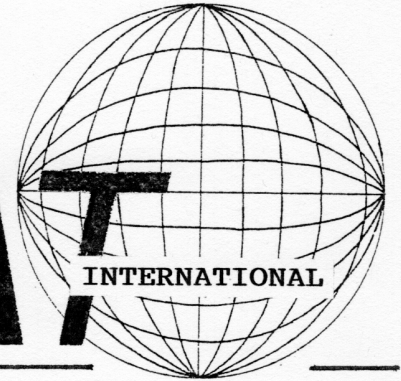


ROCK BEAT



Issue No. 50 - Winter 2025

FREE

Rufus Thomas

Little Junior Parker

Johnny Ace

The Delmore Brothers

Arthur Smith

Tennessee Ernie Ford

Moon Mullican

Arkie Shibley



POP ROCK PUNK ROCK GARAGE ROCK ROOTS ROCK SURF ROCK

NEWS BEAT

Tommy Keene

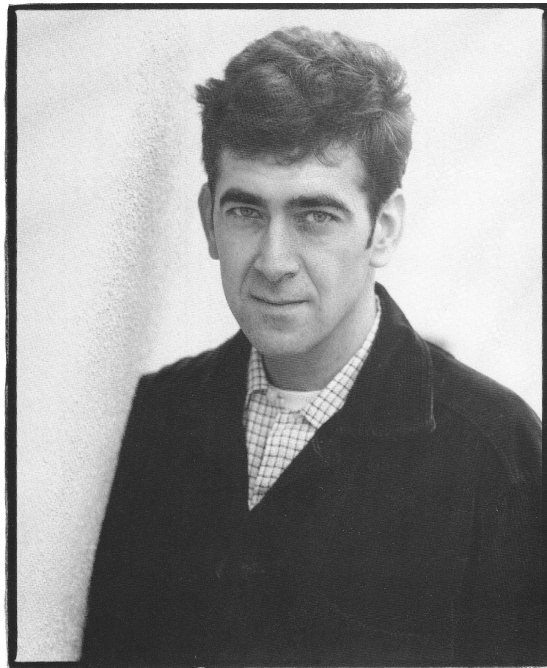
An archival live album by **Tommy Keene**, *Rockin' the Iota*, has recently been released in digital format. The album was recorded at the Iota Cafe in Arlington, Virginia on August 23, 2002. Keene is backed on the album by **Steve Gerlach** on guitar, **Brad Quinn** on bass, and **John Richardson** on drums. In addition, two archival live tracks from 1984 also have been released - a cover of the Byrds "Mr. Spacemen" and a previously-unreleased original number, "Stop." On these two tracks, Keene is backed by the *Places That Are Gone / Songs from the Film* - era band of **Billy Connelly** on guitar, **Ted Nicely** on bass, and **Doug Tull** on drums.

(tommykeene.bandcamp.com)

The Fleshtones

The **Fleshtones** new album, *It's Getting Late (...and More Songs About Werewolves)* has been released on the Yep Roc label.

(thefleshtones.bandcamp.com)



Tommy Keene. (Chris Cuffaro, courtesy Matador Records.)

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Cover photo: Tennessee Ernie Ford, 1957. (NBC Television, Public Domain, via Wikimedia Commons.)

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Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes

Southside Johnny has announced that he is retiring from touring “in order to manage ongoing health issues.” The **Asbury Jukes** annual New Year’s Eve show at the Count Basie Theater in Red Bank, New Jersey has been cancelled along with tour dates planned for 2025.

Rich Arithmetic

Rich Arithmetic has released a 30th anniversary edition of his 1994 album, *Sleep in a Wigwam*, in digital format with six bonus tracks. (richarithmetic.bandcamp.com)

Jeremy

Jeremy’s new album, *The Promise*, has been released by the JAM label. Jeremy’s latest collaboration with **Ken Stringfellow**, *The Future Is the Past*, also is out on the JAM label. In addition, JAM has reissued Jeremy’s third album, *Soul Saver*, on CD along with bonus tracks. (jamrecordings.com)



Southside Johnny. (David Gahr, courtesy Mercury Records.)



*Introducing a Website for the
Oceanic Park Mystery Series,
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More!*

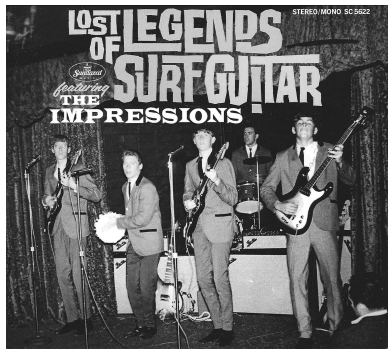
Please visit geoffcabin.com.

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Surf Beat

By Terry Wilson



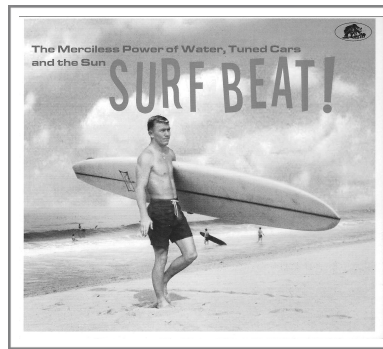
Brothers Richard Martin-Frost and Thomas Martin-Frost are best known as part of the late-'60s, British-style band Powder and as the pop duo Thomas & Richard Frost. Prior to that, in

the early '60s, they played in a band called the Impressions, which played surf instrumentals as well as rhythm and blues numbers. The Impressions didn't release any records during their lifetime, but they left behind some unreleased home and live recordings. Sundazed has now collected those recordings and released them as the latest installment in their *Lost Legends of Surf Guitar* series. The album is like a time capsule that takes you back to the early '60s and allows you to hear a teenaged surf-guitar band playing for the fun of it.

The album kicks off with an original number, "Rock the Surf," on which Richard Martin-Frost demonstrates impressive guitar-picking skill and drummer Steve Lee keeps things moving with a flurry of drum rolls and cymbal crashes. "The Fugitive" is a catchy rocker that features some rapid-fire double-picking on the guitar, while "Home" is a slow, atmospheric ballad with chiming guitar over a relaxed groove. The band turns in strong versions of the instrumental standards "Wipe Out" and "Sleepwalk" as well as three Freddie King instrumentals "Just Pickin'," "Sen-Say-Shon," and "San-Ho-Say." They convert Floyd Cramer's piano instrumental, "Last Date," into a guitar number, with twangy guitar over a slow groove. The live material includes raucous versions of "Miserlou" and "Night Train." The album concludes with its lone vocal number, a rocking cover of Louis Jordan's "Let the Good Time Roll."

This is a highly enjoyable album that brings to light a lost chapter of surf music history.

(sundazedmusic.bandcamp.com)



Surf Beat! is a compilation album that contains 33 surf instrumentals by 26 different artists, recorded during the first wave of surf music between 1959 and 1966. The artists range from the well-

known (Dick Dale, Duane Eddy, the Ventures, Jan & Dean) to the semi-well-known (the Challengers, the Surfaris, the Super Stocks) to the all-but-unknown (the Thundermen, the Go-Getters, the Scarlets). The recordings are mostly lesser-known ones and seem to have been selected somewhat randomly - they are not linked together by any common connections or themes, but they provide plenty of varied and interesting listening for surf-music fans.

"Tidal Wave" by the Challengers has the classic sixties-era, surf-guitar sound and features strong interplay between the guitar and drums. On "Storm Surf," the Surfaris combine rapid-fire double picking on an electric guitar with a propulsive acoustic rhythm guitar. "Bullwinkle - Part II" by the Centurians is a moody, atmospheric number with bluesy guitar and saxophone over reverbed guitar chords. "Midnight Run" by the Super Stocks, one of Gary Usher's studio groups, showcases the guitar playing of Richie Podolor (aka Richie Allan) who would go on to a successful career as a studio musician and producer. Similarly, "El Gato" by the Chandelles showcases impressive guitar picking by Billy Clayton. On "Baha-Ree-Ba!," the Nocturnes incorporate mariachi-style horns into their surf sound. "The Surfing Matador" by Jan Davis also shows a Latin influence with flamenco-tinged guitar and clattering castanets. The collection contains the original version of "Banzai Washout" by the Catalinas, a studio group comprised of members of the Wrecking Crew. With its dramatic melody and driving beat, the song would go on to become a surf music standard. "Cheater Stomp" by the Fabulous Playboys is an energetic and hard-driving rocker featuring reverbed guitar and pounding piano and punctuated with exuberant shouts from the band members. "Inferno" by the Crossfires" features guitar and sax solos over a

percolating rhythm. The Crossfires subsequently would change their name to the Turtles and score a string of pop vocal hits. The collection presents two versions of "Surfin' Blues" by session ace Al Casey on which Casey's twangy guitar picking alternates with wild organ solos by Leon Russell. Dick Dale is represented by "Miserlou Twist," an extended version of one of Dale's signature tunes that is augmented by an orchestra, which serves to enhance the song's Middle-Eastern flavor.

The CD comes with a 30-page booklet, which is profusely illustrated with photos and memorabilia and includes informative liner notes by surf music historian John Blair.

All in all, an excellent and highly-enjoyable collection of surf-music rarities.

(www.bear-family.com)



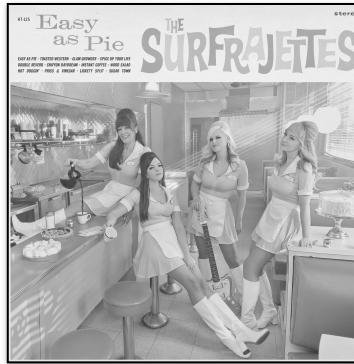
Late to the Party is the debut album by the Quebec-based surf-guitar band, the Babalooneys. As might be surmised from the photo of vintage gear on the album cover, the band favors a traditional, '60s-era surf-

guitar sound. Throughout the album, the performances are kept sharp and concise; the 12-track album clocks in at slightly less than 30 minutes.

The opening track, "Sittin' on the Line," begins with the sound of a hot-rod engine revving up and taking off followed by classic-sounding surf guitar set to a driving beat. "Wide Track Weekend" has an irresistibly-catchy melody with strong interplay between the guitars and saxophone. "Oceanside" is another irresistibly-catchy number. The quiet and atmospheric ballad, "Endless Winter," features reverbed guitar chords and mournful saxophone. On "Tomatillo," the band adds a bit of Latin flavor to their surf sound. "Locked In" features honking saxophone and a dynamic drum solo. The lone vocal number on the album is a cover of the Trashmen's "King of the Surf." The Babalooneys also turn in a sterling cover of Eddie and the Showmen's "Mr. Rebel."

This is a very impressive debut and demonstrates that instrumental surf music is alive and well and in good hands.

(thebabalooneys.bandcamp.com)



Easy as Pie is the second album by the Toronto-based, surf-guitar band, the Surfrajettes, and it's another outstanding effort. The band demonstrates skillful songwriting and strong ensemble playing throughout the

album.

The album kicks off with the title track, which glides along to a breezy melody with the guitars augmented by an organ. "Toasted Western" sounds like the theme from an Italian Western, with twangy guitars over a clippity-clop beat and the eerie whine of a synthesizer adding to the atmosphere. The band turns in a rocking cover of the Jokers' "Instant Coffee." They also turn in solid covers of the Astronauts' "Hot Doggin'" and the Sadies' "Clam Chowder." "Chiffon Daydream" is a slow, dreamy number with a lush arrangement and lap steel guitar in the vein of "Sleepwalk." "Lickety Split" features chiming guitars set to a percolating groove. The album closes with a cover of the Nancy Sinatra hit "Sugar Town," with twangy guitar over a jaunty rhythm.

With *Easy as Pie*, the Surfrajettes continue to establish themselves as one of the leading bands on the contemporary surf-music scene.

(thesurfrajettes.bandcamp.com)

The History of Rock 'n' Roll: Part 12

By Geoff Cabin

Sun Records

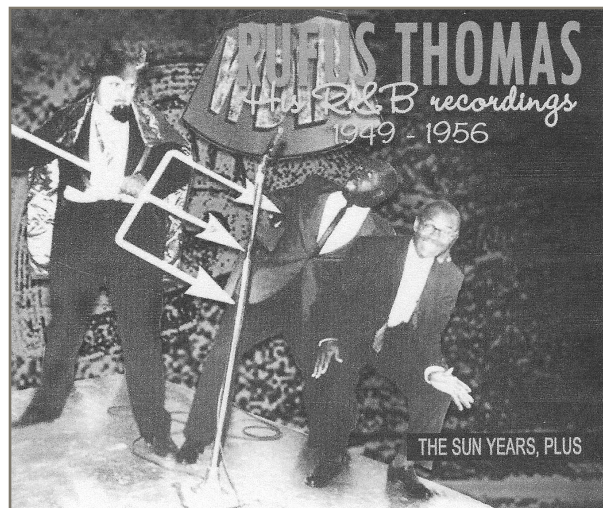
In early 1952, Sam Phillips decided to make another attempt at starting his own record company and Sun Records was launched.¹ Sun's first release, in April 1952, was "Drivin' Slow" by the teenaged saxophonist Johnny London.² The record featured London's jazzy, wailing saxophone over a relaxed, piano-driven rhythm section. Other notable early releases by Sun included "Easy" by Jimmy & Walter (guitarist Jimmy DeBerry and harmonica player Walter Horton), an atmospheric, harmonica-driven instrumental with a melody similar to Ivory Joe Hunter's "I Almost Lost My Mind"; "Just Walkin' in the Rain" by the Prisonaires, a romantic ballad by a vocal group comprised of inmates at the Tennessee State Penitentiary (the song was later a hit for Johnnie Ray); "The Boogie Disease" by Doctor Ross, a down-home-style boogie in the vein of John Lee Hooker; "Cotton Crop Blues" by James Cotton, a grief-filled slow blues with Cotton's vocal backed by phenomenal guitar playing by Pat Hare; "Rockin' Chair Daddy" by Harmonica Frank, a combination of old-time country and down-home blues; and "Red Hot" by Billy "The Kid" Emerson, a rocking r&b number derived from a high school cheerleaders chant ("Our team is red hot, your team ain't doodley squat").

In the spring of 1953, Sun scored its first hit with "Bear Cat (The Answer to Hound Dog)" by Rufus Thomas.

Rufus Thomas

Rufus Thomas was born in rural Cayce, Mississippi on March 26, 1917 and grew up in Memphis.³ He first began performing in vaudeville and minstrel shows.⁴ In 1935, Thomas started working at the Palace Theater on Beale Street in Memphis, acting as a comic with Nat D. Williams, the MC of the theater's amateur show.⁵ When Williams began working as a disc jockey at WDIA, Thomas took over as the MC of the amateur show.⁶ With Williams' help, Thomas got a job as a disc jockey at WDIA as well.⁷ In addition, Thomas sang with the Bill Farr Orchestra.⁸ All the while, Thomas also held down a day job in a textile mill, the American Finishing Company.⁹

Thomas first recorded for the Star Talent label in 1950 or '51.¹⁰ In June 1951, he recorded several



songs for Sam Phillips, who leased the songs to Chess Records.¹¹

When "Hound Dog" by Big Mama Thornton became a hit in early 1953, Phillips decided to release an answer record. He wrote "Bear Cat (The Answer to Hound Dog)" by setting new lyrics to the melody of "Hound Dog" and brought Rufus Thomas in to the studio to record it.¹² Thomas delivered the song in a growling voice backed by bluesy guitar licks from Joe Hill Louis and a rumba beat. The song became a big hit, going to number three on the national rhythm and blues charts in the spring of 1953.¹³

After "Bear Cat" became a hit, Phillips was sued for copyright infringement by Don Robey of Peacock Records, who owned the rights to "Hound Dog" through his Lion Musical Publishing Company.¹⁴ Phillips had little defense since the melodies of the two songs were identical, and he ended up agreeing to a financial settlement and giving up all claims to the publishing rights of "Bear Cat."¹⁵

As a follow-up to "Bear Cat," Thomas recorded "Tiger Man," a catchy, rocking r&b number, written by Joe Hill Louis, who played guitar on the record. Although it was a very strong record, "Tiger Man" failed to become a hit. (The song subsequently was covered by Elvis Presley during one of the sit-down segments for his '68 Comeback Special, although it wasn't included in the original broadcast.)

"Tiger Man" was the last record that Thomas made for Sun.¹⁶ Not long afterwards, Phillips

discovered Elvis Presley, and began devoting much of his time and resources to working with Elvis. The experience left Thomas bitter. "I sold a hundred thousand records for him and all the time he was looking for a White boy," Thomas said. "Sam never mentions that I was the first to make money for Sun Records either."¹⁷

Thomas subsequently went on to a successful career on Stax Records during the '60s and '70s, with hits such as "Walking the Dog," "Do the Funky Chicken," and "(Do the) Push and Pull." (His daughter, Carla Thomas, also had a successful career on Stax.)

Little Junior Parker:

In the fall of 1953, Sun scored its second hit with "Feelin' Good" by Little Junior's Blue Flames.

Little Junior Parker was born Herman Parker, Jr. on March 3, 1927 in West Memphis, Arkansas.¹⁸ As a youngster, Parker learned harmonica from Rice Miller (Sonny Boy Williamson #2).¹⁹ While still in his teens, he joined Howlin' Wolf's original band, and played with them during 1949 and '50.²⁰ Parker then left Howlin' Wolf's band to form his own band, the Blue Flames.²¹ Like Wolf, Parker also had his own radio show on KWEM in West Memphis.²²

Parker was first recorded by Ike Turner for the Modern label in 1952.²³ Some time in 1953, Parker and the Blue Flames auditioned for Sam Phillips.²⁴ Phillips thought that they sounded too slick and uptown and suggested they do something simpler and grittier.²⁵ In response, Parker wrote a one-chord boogie, "Feelin' Good," which borrowed liberally from John Lee Hooker's "Boogie Chillen'."²⁶ "Feelin' Good" was released by Sun in July 1953 and became a hit, going to number five on the national r&b charts.²⁷

Parker followed up "Feelin' Good" with one of the great classics of r&b, "Mystery Train." The song featured lyrics with train imagery over a slow groove. The record failed to become a hit, but later was remade into a rockabilly classic by Elvis Presley.

Parker's tour dates were booked by the Buffalo Booking Agency, which was owned by Don Robey, who also owned the Peacock and Duke record labels.²⁸ In 1954, Robey signed Parker to the Duke label.²⁹ In response, Sam Phillips filed a lawsuit against Robey and ended up receiving a significant financial settlement.³⁰

Parker went on to score a long string of hits on the Duke label, which included "Next Time You See Me," "Driving Wheel," "In the Dark," and "Annie Get Your Yo-Yo."³¹ During the late '50s and early '60s, Parker frequently toured with his Duke label mate, Bobby "Blue" Bland, as Blues Consolidated, and they built up a large following in the southern part of the U.S.³² Parker scored his last hit on the r&b charts in early 1971 with "Drowning on Dry Land."³³ He died on November 18, 1971 during surgery for a brain tumor.³⁴



Junior Parker at the 1970 Ann Arbor Blues Festival. (Jeff Titon, Eatonland, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons.)

Duke Records:

Sun was not the only important record label to be established in Memphis during this period - there also was Duke Records, which was founded by WDIA program director David James Mattis.³⁵ Like Sam Phillips, Mattis hoped to tap into the pool of local talent in the Memphis area.³⁶

Mattis started out by signing singer and pianist Rosco Gordon and had Sam Phillips record Gordon at the Memphis Recording Service.³⁷ Gordon was still under contract to the Modern label, however, and the Bihari brothers brought another lawsuit.³⁸

Mattis then signed local singer and pianist John Alexander, who would become better known as Johnny Ace.³⁹

Johnny Ace:

John Marshall Alexander, Jr. was born on June 9, 1929 in Memphis.⁴⁰ After serving a stint in the navy, he played piano in Adolph Duncan's band.⁴¹ Alexander also played with other Memphis-based musicians like B.B. King, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Little Junior Parker, and Rosco Gordon, who informally became known as "the Beale Streeters."⁴²

After Alexander signed to Duke Records in the spring of 1952, it was decided that his records would be released under the name "Johnny Ace."⁴³ His first record was "My Song," a plaintive piano-based, r&b ballad in the tradition of Cecil Gant. Against the odds for a record by a new, unknown artist on a small, independent label, "My Song" became a huge hit, going to number one on the national r&b charts in the late summer of 1952, where it remained for nine weeks.⁴⁴

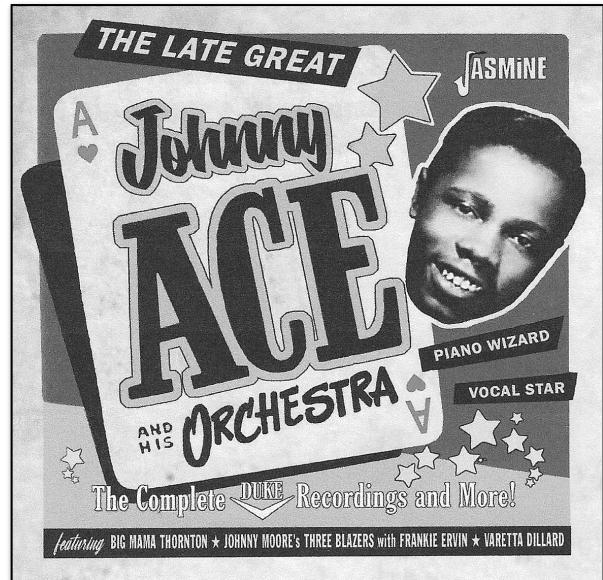
Despite of the success of "My Song," payments from distributors were slow to come in and Mattis needed operating capital to keep the Duke label going.⁴⁵ To address this situation, Mattis agreed to a merger of Duke Records with Houston-based Peacock Records.⁴⁶ Things, however, didn't work out as Mattis had planned. Don Robey, the owner of Peacock Records, was known as a ruthless business man. After reportedly threatening Mattis with a pistol, Robey forced Mattis to sell out and took over Duke Records.⁴⁷

After following "My Song" with a top-ten hit, "Cross My Heart," Johnny Ace scored another number one r&b hit in the summer of 1953 with "The Clock," a melodic, piano-based ballad with a bluesy saxophone solo.⁴⁸ This was followed by three more top-ten r&b hits during 1953 and '54 - "Saving My Love for You," "Please Forgive Me," and "Never Let Me Go."⁴⁹

Ace recorded his next single, "Pledging My Love," backed by the Johnny Otis Orchestra, but he didn't live to see it released. Ace's career was tragically cut short when he died backstage at the Houston City Auditorium during intermission for a show on Christmas Eve 1954 at age 25.⁵⁰ Ace reportedly shot himself while playing Russian roulette, although there is some question as to exactly what happened.⁵¹

A funeral was held for Ace at Clayburn A.M.E. Temple in Memphis on January 2, 1955, and a large crowd of mourners turned out for the event.⁵² Don Robey hired a photographer to document the funeral and provide photos to the press.⁵³

"Pledging My Love" was released in January 1955. The song was another melodic, piano-based ballad with a lush arrangement that featured vibes and saxophone. "Pledging My Love" became a huge posthumous hit, going to number one on the national r&b charts and remaining there for 10 weeks.⁵⁴ It also crossed over to number 17 on the pop charts.⁵⁵ A second record, "Anymore," also became a posthumous hit.⁵⁶



Country boogie:

During the post-World-War-II period, while blues musicians were combining blues with boogie-woogie and shuffle rhythms to create rhythm and blues, a parallel movement was taking place in country music. In the mid-to-late '40s, country musicians began adding boogie-woogie and shuffle rhythms to country music to create country boogie, which eventually would evolve into rockabilly.

Among the early pioneers of country boogie were the Delmore Brothers.

The Delmore Brothers

Alton and Rabon Delmore hailed from Elkmont, Alabama; Alton was born on December 25, 1908 and Rabon on December 3, 1916.⁵⁷ Their mother, Mollie, composed gospel songs and the brothers grew up singing gospel music.⁵⁸ The duo established their reputation as singers and guitar pickers by performing at local talent contests.⁵⁹

In 1931, the Delmores made their recording debut with "Got the Kansas City Blues" on the Columbia label.⁶⁰ The following year, they joined the *Grand Ole Opry*, which was broadcast over WSM on Saturday night from the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville.⁶¹ The *Opry* served as the leading radio showcase for country music and the Delmore Brothers became one of its most popular acts.⁶² Around the same time that they joined the *Opry*, the Delmore Brothers began recording for Bluebird, a subsidiary of RCA Victor.⁶³ Among the recordings that the Delmore Brothers made for Bluebird were "Brown's Ferry Blues," "Till the Roses Bloom Again," "I'm Alabama Bound," "When It's Time for the Whippoorwill to Sing," and "Fifteen Miles to Birmingham."⁶⁴ The Delmores also



collaborated with fellow *Opry* member Fiddling' Arthur Smith on songs such as "Beautiful Brown Eyes" and "There's More Pretty Girls Than One."⁶⁵

In 1938, the Delmore Brothers left the *Opry* due to disagreements with the *Opry* management.⁶⁶ After leaving the *Opry*, they bounced around to radio stations in different cities.⁶⁷ While working at WMC in Memphis, the Delmore Brothers met the harmonica player Wayne Raney, who would become an important collaborator.⁶⁸

After recording for Decca, the Delmore Brothers signed with the Cincinnati-based, independent label, King Records.⁶⁹ King had been founded in 1943 by Syd Nathan and released records in a wide range of genres including country, r&b, gospel, and, later, rockabilly.⁷⁰ King was unique among independent labels in that it was a self-contained operation - it had its own pressing plant and distribution network.⁷¹

While recording for King in the mid-'40s, the Delmores began to incorporate blues and boogie-woogie into their songs.⁷² In March 1946, they released the seminal country-boogie record "Hillbilly Boogie," which featured an eight-to-the-bar boogie-woogie pattern played on guitar.⁷³

The Delmores followed "Hillbilly Boogie" with "Freight Train Boogie." The song opened with Wayne Raney imitating the sound of a train whistle on the harmonica. The brothers then sang overtop of a clickety-clack rhythm like the sound of train wheels on the track with an eight-to-the-bar boogie-woogie guitar riff between verses. "Freight Train Boogie" gave the Delmores a big hit, going to number two on the national country charts late in 1946.⁷⁴

In 1949, the Delmore Brothers recorded the classic "Blues Stay Away from Me." The song was driven by a twangy guitar riff with the brothers singing the catchy melody in close harmony augmented by Wayne Raney's mournful harmonica. "Blues Stay Away

from Me" became a big hit, going to number one on the country charts in September 1949.⁷⁵ The song has since gone on to become a standard and has been covered by the Johnny Burnette Trio, Gene Vincent and the Blue Caps, the Louvin Brothers, Les Paul and Mary Ford, the Everly Brothers, and Doug Sahm, among others.

Throughout the '40s, the Delmores continued to bounce around to radio stations in different cities, finally ending up at KPRC in Houston.⁷⁶ They scored a final hit in early 1950 with "Pan American Boogie," singing overtop of a chugging rhythm augmented by boogie-woogie guitar and Wayne Raney's harmonica.⁷⁷

The Delmore Brothers broke up when Alton decided to concentrate on being a full-time songwriter and Rabon was diagnosed with lung cancer.⁷⁸ Rabon died on December 4, 1952.⁷⁹ Alton made some records for independent labels as a solo artist, but had little success and ended up dropping out of music.⁸⁰ He died on June 8, 1964.⁸¹

Arthur Smith

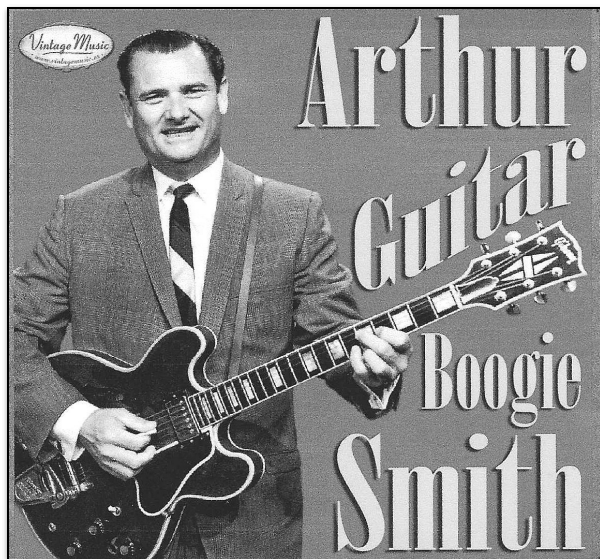
Another early pioneer of country boogie was Arthur Smith, whose instrumental hit "Guitar Boogie" helped to popularize the style.

Arthur Smith was born in Clinton, South Carolina on April 1, 1921 and grew up as part of a musical family in Kershaw, South Carolina.⁸² Smith's father, a textile mill worker, taught music and led a local jazz band.⁸³ When Smith was 11 years old, he joined his father's band as a trumpet player.⁸⁴ Smith also took up guitar as well as fiddle, mandolin, and banjo.⁸⁵ He and his brothers formed a country group that performed on radio station WBT in Charlotte, North Carolina and recorded for RCA in the mid-'30s, while Smith was still in junior high school.⁸⁶

During World War II, Smith served in the navy and was stationed at Bainbridge, Maryland.⁸⁷ During his spare time, Smith worked as a session guitarist for Irwin Feld's Super Disc label in nearby Washington, DC.⁸⁸

In 1945, Smith did a session for Super Disc with a group called the Tennessee Ramblers.⁸⁹ There was some left-over time at the end of the session and Feld asked if anyone had a number that they could record.⁹⁰ Smith said that he had a number called "Guitar Boogie."⁹¹ Smith showed the chords to the Tennessee Rambler's guitarist, Roy Lear, and bass player, Don White, and they quickly recorded it.⁹² On the recording, Smith alternated playing an eight-to-the-bar boogie-woogie figure on the bass strings of the guitar with jazzy picking on the treble strings, while Lear and White kept a steady rhythm behind him.

Super Disc released "Guitar Boogie" in late 1945, credited to the Rambler Trio, but, at the time, the record made little impact outside of the Washington, DC area.⁹³



After the war, Smith signed with the newly-formed MGM label based in Culver City, California.⁹⁴ Starting on January 1, 1948, Smith and other musicians were prohibited from making records by a recording ban that was put in effect by the American Federation of Musicians under the leadership of union president James Caesar Petrillo.⁹⁵ Petrillo was concerned that venues were installing jukeboxes rather than hiring bands and that this was putting musicians out of work. Petrillo hoped to stop the spread of jukeboxes by cutting off the supply of new records to jukeboxes.

Since MGM couldn't make any new recordings of Smith, they bought earlier recordings that he had done for Super Disc, which had since gone out of business.⁹⁶ MGM began releasing these recordings, crediting them to Arthur Smith and the Crackerjacks.⁹⁷ In the summer of 1948, one of the Super Disc recordings, "Banjo Boogie," became a hit, going to number nine on the national country charts.⁹⁸ MGM then reissued "Guitar Boogie" and this time "Guitar Boogie" became a hit, going to number eight on the national country charts.⁹⁹ The success of the song helped to introduce the country boogie sound to a wider audience.

(In 1959, the Virtues had a hit with a rocked-up, electrified version of "Guitar Boogie" under the title "Guitar Boogie Shuffle."¹⁰⁰ The leader of the Virtues, Frank Virtuoso, had been a navy mate of Smith's at Bainbridge, where he had learned the song from Smith.¹⁰¹)

Smith went on to a long and prolific career as a songwriter and recording artist. Among the songs he wrote was the cowboy ballad, "The Red Headed Stranger," which later became one of Willie Nelson's signature songs.¹⁰²

Another song of Smith's would have a long afterlife. In 1955, Smith recorded "Feuding Banjos," a call-and-response banjo duet with Don Reno.¹⁰³ The

song subsequently was covered by Eric Weisberg and Steve Mandel under the title "Dueling Banjos."¹⁰⁴ When Weisberg and Mandel's version of the song was used on the soundtrack of the movie *Deliverance* in 1973, it became a big hit, going to number two on the pop charts.¹⁰⁵ Smith, however, was not credited as the song's composer and he brought a lawsuit against Warner Brothers.¹⁰⁶ In a landmark copyright decision, Smith was awarded credit for the song as well as past and future royalties.¹⁰⁷

Smith also had a long career in television. From 1951 to 1982, Smith hosted *The Arthur Smith Show*, a syndicated country music variety show based in Charlotte, North Carolina, which featured guests such as Johnny Cash, Andy Griffith, and Roy Orbison.¹⁰⁸ At its peak, the show was seen in more than 80 markets.¹⁰⁹ Smith also had a sport fishing show on ESPN from 1982 to 1994.¹¹⁰

Smith died at his home in Charlotte, North Carolina on April 3, 2014 at age 93.¹¹¹

Tennessee Ernie Ford

Another leading proponent of country boogie was Tennessee Ernie Ford.

Ernest Jennings Ford was born in Bristol, Tennessee on February 13, 1919.¹¹² (Bristol, located on the Tennessee / Virginia border, played an important role in country music history because it is where Victor talent scout Ralph Peer first recorded Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family.) After graduating from Bristol High in 1937, Ford took a job as an announcer at radio station WOPI in Bristol.¹¹³ He subsequently moved to WATL in Atlanta and WORL in Knoxville, Tennessee.¹¹⁴ During World War II, Ford spent three years in the Army Air Corps, stationed in California.¹¹⁵

Following his discharge from the army, Ford took a job at KFXM in San Bernardino, California, where he hosted a show called *Bar-Nothin' Ranch Time*.¹¹⁶ While hosting the show, Ford played up his southern accent, adopted a hillbilly persona, and started billing himself as "Tennessee Ernie."¹¹⁷

Ford then moved to KXLA in Pasadena, where he hosted a similar show.¹¹⁸ One of the shows that followed Ford's was *Dinner Bell Round-Up*, which was hosted by Cliffie Stone and featured live country music and comedy.¹¹⁹ In addition to working as a disc jockey, Stone was a bass player who worked for Capitol Records as a session musician, talent scout, and producer.¹²⁰ Stone had a few hits of his own on Capitol with "Silver Stars, Purple Sage, Eyes of Blue" (1947), "Peepin' Through the Keyhole (Watching Jole Blon)" (1948), and "When My Blue Moon Turns to Gold Again" (1948).¹²¹ ("When My Blue Moon Turns to Gold Again" was covered by Elvis Presley and became a pop hit for him in 1956.¹²²) After hearing Ford sing, Stone recruited Ford to sing with *Dinner Bell's* vocal group.¹²³



Tennessee Ernie Ford and Lucille Ball from an episode of *I Love Lucy*. (Bureau of Industrial Service, Public Domain, via Wikimedia Commons.)

In 1948, Stone started hosting a Saturday night stage show called *Hometown Jamboree*, which was held at the American Legion Stadium in El Monte, California.¹²⁴ Beginning in December 1949, *Hometown Jamboree* was broadcast by KCOP-TV.¹²⁵ Tennessee Ernie Ford appeared on *Hometown Jamboree* and became the star of the show.¹²⁶ In January 1949, Ford was signed to Capitol Records by Stone's boss, country A&R man Lee Gillette.¹²⁷

Ford scored his first hit on the country charts in the spring of 1949 with "Tennessee Border."¹²⁸ He then scored a hit with the country-boogie number, "Country Junction," which featured Moon Mullican playing boogie-woogie piano.¹²⁹ This was followed by another hit, "Smoky Mountain Boogie," which combined a boogie-woogie rhythm with country-style fiddle and steel guitar.¹³⁰

In the fall of 1949, Ford hit number one on the country charts with a cover of Frankie Laine's "Mule Train," which crossed over to number 9 on the pop charts.¹³¹ He next scored a hit with a cover of another of Laine's songs, "Cry of the Wild Goose."¹³²

In the fall of 1950, Ford went to number 2 on the country charts and number 3 on the pop charts with a duet with Kay Starr on the melodic ballad "I'll Never Be Free."¹³³ This was first record to feature the new Fender Esquire solid-body guitar, which was played by Jimmy Bryant.¹³⁴ In late 1950, Ford scored one of the biggest hits of his career with "Shotgun Boogie," which went to number one on the country charts and crossed over to number 14 on the pop charts.¹³⁵ The song was driven by boogie-woogie-style guitar and piano, and featured prominent-sounding drums, which was unusual for a country record at a time, given that drums were banned from the stage of the *Grand Ole Opry*. "Shotgun Boogie" was followed by a string of hits that included "Mr. and Mississippi," "Blackberry Boogie," "Hey, Mr. Cotton Picker," "River of No Return," and "Ballad of Davey Crockett."¹³⁶

In the fall of 1955, Ford scored the biggest hit of his career with a cover of Merle Travis' "Sixteen Tons," which went to number one on both the country and pop charts.¹³⁷ The song had a spare instrumental accompaniment with Ford's deep, ominous-sounding vocal backed by finger snaps, bass, and drums.

In the mid-'50s, Ford began to branch out into t.v. In the summer of 1953, he hosted a quiz show; in 1954, he guested as the hick "Cousin Ernie" on *I Love Lucy*; and in 1955, he hosted a daily half-hour variety show.¹³⁸ In 1956, Ford landed a job as the host of *The Ford Show*, a weekly variety show sponsored by the Ford Motor Company.¹³⁹ Ford closed each show by singing a hymn.¹⁴⁰ The popularity of the hymns led Ford into a successful series of gospel recordings.¹⁴¹ After *The Ford Show* ended its run in 1961, Ford hosted a daytime variety show from 1962 until 1965.¹⁴²

Ford scored his final top ten single on the country charts with "Hicktown" in 1965, although he continued to place songs on the lower reaches of the country charts into the mid-'70s.¹⁴³ As his recording career wound down, Ford concentrated on t.v. and concert appearances.¹⁴⁴ Eventually, liver problems caused him to cut back on live performances.¹⁴⁵ In October 1991, Ford fell ill after attending a state dinner at the White House; he died in a Virginia hospital on October 17, 1991.¹⁴⁶

Moon Mullican

Moon Mullican, who was billed as the "King of the Hillbilly Piano Players," was another important proponent of country boogie. Mullican was a major



influence on early rock 'n' roll pianists such as Jerry Lee Lewis.

Aubrey Wilson Mullican was born in Corrigan, Texas on March 29, 1909 and grew up on his family's farm.¹⁴⁷ Mullican's parents, who were devoutly religious, purchased a pump organ when Mullican was eight years old so that they could sing hymns in the family home, and Mullican quickly learned to play the organ.¹⁴⁸ During his teens, Mullican played the organ in church, but he also developed an interest in blues, boogie-woogie, and western swing.¹⁴⁹

When Mullican was about 16, he left for Houston to pursue a career as a musician.¹⁵⁰ During the late '30s and early '40s, Mullican played western swing with Leon Selph's Blue Ridge Playboys and Cliff Bruner's Texas Wanderers in the Gulf Coast region of Texas.¹⁵¹ While playing with the Texas Wanderers, Mullican sang lead on their recording of his composition "Pipeliner Blues."¹⁵²

During 1944, Mullican led the band that accompanied country music star Jimmie Davis at campaign appearances during Davis' successful run for governor of Louisiana.¹⁵³ (Musically, Davis is best known for his hit 1940 recording of "You Are My Sunshine," which he co-wrote with Charles Mitchell.)

In 1946, Mullican signed with King Records.¹⁵⁴ Early the following year, Mullican hit number two on the country charts with "New Pretty Blonde," a humorous adaptation of the traditional Cajun number "Joe Blon," performed as a fiddle-led waltz.¹⁵⁵ Mullican then scored hits with "Jole Blon's Sister" and "Sweeter Than the Flowers."¹⁵⁶ In 1949, Mullican joined the cast of the *Grand Ole Opry* and remained with the show until 1955.¹⁵⁷

In early 1950, Mullican scored the biggest hit of his career, when he hit number one on the country charts with "I'll Sail My Ship Alone," a country two-step

with a honky-tonk-style piano solo.¹⁵⁸ His string of hits continued during 1950 and '51 with "Mona Lisa," "Goodnight Irene," and "Cherokee Boogie (Eh-Oh-Aleena)."¹⁵⁹ Other highlights of Mullican's output for King included "Moon's Tune," which served as a showcase for his boogie-woogie piano; a Cajun-inflected version of Hank Williams' "Jambalaya"; and a boogie-woogie version of Al Terry's country hit "Good Deal Lucille."

During his final session for King in 1956, Mullican was backed by the rock 'n' roll band, Boyd Bennett and His Rockets.¹⁶⁰ This session yielded the rock 'n' roll classic "Seven Nights to Rock."¹⁶¹ The song failed to chart but has gone on to become something of a rock 'n' roll standard, having been covered by Nick Lowe, Brian Setzer, and Bruce Springsteen, among others.

In April 1958, Mullican signed with the Coral label, a subsidiary of Decca.¹⁶² Among the highlights of Mullican's output for Coral were "Moon's Rock," an all-out rock 'n' roll number with guitar, sax, and piano solos; a rocking cover of Jan and Arnie's "Jennie Lee"; and "Early Morning Blues," an uptempo twelve-bar blues.

In 1961, Mullican scored a final hit on the country charts with "Ragged but Right" on the Starday label.¹⁶³ The following year, Mullican suffered a heat attack while performing onstage, but recovered and was able to return to performing.¹⁶⁴ Mullican went on to record for a number of small, independent labels, such as Musicor, Spar, Sterling, and Hall-Way, but failed to achieve any commercial success.¹⁶⁵

Mullican died on January 1, 1967 at age 57 in Beaumont, Texas, following another heart attack.¹⁶⁶

Arkie Shibley and His Mountain Dew Boys

A record that helped popularize country boogie was the 1951 hit, "Hot Rod Race," by Arkie Shibley and His Mountain Dew Boys. The song also was one of the earliest about California car culture and hot rod racing, which would become a major sub-genre of rock 'n' roll.

Jesse Lee Shibley was born on September 21, 1915 in Van Buren Arkansas.¹⁶⁷ Shibley's family farmed and he initially worked as a cattle farmer, before moving to Bremerton, Washington in 1936, where he worked on construction of the Illahee State Park.¹⁶⁸ During this time, Shibley formed a band, the Mountain Dew Boys, which consisted of Leon Kelly on lead guitar, Phil Fregon on fiddle, Jackie Hayes on bass and banjo, and Dean Manuel on piano.¹⁶⁹ Shibley and the Mountain Dew Boys performed on radio station KGIB in Bremerton.¹⁷⁰

In 1947, Shibley and the Mountain Dew Boys relocated to California.¹⁷¹ They first recorded for the small, independent label, Mae Mae, in the late '40s.¹⁷²

In 1950, Shibley obtained a song called "Hot Rod Race," which was written George Wilson.¹⁷³



Arkie Shibley. (Family photograph, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.)

Shibley took the song to Bill McCall, the owner of 4 Star Records, but McCall wasn't interested.¹⁷⁴ Shibley decided to form his own record company, Mountain Dew Records, and release the song himself.¹⁷⁵ The song recounts a race between a Ford and a Mercury and Shibley performed it as a Woody Guthrie-style talking blues set to a boogie-woogie beat. After Shibley released "Hot Rod Race" in November 1950, Bill McCall reconsidered his decision about the song.¹⁷⁶ McCall purchased the master recording of "Hot Rod Race" and released it on his Gilt-Edge label.¹⁷⁷ The song became a big hit, going to number five on the national country charts in February 1951.¹⁷⁸

Other artists rushed to cash in on the popularity of "Hot Rod Race" by recording cover versions and Shibley had to compete with three cover versions by artists on major labels - Ramblin' Jimmie Dolan on Capitol, Red Foley on Decca, and Tiny Hill on Mercury.¹⁷⁹ Shibley, however, bested the cover versions - all three cover versions peaked at number 7

on the country charts, with Tiny Hill's version crossing over to number 29 on the pop charts.¹⁸⁰

In addition to cover versions, "Hot Rod Race" also spawned a number of answer records, the most notable of which was "Hot Rod Lincoln." The song was first recorded by Charlie Ryan for his own Souvenir label in 1955, but failed to make any impact at the time.¹⁸¹ In 1960, Johnny Bond covered the song for Gene Autry's Republic label, and the record went to number 26 on the pop charts.¹⁸² Charlie Ryan, along with his band the Timberline Riders, then recorded a new version of the song for the 4 Star label, which went to number 14 on the country charts and number 33 on the pop charts.¹⁸³ The song became a hit again for Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen in 1972, going to number 9 on the pop charts and number 51 on the country charts.¹⁸⁴

Shibley himself recorded a number of sequels to "Hot Rod Race" - "Hot Rod Race #2," "The Judge (Hot Rod Race #3)," "The Guy in the Mercury (Hot Rod Race #4)," and "The Kid in the Model A (Hot Rod Race #5)" - but none had the impact of the original.

After the success of "Hot Rod Race," Shibley faded from public view and little is known about his subsequent career. Shibley died on September 7, 1975 in his hometown of Van Buren, Arkansas.¹⁸⁵

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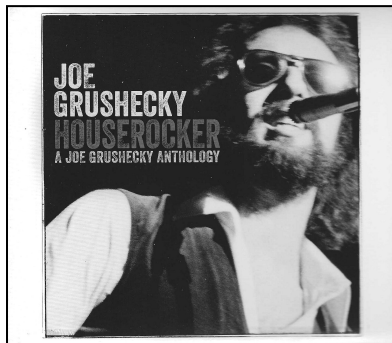
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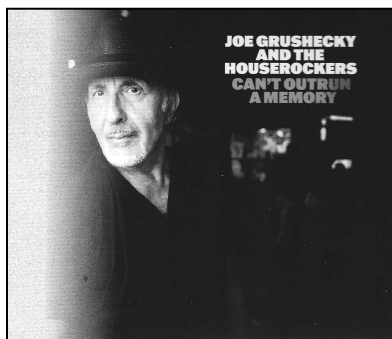
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REVIEWS



Houserocker: A Joe Grushecky Anthology
(Omnivore)



Can't Outrun a Memory: Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers
(Omnivore)

By Geoff Cabin

Joe Grushecky is a journeyman rock 'n' roller who has never achieved significant commercial success or widespread recognition but has stubbornly soldiered on for more than 40 years, producing an impressive body of work and winning a small but loyal audience. The two-disc set, *Houserocker: A Joe Grushecky Anthology*, provides an excellent, career-spanning overview of Grushecky's work.



Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers. Left to right: Joe Pelesky, Joffo Simmons (obscured), Joe Grushecky, Art Nardini, Bernie Herr (partially obscured), and Bill Toms. (Geoff Cabin.)

Grushecky first came to the attention of rock 'n' roll fans as the leader of the Iron City Houserockers, who recorded four albums between 1979 and 1983, including their 1980 masterpiece, *Have a Good Time (But Get Out Alive)*. (See Beverly Paterson's review of the 2020 reissue of *Have a Good Time (But Get Out Alive)* in issue 43.) The Iron City Houserockers were a hard-rocking bar band that played gritty rock 'n' roll with a heavy shot of rhythm and blues, topped off by Grushecky's impassioned and soulful vocals. The son of a Pittsburgh-area coal miner, Grushecky's songs expressed a hardscrabble, working-class perspective.

The *Anthology* provides a good selection of material from the

Iron City Houserocker's four albums. The set kicks off with "I Can't Take It," a hard-rocking number driven by distorted guitar chords, pounding piano, and honking harmonica. "Love's So Tough" and "Have a Good Time (But Get Out Alive)" mine similar musical territory. The catchy rocker, "Hideaway," is driven by a propulsive guitar riff and is the closest the band came to a hit single. The band's signature anthem, "Pumping Iron," is set to a boogie beat and boasts a shout-along refrain. "We're Not Dead Yet" is a foot-stomping rocker with chanted backing vocals. On "A Fool's Advice," the band employs a soulful, Stax-style sound, augmented by a horn section. "I Should Have Never Let You Go," is

a catchy piano-and-guitar-driven rocker.

The Iron City Houserocker's sound probably was too raw and abrasive for them ever to achieve mainstream success, and they broke up after the release of their fourth album.

In 1984, Grushecky released the single "Radio Ears" / "Goodbye Steeltown" under the name "Joey G." and, in 1989, released his first solo album, *Rock and Real* under the name Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers. He has gone on to release more than a dozen albums that feature skillful songcraft and strong, impassioned performances. The anthology provides a well-chosen selection of his solo work. "Rock and Real," is a catchy, sing-along anthem about the power of rock 'n' roll. The brooding lament, "Chain Smokin'," is set to a slow-burning groove with washes of keyboards in the background. "Never Be Enough Time" starts quietly before building into a soulful rocker with soaring guitar lines between the verses. "Coming Home" features a catchy pop melody framed by ringing guitars. "True Companion" is a moody, atmospheric number with bluesy guitar and harmonica. On the introspective ballad, "East Carson Street," Grushecky's vocal is backed by accordion and chiming guitar. "Another Thin Line" is a catchy rocker sung as a duet with Bruce Springsteen and features explosive guitar solos. On the powerful ballad, "More Yesterdays Than Tomorrows," Grushecky's vocal is backed by layers of guitars.

If you're not familiar with Grushecky, the anthology provides a perfect introduction to his work.

In addition to the anthology, Grushecky has an album of new material entitled *Can't Outrun a Memory*. The album demonstrates that Grushecky is still going as strong as ever.

The album kicks off with "This Is Who We Are," a rocking

anthem driven by Searchers-style guitar riffs. "Here in '68" recounts the social and political upheaval of 1968, backed by heavy-duty guitar sounds and chanted background vocals. The album's title track is an ultra-catchy rocker with Grushecky's vocal backed by layers of guitar. "Just Drive" is a slow, brooding number with quiet, understated vocals over a bed of acoustic and electric guitars. The foot stomping rocker, "If These Hills Could Talk," recounts the decline of a steel mill town. "Living in Coal Country" is a brooding, atmospheric lament with bluesy harmonica and slide guitar. The gospel-inflected "Let's Cross the Bridge," features churchy-sounding organ and soulful background vocals. In addition to the originals, Grushecky and the Houserockers turn in a strong cover of the Animals hit, "We Gotta Get Out of This Place."

Can't Outrun a Memory is yet another strong addition to Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers' catalog.



Footprints: Jeremy
(JAM)

By Beverly Paterson

For the past thirty-odd years, Jeremy Morris has been a permanent fixture on the DIY music scene. Based in Portage, Michigan, the singer, songwriter and multiple-instrumentalist not only releases a solo album every few months, but is also a member of the internationally-renowned Lemon Clocks. Appearances on

compilation sets and collaborations with other musicians stand as further accomplishments. And to top it off, Jeremy owns and operates the widely-respected JAM label.

Pitching a tri-pronged brew of psychedelia, prog rock and power pop, Jeremy offers a sound and style that is both recognizably-retro and uniquely contemporary. Imaginative arrangements, novel twists, John Lennon-meets-Hollies type vocals and Christian-rooted lyrics are core characteristics of his handiwork. One does not need to practice a particular religion or philosophy to appreciate Jeremy's music, simply because his material is so catchy and carries such a positive vibe.

Here on *Footprints*, Jeremy has partnered with singer, songsmith and varied-instrumentalist Ken Stringfellow, he of notable bands like the Posies, Big Star and the Minus 5. A concept album, *Footprints* charts Jeremy's faith to a repertoire of rich melodies, engaging movements and sonic experimentation.

The first number on the disc, "Everlasting Friend," gets things going with a quick burst of strummy riffing before blossoming into a wash of ringing electric guitars, surrounded by warm harmonies and textures. Brimming with joy, "Heaven To Pay" sports a rousing sing-a-long chorus and bops and bounces to a bit of a boogie-glam flavored beat.

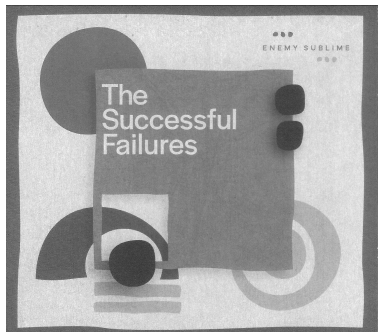
Ignited by chiming piano chords and emotive vocals, the title cut of the album initially has all the markings of a mid-paced ballad, then gradually turns into an ambitious display of musical sensations. Majestic horn trills soon enter the picture, presenting a symphonic feel, culminating into a swirling mass of trippy backward guitars and looping.

Driven by high energy guitars and hooky rhythms, "Won't Let You Down" and "Lay Your Burden Down" crackle and soar

with ear-grabbing pop-rock elements, while "Only Ghosts Remain" quivers to an atmospheric sheen, supported by floating harmonies and shimmering psychedelic effects. Carved of tugging licks, glistening tones, inventive instrumentation and radiant patterns, "Stranger To Yourself" and "Never Let You Go" occasionally recall the kind of sweeping beauty heard on select Moody Blues efforts.

As *Footprints* proves, Jeremy possesses the rare talent to simultaneously maintain and expand on his signature vision with each new recording. His love letters to God are always refreshing, inspiring and crafted of tuneful splendor.

(www.jamrecordings.com)



Enemy Sublime: The Successful Failures
(FDR)

By Geoff Cabin

Enemy Sublime is the eleventh album by the New Jersey-based Successful Failures and, musically, it is an overwhelming success. The album is filled with great songs that combine catchy pop melodies with roots-oriented rock 'n' roll and feature evocative and thoughtful lyrics.

The opening track, "Worried All the Time," is a country-tinged rocker, driven by heavy-duty, fuzzed-out guitar riffs for a sound reminiscent of Neil Young and Crazy Horse. The band employs a more pop-oriented

sound on "A Song Is Always on My Mind," which features a buoyant pop melody backed by chiming guitars. "Adelaide" is a catchy, country-rock number with lots of twangy guitar. On "Love You Although," the band sets a gorgeous melody filled with yearning against a pulsating rhythm and includes a shimmering guitar solo. "Future Employers" is an atmospheric, psychedelic-tinged track with a spacey soundscape of swirling synth strings and wah-wah guitar. The reflective and wistful "Face the Faceless," is a melodic, piano-based ballad. "High End Handbags" is an ultra-catchy power pop number with synth strings and chiming guitar. The album-closing "Tell Me Again" is a catchy, hard-driving rocker given an energetic and exuberant performance.

With *Enemy Sublime*, the Successful Failures have delivered a really fantastic album that should thrill anyone who loves rock 'n' roll. (www.thesuccessfulfailures.com / thesuccessfulfailures.bandcamp.com / mickchorba.substack.com.)



TexiCali: Dave Alvin & Jimmie Dale Gilmore with the Guilty Ones
(Yes Roc)

By Al Moscicchi

As I wrote in these pages five years ago the first Dave Alvin – Jimmie Dale Gilmore collaboration, 2018's *Downey To*

Lubbock, was a fine enough album but for this longtime Alvin fan it was no substitute for a true Dave Alvin album filled with new material.

Another six years have gone by and I am still waiting for that album. A lot has happened since for all of us and more so for Dave Alvin who has battled some serious health issues. In the meantime, we have the similarly titled *TexiCali*, a second helping of some Alvin songs, some Gilmore songs, and a majority of covers.

There is a lot to like here. The production is clean and uncluttered and, no surprise, the players are first rate; Alvin's Guilty bandmates are going to be a standout on any album they contribute to. The lead guitars - Alvin's more aggressive and bluesy and Chris Miller's sparser - are a highlight. Miller's slide guitar - equally sparse and equally as effective - is sprinkled throughout.

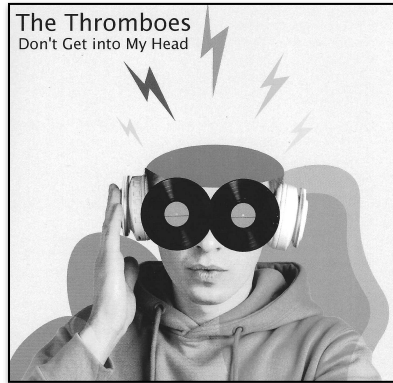
Gilmore's voice can be a little nasally which doesn't harm some songs ("Broke Down Engine" and "Why I'm Walking" are standouts) but diminishes others ("Trying To Be Free"). And Gilmore's and Alvin's voices don't mesh on the songs where they share vocals ("Death Of The Last Stripper", "Down The 285", and closer "We're Still Here").

Gilmore's harmonica is judiciously and effectively used, especially so in "Betty & Dupree" where it meshes perfectly with Miller's slide.

The song that maybe best displays the strengths and the weaknesses of the album is "Blind Owl". If the title didn't give a clue to the song, the opening rhythm guitar chunk-a-chunk makes the tribute to Canned Heat and Alan Wilson obvious. There is a sterling Alvin guitar solo - funky, keening, and restrained all at once. The song shows how much influence Canned Heat has had on Alvin's material over the years even as it seems repetitive of some of his other songs giving nods to heroes

like “Boss Of The Blues”; “Blind Owl” even name checks Big Joe Turner, the subject of “Boss”.

And I can’t let this review finish without mentioning Lisa Pankratz’s drumming, as stellar as always. Listen to the fill following the line ‘don’t you hear me, baby, rapping on your door’ in “Blind Owl” – understated genius!



Don't Get into My Head: The Thromboes
(CatErratic)

By Geoff Cabin

Don't Get into My Head is the second album by the Thromboes, a side project of Larry Levy of the Histrioniks. In addition to vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Levy, the band includes Cat Levy backing vocals and Anthony Kelly on keyboards, with occasional contributions from D.B. on bass and guitar and Dave DeMarco on bass and organ. The band has a guitar-and-organ-driven sound that is heavily influenced by '60s garage rock and augmented by Cat Levy's entrancing backing vocals.

The album's opening track, “Don't Get into My Head,” is a catchy rocker, driven by a strummy guitar riff and featuring a chiming guitar solo. On “I Want to Be Your Pistol” Larry Levy's vocals are backed by bluesy guitar riffs. “Time Won't Forgive Us” is a catchy pop-rock number that features some explosive drumming and a dynamic fuzz guitar solo. “I

Locked Horns” is an organ-driven number with a bluesy, fluid organ solo. The fast-paced rocker, “Picked Up by the Fuzz,” is driven by hard-edged guitar and whirring organ. “The Master of the Mistress of Rock 'n' Roll,” another fast-paced rocker, is built around a stop-time guitar riff.

Don't Get into My Head is a fun and enjoyable listen, the sort of DIY project that keeps the music scene fresh and interesting.

(levy201@comcast.net)



New Adventures: The Lemon Clocks

By Geoff Cabin

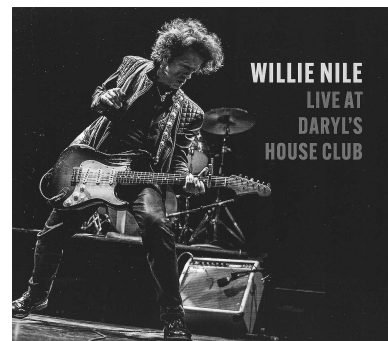
New Adventures is the latest album by the psychedelic-pop group, the Lemon Clocks, a collaboration between Jeremy Morris and Stefan Johansson. The group's songs combine catchy pop melodies with psychedelic-oriented arrangements and feature lots of impressive guitar pyrotechnics. The group draws on the classic psychedelic pop sounds of the '60s and '70s, while adding their own twist to the mix.

The album's title track features a catchy pop tune backed by strummed acoustic guitar and pulsating electronic keyboards that builds to a climactic guitar solo. “Light in the Sky” sets a blues-rock guitar riff against a background of wavering white noise. The quiet, moody ballad, “When the Night Falls,” features hushed vocals over an atmospheric soundscape of

riffing guitar, piano, and washes of synthesizer. “The Fall” is an introspective and melancholy piano-based ballad. The instrumental, “Floating Away,” creates a spacey soundscape of echo-laden guitar and piano overtop of a repeating bass riff. An alternate version of the track with vocals added appears under the title “On the Beach.” “Listen Up” is a catchy rocker backed by electronic keyboards and melodic slide guitar.

With *New Adventures*, the Lemon Clocks take the listener on a colorful and interesting musical journey.

(www.jamrecordings.com)



Live at Daryl's House Club: Willie Nile
(River House)

By Geoff Cabin

This album captures a sensational performance by Willie Nile and his crack band at Daryl's House Club in Pawling, New York in September 2022. Nile and his band members - Johnny Pisano on bass, Jimi K. Bones on guitar, and Jon Weber on drums - are practically bursting with energy and enthusiasm and driven to inspired heights throughout.

They kick off with the great pop-rock anthem “Places I Have Never Been,” which features a soaring, sing-along refrain Nile and his band then proceed to tear through one great song after another, with the band's aggressive guitar attack giving the songs a punkish edge. Among the

highlights are the catchy, energetic rockers "This Is Our Time" and "New York at Night"; the great pop-rock anthems "Lost and Lonely World" and "Run Free"; the melancholy piano-based ballad, "Shoulders," which features a couple of dramatic guitar solos by Jimi Bones; the noir-style story telling in "Trouble Down in Diamond Town"; and the celebration of music in "House of a Thousand Guitars."

Live at Daryl's House Club has to rank as one of the greatest live albums of all time. You absolutely do not want to miss it.

(Continued from page 15.)

- 171. de Heer; Komorowski 45.
- 172. de Heer; Komorowski 45.
- 173. De Heer.
- 174. de Heer; Komorowski 45.
- 175. de Heer; Komorowski 45.
- 176. de Heer; Komorowski 45.
- 177. de Heer; Komorowski 45.
- 178. de Heer; Whitburn, *Top Country Singles*, 339.
- 179. Dawson 81; De Heer.
- 180. de Heer; Whitburn, *Top Country Singles*, 102, 121, 163.
- 181. Dawson 83; Whitburn, *Top Country Singles*, 326.

- 182. Dawson 83; de Heer; Whitburn, *Top Country Singles*, 37.
- 183. Dawson 83, Whitburn, *Top Country Singles*, 326.
- 184. de Heer; Whitburn, *Top Country Singles*, 77.
- 185. de Heer.

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