denny and Arthur Lyman.

Forbidden Isle of Demos is a particularly welcome addition to Combustible Edison's oeuvre since the band left behind a relatively small body of work. The music on the album holds up really well because Combustible Edison weren't trying to be campy or ironic, but had genuine affection and respect for the music that they played. That music provides as much of a breath of fresh air today as when it first appeared on the scene 30 years ago.

(modernharmonic.com)



The Pyramids were one of the most successful of the '60s-era surf-guitar bands, scoring a top ten hit with "Penetration," appearing in the movie *Bikini Beach*, and performing on *American Bandstand* and numerous other

t.v. shows. *Penetration!: The Best of the Pyramids* provides a comprehensive overview of the band's work.

The Pyramids formed around 1962 and, after going through a few personnel changes, their lineup solidified into Willy Glover and Skip Mercier on guitars, Tom Pittman on saxophone, Steve Leonard on bass, and Ron McMullen on drums. The band performed a combination of instrumental and vocal numbers.

Penetration!: The Best of the Pyramids opens with "Penetration," a classic surf instrumental with catchy, reverb-laden guitar line over a 1-2 rhythm. "Road Runnah" kicks off with the sound of a revving hot-rod engine and features twangy, reverbed guitar set to a hard-driving beat. "Sticks and Skins" showcases Ron McMullen's prowess on the drums. On the vocal front, the Gary Usher and Roger Christian-penned "Custom Caravan" is a credible Beach Boys knockoff. "Here Comes Marsha" is a melodic and soulful ballad, while "Koko Joe" and "Do the Slauson" are raucous, frat-rock numbers.

The album includes the two tracks that the band performed in *Bikini Beach*, "Record Run" and "Bikini Drag," both of which were written by Gary Usher and Roger Christian. The vocal number "Record Run" is another Beach Boys knockoff, while the instrumental "Bikini Drag" is a catchy tune with lots of twangy guitar. The album also includes solid covers of some of the hits of the day including "Louie, Louie," "Out of Limits," and "Walkin' the Dog."

The package is rounded out by liner notes by Robert Dalley, author of *Surfin' Guitars* and leader of the Surf Raiders, which provide an overview of the band's history. *Penetration!: The Best of the Pyramids* does an excellent job of documenting the band's work.

(sundazed.com)



Thomas Lauderdale Meets the Pilgrims is a collaboration between Thomas Lauderdale, the pianist and bandleader of Pink Martini, and Satan's Pilgrims, the Portland-based surf-

guitar band. The project was started back in 1996 at the same time that Lauderdale was working on Pink Martini's debut album, *Symphatique*. When *Symphatique* turned out to be a hit, Lauderdale became busy with Pink Martini and the collaboration with Satan's Pilgrims was put on hold. Some additional recording was done in 2011 but the project again was put on the shelf. During the pandemic, the parties made a determined effort to finish the project and it finally has seen the light of day.

Lauderdale and Satan's Pilgrims may seem like an unlikely combination but they find plenty of common musical ground and the collaboration results in some really fantastic music. One of the highlights of the album is an absolutely brilliant cover of Cole Porter's "Night and Day" with piano and reverbed guitar playing the song's melody over a languid rhythm.

Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Bali Ha'i" is given the exotica treatment complete with bird calls, jungle noises, Polynesian percussion, and choral vocals. A cover of the Wailers' "Tall Cool One" combines jazzy piano with surf guitar and a rocking beat. Lauderdale and the Pilgrims turn in an upbeat, rocking version of Kyu Sakamoto's 1963 hit, "Sukiyaki," with the melody overtop of driving rhythm guitars. They also turn in an energetic version of Henry Mancini's Latin-tinged "It Had Better Be Tonight" from *The Pink Panther*. The album has one vocal track, a cover of the Beach Boys' "Girls on the Beach" with guest vocalist Phranc backed by a lush arrangement that features Lauderdale on melodica, Maureen Love of Pink Martini on harp, and the Portland State University Chamber Choir on backing vocals. (Maureen Love brings a special Beach Boys connection to the song - she is the sister of Mike Love, cousin of the Wilson brothers, and played harp on the Beach Boys' records "Catch a Wave" and "In My Room.") The album concludes with a cover of the Lawrence Welk / Ventures number, "Calcutta," which features an irresistibly catchy melody over a bouncy rhythm.

This is a really great album and definitely one of the musical highlights of the summer.

(pinkmartini.com / satanspilgrims.bandcamp.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

The History of Rock 'n' Roll: Part 9

By Geoff Cabin

The North

One of the most significant developments in U.S. history during the 20th century, was the migration of African-Americans from rural areas in the South to industrial cities in the North in what has become known the Great Migration.¹ Migration to northern cities provided Blacks with a way to escape the economic servitude of the sharecropping system, the political suppression of Jim Crow laws, and the terror of lynchings.² Although Blacks who moved North still faced many obstacles, they were able to achieve a measure of economic independence and political freedom that they could not in the South.³

Northern migration of African-Americans began in earnest during World War I, due to a combination of push and pull factors.⁴ In the South, the agricultural economy was undergoing hard times as cotton crops were attacked by the boll weevil and damaged by a series of floods.⁵ In the North, industry needed workers because the war had cut off the flow of immigrants from Europe, who normally filled industrial jobs.⁶

The pace of African-American migration slowed during the Great Depression, but increased during World War II as the wartime economy shifted into high gear, demand for industrial workers increased, and the departure of workers to join the armed forces created additional vacancies.⁷ The pace of migration continued to accelerate after World War II, as the invention of the mechanical cotton picker eliminated many agricultural labor jobs in the South.⁸

For African-Americans in the Mississippi Delta, Chicago was a popular destination in the North. It was easily accessible via the Illinois Central Railroad, which ran almost due north from New Orleans, through the Delta, to Chicago.⁹ Chicago offered employment opportunities in its stockyards, steel mills, foundries, and food-processing plants.¹⁰ Chicago also was the home of the *Defender*, the country's leading African-American newspaper, which was widely circulated in the South and encouraged migration to the North.¹¹

As African-Americans moved from the Mississippi Delta to Chicago and other cities in the North, they took their music with them. In Chicago, Delta blues became electrified and transformed into a tough, new urban blues style, while retaining its down-home, country roots. An individual who personified this

experience, was McKinley Morganfield, better known as Muddy Waters.

Muddy Waters

Muddy Waters was born in Rolling Fork, Mississippi on April 4, 1915 to Bertha Jones and Ollie Morganfield.¹² After the death of his mother when Waters was three years old, he was sent to be raised by his maternal grandmother, Della Jones, in Clarksdale, Mississippi.¹³

Waters began playing harmonica when he was 13 and took up the guitar when he was about 17.¹⁴ He developed his guitar and singing styles by listening to the masters of Delta blues such as Charley Patton, Tommy Johnson, Eddie "Son" House, and Robert Johnson.¹⁵

As a young man, Waters worked as a tractor driver on Stovall Plantation, outside of Clarksdale.¹⁶ He lived in a cabin out in the country that he converted to a juke joint on weekends, where he sold moonshine whiskey, held gambling sessions, and played the blues.¹⁷ During the early '40s, Waters began playing with the singer Big Joe Williams and the guitarists Son Sims and Perry Thomas.¹⁸

In the summer of 1941, two folk song collectors from the Library of Congress, Alan Lomax and John Work, came through the Clarksdale area with a portable recording device.¹⁹ Lomax and Work were looking for Robert Johnson, not realizing that he had died three years earlier, in August 1938.²⁰ After inquiring about other local musicians, Lomax and Work were directed to Waters.²¹ They recorded Waters performing two songs - "I Be's Troubled" and "Country Blues."²² In the summer of 1942, Lomax returned to the area and recorded several more performances by Waters, both by himself and accompanied the Son Sims group.²³ These early field recordings subsequently were released on the album *Down on Stovall's Plantation* on the Testament label after Waters had become well known.

In May 1943, Waters decided to leave Mississippi for Chicago.²⁴ "I wanted to get out of Mississippi in the worst way, man," Waters stated. "... They had such as my mother and the older people brainwashed that people can't make it too good in the city. But I figured if anyone else was living in the city I could make it there too."²⁵

When Waters arrived in Chicago, his sister, who had preceded him to the city, informed him that musical styles were changing. "They don't listen to that kind of old blues you're doin' now," she told him, "don't nobody listen to that, not in Chicago."²⁶

Waters got a job in the shipping department of a paper container factory and started playing gigs at house parties.²⁷

"So I started playing for these rent parties, and then I ran into Blue Smitty and Jimmy Rogers and we got somethin' going' on," Waters stated. "We started playing little neighborhood bars on the West Side, five nights a week, five dollars a night. It wasn't no big money, but we's doing it."²⁸

Waters got his first electric guitar in 1944, which added volume and sustain to his slide guitar lines.²⁹ By 1946, Waters was gigging regularly with Blue Smitty (Claude Smith) on guitar and Jimmy Rogers on guitar and harmonica. They were subsequently joined by Baby Face Leroy on guitar and drums.³⁰

In 1948, Waters began recording for Aristocrat Records, which shortly would change its name to Chess Records, and go on to become the most important and influential blues label during the 1950s.

Leonard and Phil Chess (originally Leizor and Fiszal Czyz) were the sons of Polish immigrants who had come to the United States in 1928 and settled in Chicago.³¹ The Chess brothers entered the liquor business and operated the Macomba Lounge on the South Side of Chicago, which featured performances by popular Black artists like Louis Armstrong, Lionel Hampton, Billy Eckstine, Ella Fitzgerald, and Gene Ammons.³²

Seeing the popularity of blues in the Black community, Leonard Chess decided to go into the record business. "You had to get acclimated to what was going on in the community, and blues was the thing," Phil Chess later recalled. "This was where all the Blacks from the South were migrating to, and on the radio, in the bars, blues was what was popular..."³³

In 1947, Leonard Chess invested in a small record label called Aristocrat Records.³⁴ Aristocrat arranged to record the singer and pianist Sunnyland Slim and Slim recruited Muddy Waters to play guitar on his sessions.³⁵ At a session in 1948, Waters recorded two songs accompanied by Sunnyland Slim's bass player Ernest "Big" Crawford.³⁶ The two songs recorded by Waters were "I Feel Like Going Home," Waters' adaptation of Robert Johnson's "Walking Blues," and "I Can't Be Satisfied," a reworking of "I Be's Troubled," which Waters previously had recorded for the Library of Congress.³⁷

Leonard Chess was reluctant to release the two songs by Waters, complaining that he couldn't understand what Waters was singing.³⁸ Eventually, however, he was persuaded to release the songs.



Muddy Waters in Paris, France on November 7, 1976. (Lionel Decoster, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons)

In the summer of 1948, "I Feel Like Going Home" b/w "I Can't Be Satisfied" was released by Aristocrat, which distributed 3,000 copies to the corner stores, barber shops, beauty parlors, and record stores that served as outlets for blues records.³⁹ Word of the new record spread and, by the next afternoon, it was sold out.⁴⁰ The record eventually went to number 11 on the national rhythm and blues charts.⁴¹

By this time, Waters had a regular working band. In addition to Jimmy Rogers on second guitar and Baby Face Leroy on guitar and drums, the band now included the harmonica virtuoso, Marion "Little Walter" Jacobs.⁴² Leonard Chess, however, was reluctant to allow Waters to record with his band, not wanting to alter the sound that had been successful on Waters' first record.⁴³ Instead, during the late '40s, Chess recorded Waters solo or accompanied by Big Crawford on bass.⁴⁴ Among the standout recordings by Waters during this period were "Rollin' Stone," which was based on the Delta blues standard, "Cattfish Blues," and driven by a distorted, repetitive guitar riff, and "Rollin' and Tumblin'," Waters' adaptation of "Hambone" Willie Newbern's "Roll and Tumble," which showcased Waters' slide guitar playing.⁴⁵

In 1950, Phil Chess joined the record business; he and Leonard bought out the other owners of Aristocrat and changed the label's name to Chess.⁴⁶

Around the same time, the Chess brothers allowed Waters to start using other musicians on his recordings. One of the first results of this was "Louisiana Blues," which was recorded on October 23, 1950, with Waters accompanied by Little Walter on harmonica, Big Crawford on bass, and Elgin Evans on washboard.⁴⁷ The song was driven by Waters' distinctive slide guitar and filled out by Little Walter's mournful harmonica, with the guitar and harmonica playing in tandem on the solo.

"Louisiana Blues" gave Waters his first top ten hit on the national r&b charts in early 1951.⁴⁸ The record served to introduce the new, electrified Chicago blues sound to a national audience and also put the newly-renamed Chess Records on the map.⁴⁹ In contrast to the popular jump blues styles of the day, which featured boogie-woogie piano, wailing saxophones, and riffing horn sections, Waters' music was driven primarily by guitar and harmonica and retained a strong down-home, country flavor.

Waters followed "Louisiana Blues" with a string of top ten hits on the rhythm and blues charts over the next few years that included "Long Distance Call," "Honey Bee," "Still a Fool," "She Moves Me," and "Mad Love."⁵⁰

At the end of a session in 1952, Waters and his band recorded an untitled instrumental that they often played during live performances and that showcased Little Walter's harmonica. The tape was labeled "Your Cat Will Play," but Leonard Chess released it under the title "Juke" and credited it to Little Walter and His Night Cats.⁵¹ On its release, "Juke" became an immediate sensation and went to number one on the national rhythm and blues charts in the summer of 1952.⁵²

Following the success of "Juke," Little Walter left Muddy Waters' band to pursue a solo career, although he still recorded with Waters on occasion. Over the next few years, Little Walter scored a string of top ten hits on the national rhythm and blues charts that included "Sad Hours," "Mean Old World," "Blues with a Feeling," "You're So Fine," and "You Better Watch Yourself."⁵³ In 1955, Little Walter scored another blockbuster number one hit with "My Babe," which Willie Dixon, a producer and session musician with Chess, had written by setting secular lyrics to the melody of the gospel song "This Train (Is Bound for Glory)."⁵⁴

Muddy Waters also benefited from songs written by Willie Dixon. In 1954, Waters scored the three biggest hits of his career with songs written for him by Dixon.⁵⁵ The first of these was "Hoochie Coochie" (better known as "I'm Your Hoochie Coochie Man"), which featured lyrics filled with magical and superstitious imagery. Waters and his band, which now

included the pianist Otis Spann, performed "Hoochie Coochie Man" using a stop-time riff; the band would play the riff - dah *dah* dah dat - and then drop out while Waters sang the next line of the song. The stop-time riff became one of the basic building blocks of rock 'n' roll. Bo Diddley used the same type of stop-time riff on "I'm a Man" and the songwriting team of Leiber and Stoller also used the same type of stop-time riff in a number of their songs, such as "Riot in Cell Block #9," "Evil," and "Santa Claus Is Back in Town."

Next, Waters scored with Dixon's "Just Make Love to Me" (better known as "I Just Want to Make Love to You"), a grinding slow blues that has gone on to become a blues standard and has been covered by numerous other artists.

The last of the three Dixon-penned songs was "I'm Ready," an upbeat jump blues number, driven by swinging harmonica from Little Walter and a strong back beat, which came very close to being a rock 'n' roll number.

Waters continued to score top ten hits on the r&b charts in the mid-fifties with "Mannish Boy," "Trouble No More," "Forty Days & Forty Nights," and "Don't Go No Farther."⁵⁶ By the late fifties, however, Waters and other blues musicians were being pushed off the charts by younger rock 'n' roll acts. Waters scored his last hit on the r&b charts in the fall of 1958 with "Close to You."⁵⁷

By this time, Chess was shifting its focus to rock 'n' roll, which gave independent labels like Chess the opportunity to break out of the rhythm and blues market and into the more-lucrative pop market. During this period, Chess signed a number of rock 'n' roll artists, including Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Dale Hawkins, Clarence "Frogman" Henry, and the Moonglows.⁵⁸

"The rock and roll, this hurt the blues pretty bad," Waters said.⁵⁹ While the popularity of blues faded in the U.S., overseas the music was having an impact that Waters and other blues musicians probably never could have imagined. In England, pockets of young fans and aspiring musicians had discovered Chicago blues and were fervently listening to the music. Some of these listeners would go on to form bands like the Rolling Stones, the Yardbirds, and the Animals that would cover blues songs and write their own songs heavily influenced by the blues. As these bands became popular in the U.S., they brought attention to blues musicians like Waters and introduced them to a wider audience in the blues musicians' own country.

"Before the Rolling Stones, people over here didn't know nothing and didn't *want* to know nothing about me," Waters stated.⁶⁰ The attention brought to Waters by bands like the Rolling Stones eventually would give a whole new life to his career in the years to come.

Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup

Another Mississippian who made his mark on the Chicago blues scene was Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup. Crudup (pronounced *crew-dup*) was born in Forest, Mississippi on August 24, 1905.⁶¹ Crudup sang gospel music in church choirs, but did not get involved in playing the blues until relatively late in life, taking up the guitar when he was in his early thirties.⁶²

In 1941, Crudup was touring with a gospel quartet called the Harmonizing Four when the tour's promoter left them stranded in Chicago.⁶³ Crudup ended up sleeping in a crate underneath the 39th Street elevated train station and singing on street corners to try to raise enough money to buy a train ticket back to Mississippi.⁶⁴ Eventually, Crudup came to the attention of Lester Melrose a talent scout and record producer, who signed Crudup to a deal with the Bluebird label, a subsidiary of RCA.⁶⁵

Crudup's first session for Bluebird took place on September 11, 1941 and yielded the single "If I Get Lucky."⁶⁶

Crudup was not committed to living in Chicago and, after his first recording session, he returned to Mississippi, where he worked as a sharecropper and bootlegger.⁶⁷ Over the coming years, he would remain in Mississippi and travel north to Chicago once or twice a year for recording sessions.⁶⁸

Crudup's second recording session for Bluebird took place in April 1942 and yielded the classic "Mean Old Frisco Blues," which became one of Crudup's signature songs.⁶⁹

Crudup scored his first hit on the national r&b charts with "Rock Me, Mama," which went to number 3 in the spring of 1945.⁷⁰ This was followed by a string of top-ten r&b hits that included "Who's Been Foolin' You," "Keep Your Arms Around Me," "So Glad You're Mine," and "Ethel Mae."⁷¹

Crudup had a powerful, gospel-inflected singing voice and he backed his singing with his simple, strongly-rhythmic guitar playing. His early records had a sparse sound and he generally was accompanied only by bass and / or drums. The strong, driving rhythms of his music helped lay the foundations for rock 'n' roll.

In September 1946, Crudup recorded the song for which he is best remembered today - "That's All Right."⁷² The song failed to make the national rhythm and blues charts, but, at some point, it was heard and remembered by Elvis Presley.⁷³ In 1954, Elvis covered "That's All Right" as the A-side of his first single for Sun Records. In a rare, early interview with a reporter for the *Charlotte Observer*, Elvis talked about listening to Crudup's music: "Down in Tupelo, Mississippi, I used to hear old Arthur Crudup bang his box the way I do now, and I said if I ever got to the place where I could feel all old Arthur felt, I'd be a music man like nobody ever saw."⁷⁴ Elvis would go on to record two more of

Crudup's songs, "My Baby Left Me" and "So Glad You're Mine." Crudup did not share in Elvis' success, however, since Lester Melrose's publishing company, Wabash Music, did not pay Crudup any royalties.⁷⁵

Crudup scored his last hit on the national r&b charts with "I'm Gonna Dig Myself a Hole" in the fall of 1951.⁷⁶

During 1952, Crudup bounced from label to label recording for Champion as Arthur "Blues" Crump, for Trumpet as Elmer James, for Checker as Perry Lee Crudup, and for Ace as Big Boy Crudup.⁷⁷ In 1953, he began recording for the RCA subsidiary Groove but was let go the following year because his records no longer were selling and he faded from sight.⁷⁸

In 1962, Bobby Robinson of Fire Records brought Crudup to New York to record an album, *Mean Ol' Frisco*, which included new versions of Crudup's signature tunes "That's All Right," "Mean Ol' Frisco Blues," and "Rock Me Mama."⁷⁹ The album did little to revive Crudup's career, however, and he soon faded from sight again.

Crudup returned to performing and recording during the blues revival of the late '60s, playing college campuses and blues festivals and touring Europe.⁸⁰ The revival of his career was cut short, however, when he died of a stroke on March 28, 1974 at age 69 in the North Hampton - Accomac Memorial Hospital in Nasiawadox, Virginia.⁸¹

Jimmy Reed

Another transplant from Mississippi who made a significant contribution to Chicago blues was Jimmy Reed. James Mathis Reed was born on September 6, 1925 in Leland, Mississippi. His parents, Joseph and Virginia Reed, worked as sharecroppers.⁸² As a youngster, Reed sang in church.⁸³ Reed's father, who played the harmonica, encouraged Reed's interest in music, and Reed learned guitar at a young age with help from a childhood friend, Eddie Taylor.⁸⁴

When he was 16, Reed left for Chicago where he worked at a number of casual laboring jobs.⁸⁵ In 1943, he was drafted into the Navy and spent the next five years stationed in Coronado, California.⁸⁶ After being discharged from the Navy, Reed returned to Chicago, went to work in an iron foundry, and spent his spare time practicing the guitar and harmonica.⁸⁷ In 1949, Reed's childhood friend, Eddie Taylor moved to Chicago and he and Reed began to play in bars in the South Side of Chicago.⁸⁸

In 1953, Reed recorded some demos and took them to Leonard Chess, but Chess wasn't interested.⁸⁹ Reed's demos subsequently came to the attention of Vivian Carter, who worked as a disc jockey on WGRY in Gary, Indiana and owned a record store, in partnership with her boyfriend and future husband, Jimmy Bracken.⁹⁰

Carter and Bracken decided to form a record company in order to release records by Reed. The resulting company was named Vee-Jay - "V" for Vivian Carter and "J" for Jimmy Bracken.⁹¹

Reed's first few records didn't do much, but in early 1955 he hit the national rhythm and blues charts for the first time with "You Don't Have to Go."⁹² This was followed over the next few years by a string of classic hits on the r&b charts that included "Ain't That Lovin' You Baby," "Can't Stand to See You Go," "You've Got Me Dizzy," "Little Rain," "Honest I Do," "I'm Gonna Get My Baby," "Baby What Do You Want Me to Do," "Big Boss Man," and "Bright Lights Big City."⁹³

Reed's records had a distinctive and instantly-recognizable sound that featured catchy tunes set to a relaxed shuffle rhythm with a heavy backbeat. Reed played simple guitar parts along with harmonica on a rack and his songs usually featured harmonica solos rather than guitar solos. Eddie Taylor proved to be the ideal accompanist to Reed, reliably providing a steady shuffle rhythm behind him.⁹⁴

Perhaps because of their catchy tunes and strong shuffle rhythm, Reed's records found favor with the emerging rock 'n' roll audience. Between 1957 and 1961, eight of Reed's records, including "Baby What Do You Want Me to Do," "Big Boss Man," and "Bright Lights Big City," crossed over to the pop charts, making Reed the most popular blues performer of the era.⁹⁵ Reed's songs have been covered by Elvis Presley and the Rolling Stones, among others, and have long been staples of rock 'n' roll bands.

Reed's string of hits ended in the early sixties as Vee-Jay began to experience financial problems. Reed scored one final r&b hit, "Knockin' at Your Door," in 1966 on the Exodus label.⁹⁶ By that time, Reed was suffering from both alcoholism and epilepsy.⁹⁷ In 1969, Reed went into the V.A. hospital in Downey, Illinois.⁹⁸ Reed returned to performing during the '70s, but his health problems and erratic behavior prevented him from being able to fully benefit from the ongoing blues revival.⁹⁹ Reed died on August 29, 1976 at the age of fifty.¹⁰⁰

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REVIEWS



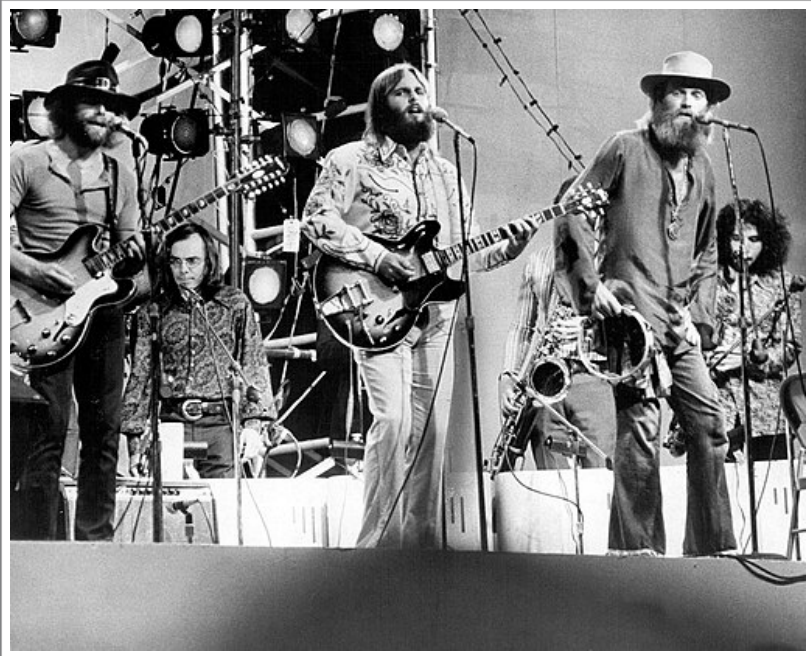
Sail on Sailor - 1972: The Beach Boys
(Capitol / UME)

By Gary Pig Gold

“We probably have the deepest catalogue of unreleased tunes of any band on Earth” – Alan Jardine, 1979

Al’s age-old claim turned out to be more than true when a decade later, as the Eighties became Nineties, the Beach Boys’ massive tape archive was *finally* being gathered together, organized, and ultimately digitized (illegal dubs of which soon ended up filling the (in)famous *Sea of Tunes* and *Unsurpassed Masters* “pirate” CD series). Having spent most of their career recording within their own studios, keeping as close an eye as possible on their own multitrack reels, there turned out to be comparatively few “holes” in the Boys’ recorded history. And these surviving artifacts were, by and large, in unusually pristine condition.

Good thing too, as the 21st Century brought about an entire cottage industry within what remains of the music biz, focused solely upon out-takes, discards,



The Beach Boys in Central Park, August 1971. Front row, left to right: Al Jardine, Carl Wilson, and Mike Love. (Brother Records, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.)

air-checks and assorted odds ‘n’ sods from various vaunted artists’ vaults (e.g.: Columbia/Legacy’s *Dylan Bootleg Series*). Why, even the Beatles’ Apple, better late than never, now greet every Christmas buying season with their latest big-boxed, copyright-extension *Super Deluxe* retread from the Fabs’ original 13-album catalogue.

On much the other hand, beginning with 1993’s monumental *Good Vibrations: Thirty Years of The Beach Boys* set, and despite the occasional misstep since (tracks 28 and 29 on Disc Five of *Feel Flows: The Sunflower and Surf’s Up Sessions*) the Hawthorne Hotshots’ audio curators, under the expert supervision of producer Mark Linett, have fully, and most purposefully salvaged our heroes’

musical history from an *Endless Summer* of slap-hazardly compiled, crassly packaged, and often even duophonically-mangled re-issues, re-packages, and truckstop-caliber budget items.

Which brings us today to *Sail On Sailor*, the latest and in many ways greatest chapter of this on-going excavation/renovation project.

Following the critical, and even sales success of their *Surf’s Up* album, 1972 found the by now by and large Brian-less band attempting to capitalize, as opposed to Capitol-ize upon their growing European esteem and attendant *Rolling Stone*-sanctioned hip factor Stateside. The result was the much-maligned (at the time, that is) *Carl and the Passions*

– “*So Tough*” long-player, which initially suffered primarily from being packaged under the same cover with a new rendering of none other than *Pet Sounds* ...”pressed in monophonic sound, the way Brian cut it” to quote its liner notes (by way of apology?). For many folk at the time, myself included, it was the first time hearing that 1966 masterwork in its complete, unblemished entirety. Is it any wonder then that, going forward, my ears seldom returned to Carl’s Passions ??

However, heard a half-century later, all upon its lonesome, *So Tough* takes on all new depth and dimension, revealing more than its fair share of gems, unpolished and otherwise. The opening “You Need A Mess Of Help To Stand Alone” for starters can, thanks mainly to Gordon Marron’s ring-modulated electric violin, more than proudly stand its own alongside such rooty contemporaries as John Hartford and even Nez’s First National Band. Why, even Big Brother Brian joins in with some tack piano flourishes worthy of Garth Hudson at his sawdust finest. Elsewhere, “He Come Down” is a Beach Boy gospel romp totally in league with “That Same Song” to come, while “All This Is That” provided Supertramp, for one, with a keyboard template upon which an entire career was soon to be built.

That all said though, new Boys Ricky Fataar and Blondie Chaplin’s “Here She Comes,” then “Leaving This Town” on *Holland*, may have sounded pretty good within the context of, say, a Flame album. But alongside B., C. and/or D. Wilson compositions, they absolutely cry out for the “skip” button on your audio device of choice. Also, Dennis Wilson’s “Make It Good” and “Cuddle Up,” exiled from his sorrowfully never-completed album with “Captain” Daryl Dragon, simply sound far too lush and languid in this here setting.

But! All is forgiven, and

then some, with those magnificently proud and dazzling four minutes called “Marcella.” Yes, coming as it did in ’72 at the very end of *So Tough* vinyl Side 1, it made us Brian devotees around this whole world immediately cry right out for “More! More! MORE!!”

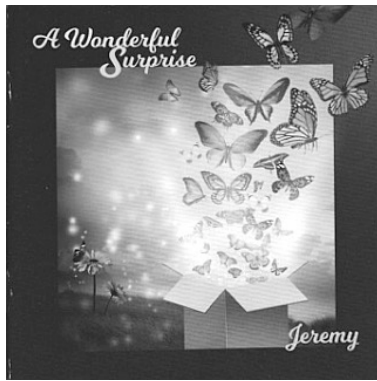
That we were eventually given, as the first week of 1973 brought the rightfully worshipped *Holland* album, complete with Brian’s “Sail On, Sailor” and *Mount Vernon and Fairway* “fairy tale” ... which, to my ears at least, is the final sustained burst of magic transistor inventiveness we have yet to hear from the man. Likewise, Dennis more than redeems himself with “Steamboat” and “Only With You,” “Funky Pretty” is, in fact, pretty funky – for the Beach Boys that is – and even the mammoth Love/Jardine, by way of Robinson Jeffers “California Saga” does not overstay, or for that matter overplay its welcome.

Depending on the format one chooses (the full 6-CD edition, as with all things Beach Boy, *is* the way to go) *Sail On Sailor* brings us behind the studio baffles, and onto the Carnegie Hall wings even, to fully flesh out the sights and sounds of what many consider that band’s last legitimately creative gasp. Thankfully the vintage-2022 remixes are kept to a minimum, and the live material is sturdy enough to withstand even Mike Love Not War’s typically combative between-song “raps.” Yet it is, not surprisingly, the bountiful wealth of raw session excerpts – two full discs worth! – which make this set as downright *educational* as it is entertaining. Believe me, even the most hardened Wilsonophile out there will positively melt upon hearing, for example, the “Steamboat” backing track, to say nothing of the abundant vocal-only a capella mixes: It is as true, not to mention truly astonishing in 2023 as it must have been through the Brother Studio headphones in 1972 to bask in the aura of rock’s only true choir.

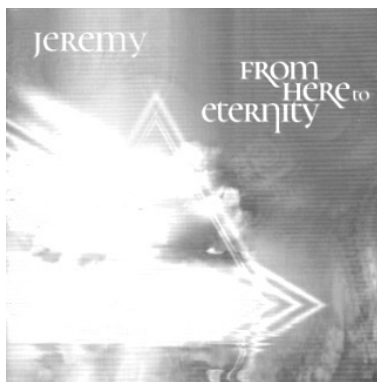
P.S.: Then we have Dennis’ utterly heart-wrenching “Carry Me Home” here to hear again as well. Or, at the far distant end of the spectrum, Al Jardine’s home-recorded “Susie Cincinnati” even.

What’s next in Capitol’s Beach Boy master plan is anyone’s guess: 1973 found the band at the peak of its prowess as a performing unit, as can still be heard all over that year’s *Beach Boys In Concert* album (including a damn near incendiary “Marcella,” I kid you not). But all too soon came the *Endless Summer* of ’74, which tragically set the band upon an increasingly jukebox/oldies trajectory for its remaining two decades and counting. Perhaps Mr. Linett & Co. will nevertheless do a deep dive into the mid-Seventies “Brian is Back” [sic?] years? I for one would love a *Beach Boys Love You* box for one, if only to upgrade my worn out bootlegs of Brian’s mythical fall of ’76 piano-and-voice-only Brother Studio performance of his latest songs-in-progress for his fellow Boys.

Until then, fingers crossed, *Sail On Sailor* provides us with – count ‘em! – 105 additional reasons, as if any more at this point were ever needed, of why Brian, Carl, Dennis, Mike, Al and Friends, while often frightened, unenlightened as they may have been, continue to... you guessed it, Sail Forever On.



A Wonderful Surprise: Jeremy
(JAM)



From Here to Eternity: Jeremy
(JAM)

By Geoff Cabin

The two latest albums by Jeremy Morris, *A Wonderful Surprise* and *From Here to Eternity*, showcase different aspects of Jeremy's music.

A Wonderful Surprise concentrates on the pop-rock side of Jeremy's music. The album is Jeremy's fourth collaboration with Ken Stringfellow of the Posies and its a collaboration that has yielded excellent results. As producer and multi-instrumentalist, Stringfellow once again provides colorful and evocative sonic settings for Jeremy's songs.

The album opens with the psychedelic-tinged title track, which features echo-laden vocals over a spacey soundscape of layered guitars, keyboards, backing vocals, and jingling,

jangling percussion. "Fill It Up" and "Get It Together" are both hard-driving rockers powered by fuzzed-out guitar and featuring dynamic guitar solos. On "Let Love Flow," the song's breezy melody is backed by layers of acoustic and electric guitars, organ, and backing vocals. "Nobody Like You" has a classic pop-rock sound with a catchy pop melody backed by hard-edged guitar. "Turn Away" and "We'll Get Along" mine similar guitar-pop territory with equally successful results. The album closes with "Wipe Away Your Tears," which features a buoyant melody over a lush soundscape of guitar, organ, vibes, and backing vocals.

From Here to Eternity showcases the more progressive and psychedelic side of Jeremy's music. The album features extended, suite-like songs that go through shifting moods and styles. The format of the songs gives Jeremy room to stretch out on guitar and shows the range of his guitar playing from quiet, spacey sounds to heavy-duty guitar freakouts. Jeremy receives strong support on the album from drummer Dave Dietrich and multi-instrumentalists Stefan Johansson and Randy Massey.

The album kicks off with a new, extended version of "Forever by My Side" (here retitled "Forever by Your Side"), which opens with a pastoral prelude of piano, mellotron, and chimes, builds through a series of sections to a heavy-duty guitar solo, and then concludes with a spacey, otherworldly section. "What Are We Living For?" features echo-laden vocals over spacey keyboards and a repetitive fuzz-guitar riff. The instrumental "Sunshine Haze" provides a showcase for Jeremy's guitar playing, which shows remarkable dexterity and speed. "Coming to the End" is a brooding, melancholy ballad that builds to a series of powerful guitar solos. The centerpiece of the album is an 18-

minute version of the Lemon Pipers psychedelic-pop classic "Green Tambourine," which alternates between vocal and instrumental sections and features lots of great guitar work.

On both albums, Jeremy delivers strong music with a positive and uplifting vibe.

(jamrecordings.com)



Wrong Together: The Successful Failures
(FDR Records)

By Beverly Paterson

Launched by singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Mick Chorba of The Dipsomaniacs, *The Successful Failures* were initially intended to be merely a side project. Well, here it is, nearly two decades later, and the band just keeps on keeping on. Based in Trenton, New Jersey, *The Successful Failures* recently released their tenth album, *Wrong Together*, which revolves around a triple-pronged attack of power pop, roots rock and raunch and roll.

Known for staging spirited live shows, the band has always boasted the ability to duplicate such energy and excitement onto disc. That noted, *Wrong Together* signs on as yet another solid piece of work. While remnants of acts like The Replacements and Wilco - along with the grittier angles of Velvet Crush and Gin Blossoms - occasionally dot the sessions, *The Successful Failures* never cease to

channel their own unique perspectives into their material. Imaginative lyrics, pinching breaks and unconventional but catchy arrangements are core factors steering the band's vision.

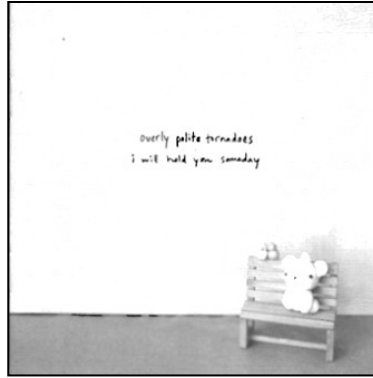
A pair of singles have been plucked from *Wrong Together*, including the frisky twangy southern-fried power pop of "Millions Of People" and "Sunny Side of Town," which travels at a bit of a slower pace in the mode of a country-rock finish.

Bruising instrumentation kicks off "New City" before morphing into a brisk and punchy pop-rock cadence marked by drifts of ringing guitars and snappy melodies, where "The Worst Of Our Kind" steps in as an explosive and thundering burst of heavy riffs and rhythms. Delicate, strummy licks, a splash of whistling and a toe-tapping beat guide the folk flavored "Learning What It Is To Be Free" and the emotionally-charged "Blue October" checks in as an arresting slice of innovative country-rock moves.

Fueled by a stomp and a swagger, "Kids From Queens" features a cool glammy pose, the light and airy "It Is The Rain" could perhaps pass as an obscure pop nugget from the Summer of Love and "Kings From Italy" reels and roars to a voluminous hard rocking tenor.

Alternating between freight-train intensity, moody textures and frequently employing a mix of genres in the same song, *Wrong Together* stands as the most experimental Successful Failures album to date. Propelled by fire and passion, the collection captures the band singing and playing their hearts out at every turn.

(thesuccessfulfailures.bandcamp.com / fdrlabel.bandcamp.com)



I Will Hold You Someday: Overly Polite Tornadoes
(JAM)

By Geoff Cabin

I Will Hold You Someday is the latest release by Overly Polite Tornadoes, the husband and wife duo of Mark Andrew Morris and Holly Klutts-Morris. The duo also play in the dream pop / shoegazing band, Tambourina. Overly Polite Tornadoes' music has a similar dream pop / shoegazing vibe, but it is a bit more oriented toward folk-rock and pop-rock. The music on the album is characterized by hushed vocals, chiming and ringing guitars, and ambient keyboards.

"Porch Light" is a really fantastic track that sets a gorgeous melody to chiming guitar and a propulsive beat. Another standout track is the lovely, atmospheric ballad "Sherbert Sky." "Prequel" is another atmospheric ballad with slide guitar lines providing a counterpoint to the vocal. On "Into the Background," the duo set a catchy trumpet riff and buoyant melody to a jaunty rhythm before closing with a quiet ending section. "When" is a catchy, mid-tempo rocker, while "And Here We Are" features a strong melody floating above guitar, banjo, trumpet and percussion.

With *I Will Hold You Someday*, Overly Polite Tornadoes have delivered a truly outstanding album filled with haunting and memorable songs.

(jamrecordings.com /
overlypolitetornadoes.bandcamp.com)



Mercy: John Cale
(Double Six Records)

By Al Masciocchi

If John Cale isn't unique in rock & roll history – and he may well be – he is certainly rare. Viola player, roots in classical music, member of one of the most influential bands, the Velvet Underground, in rock & roll history, noted producer (The Stooges, Alejandro Escovedo, Squeeze, Patti Smith, and others), and solo artist. For all his claims to fame, he is probably most widely known for his cover of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah"; he is as responsible as anyone for making that song a modern-day standard.

Over a career of 20-some solo albums he has covered a lot of ground. Straight ahead rock & roll, solo piano, experimental, sound collages; it is hard to keep up. And a lot of it is not easy-listening by any means. It's pretty easy to get into *Paris 1919* or *Fear* or *Slow Dazzle* (I mean, who can't get into "Dirty-Ass Rock 'n' Roll"?), but, say, *Church of Anthrax*, well, not so much.

His output over the last two decades or so takes some effort and this album is no exception. No one would describe it as hummable. In current fashion it is something of a duets album but in Cale fashion it eschews the



John Cale. (Paul Hudson from United Kingdom, CCBY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons).

type of artists others would share a billing with. Laurel Halo, Actress, Weyes Blood, Sylvan Esso, Animal Collective, Fat White Family, and Tei Shi each get a “featuring” credit on a song on the album (leaving only five songs credited solely to Cale).

I will confess to being unfamiliar with these artists; in fact, I only recognized two names. All come from the electronic/electropop/techno/experimental end of the musical genre spectrum but with everything anchored by Cale there is a cohesiveness to the album.

The thing about Cale, though, is that any effort in listening gets repaid. With repeated listening, the underlying songs/melodies reveal themselves. The electronic trance is still there or the synth repetition remains but you hear the song foundation. This is most definitely not background music – which a lot of the genres listed above are to me – but requires dedicated listening to reveal the layers.

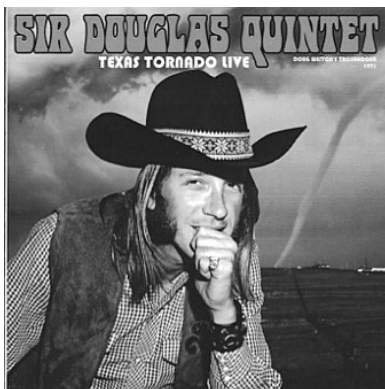
It’s not the place to start if you are new to Cale but it is a rewarding place to get to.

live recording by the Quintet is extremely welcome.

Under the leadership of singer and guitarist Doug Sahm, the Quintet played a blend of country, blues, Tex-Mex, and rock ‘n’ roll. In addition to Sahm, the band at this performance included his sidekick Augie Meyers on keyboards, original members Johnny Perez on drums and Frank Morin on sax and harmonica, and new member Jim Stallings (aka J.J. Light) on bass, with Martin Fierro sitting in on sax.

The band turns in dynamic performances of its three biggest hits, “She’s About a Mover,” “Mendocino,” and “Dynamite Woman” driven by Meyers’ riffing Vox organ and Perez’s driving back beat. “Tortilla Flats” is a country-oriented number with some twangy guitar picking. Also in a country vein is “Be Real,” with Sahm’s vocals backed by Meyer’s honky-tonk piano. “It Didn’t Even Bring Me Down” is a rhythm-and-blues number with Sahm’s soulful vocals backed by organ and saxophones. “I’m Glad for Your Sake (But Sorry for Mine)” is another r&b number, driven by piano triplets and riffing saxophones. Jim Stallings takes over vocals on the tribal-chant number, “Hoya, Hoya,” with Sahm contributing some psychedelicting guitar.

This album is a welcome addition to the catalogue of this great but under-appreciated band. (liberationhall.com)



Texas Tornado Live: Sir Douglas Quintet

(Liberation Hall)

By Geoff Cabin

Texas Tornado Live is an archival live album by the Sir Douglas Quintet, recorded during a soundcheck rehearsal in front of an audience at the Troubadour in Los Angeles in September 1971. It’s a brief set - just eight songs - but any chance to hear a vintage