



HANK MARVIN
"THIS RECORD MADE
ME WANT TO PLAY"



ELVIS PRESLEY
HIS BEST SONGS?
A PROFESSOR DECIDES



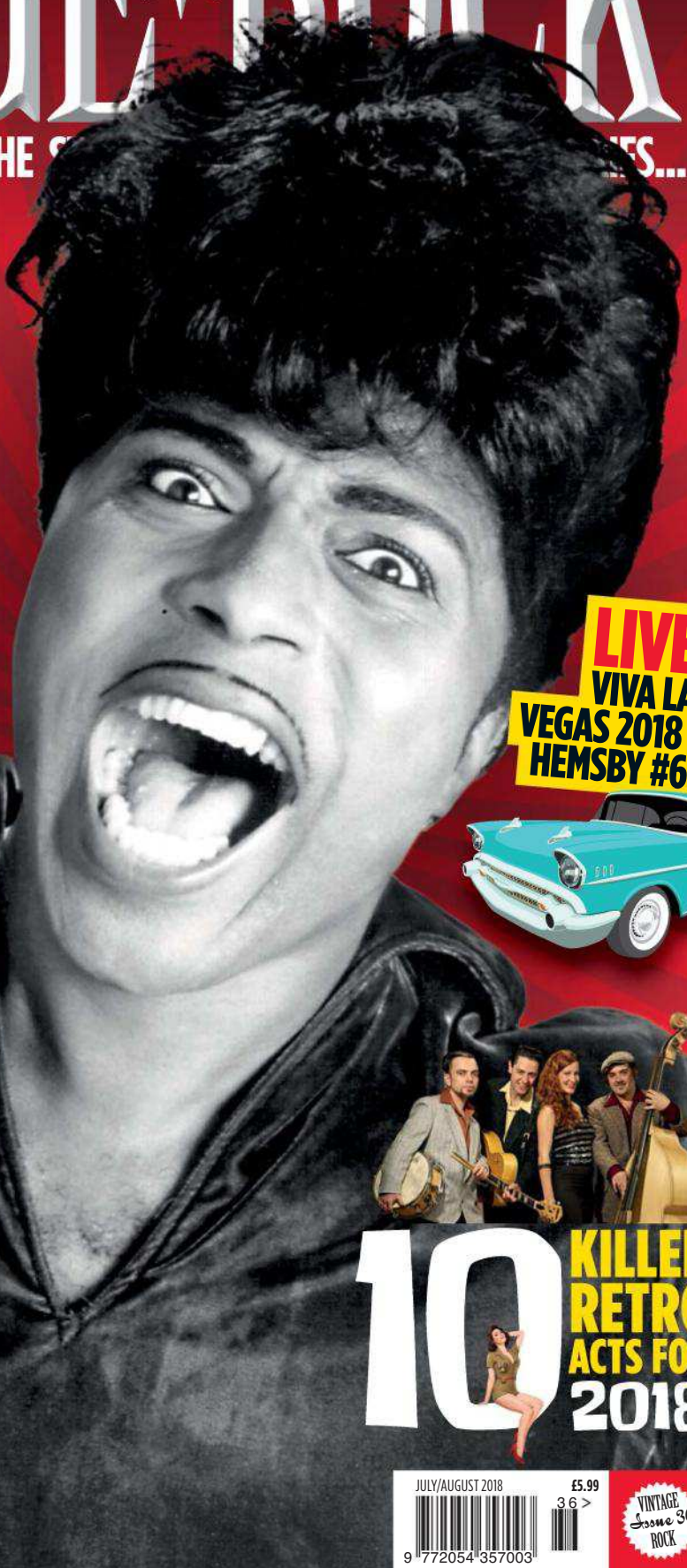
SHAKIN' STEVENS
THE EARLY DAYS:
"HE WAS CRYING"

VINTAGE*ROCK

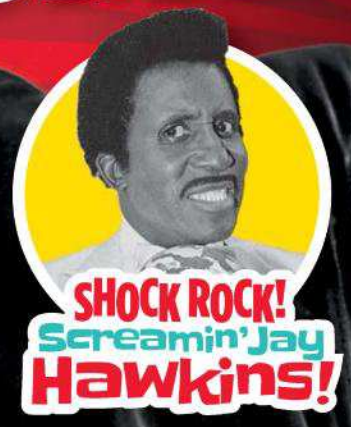
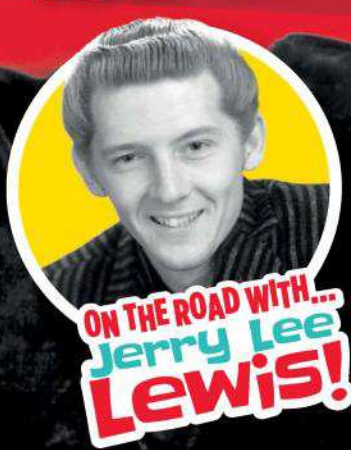
HAIL! HAIL! ROCK'N'ROLL! THE MUSIC, THE STORIES, THE LEGENDS...

Little Richard!

THE SECOND COMING OF HIS MAJESTY
PIANO-POUNGING
SPECIAL!



LIVE!
VIVA LAS
VEGAS 2018 &
HEMSBY #60



PLUS...

CHAS HODGES
THE BLUEJAYS

NEW 7-INCH SINGLES REVIEWS

CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE

"MEMPHIS, THE KING & ME"

**10 KILLER
RETRO
ACTS FOR
2018**

JULY/AUGUST 2018 £5.99
36 >
9 772054 357003



VIVA



APRIL
18TH-21ST
2019

LAS VEGAS

BY VINCE RAY

ROCKABILLY

WEEKEND

22

www.vivalasvegas.net

VINTAGE*ROCK

Anthem Publishing

Piccadilly House,
London Road, Bath, BA1 6PL
+44 (0)1225 489984

vintagerock@anthem-publishing.com
www.vintagerockmag.com
www.facebook.com/vintagerockmag

EDITOR Michael Leonard
mike.leonard@anthem-publishing.com

ART EDITOR Andrew McGregor
andy.mcgregor@anthem-publishing.com

PRODUCTION EDITOR Dan Biggane
dan.biggane@anthem-publishing.com

ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING MANAGER Adrian Major
adrian@majormediasales.com
+44 (0) 1453 836257

AD PRODUCTION Craig Broadbridge
craig.broadbridge@anthem-publishing.com

ANTHEM PUBLISHING

CHIEF EXECUTIVE Jon Bickley
jon.bickley@anthem-publishing.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR Simon Lewis
simon.lewis@anthem-publishing.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR Jenny Cook
jenny.cook@anthem-publishing.com

MARKETING MANAGER Gemma Bailey
gemma.bailey@anthem-publishing.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Craig Brackenridge, William Browning, David Burke,
Julie Burns, Garth Cartwright, Nick Cobban, Bill Dahl,
Vince Eager, Randy Fox, John Howard, Jack Watkins
and David West

PRINTED BY

William Gibbons & Sons Ltd
+44 (0) 1902 730 011

DISTRIBUTED BY

Marketforce (UK) Ltd,
5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London,
E14 5HU +44 (0) 20 378 79001

LICENSING

Regina Erak
+44 (0) 7753 811 622
regina.erak@googlemail.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS & BACK ISSUES

PLEASE CONTACT:

0844 856 0642* (UK)
+44 (0)1371 853 609 (US)
email: shop@anthem-publishing.com
web: anthem-publishing.com/vintage

*Calls cost 7 pence per minute plus your
phone company's access charge

ANTHEM PUBLISHING

ppa
**independent
publisher awards**
Winner 2017
INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING
COMPANY OF THE YEAR

ppa The Professional
Publishers Association
Member

All content copyright Anthem Publishing Ltd 2018, all rights reserved.
While we make every effort to ensure that the factual content of *Vintage
Rock* magazine is correct, we cannot take any responsibility nor be held
accountable for any factual errors printed. Please make every effort to
check quoted prices and product specifications with manufacturers prior
to purchase. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a
retrieval system or resold without prior consent of Anthem Publishing Ltd.
Vintage Rock magazine recognises all copyrights contained within the
issue. Where possible, we acknowledge the copyright holder.

WELCOME...



We turn down the guitars and pummel the pianos in this issue, as we look at three stages in the careers of three titans of rock'n'roll. Jerry Lee Lewis' 50s tales have been well-documented, but *Vintage Rock* wanted to hear more from a man who was actually there at the start – so we've talked to bassist, manager and (in many ways) mentor, JW Brown. Read

his fascinating memories starting on page 28.

We also revisit the latter days of a true maverick of music, Screamin' Jay Hawkins. The piano man's life seemed to be half myth, half outright lies... and even after talking to his manager we're still none the wiser.

At the heart of this issue, is the bona fide legend Little Richard. His early records were monumental in their influence, but even trailblazers need somewhere to go so we're throwing ourselves into to the second reign of 'King' Richard in the early 60s, when he came out of retirement (not for the last time!) and cut some of the most underrated music of his extraordinary career.

'What Happened Next?' is a theme continued elsewhere. Starting on page 56, we profile 10 of the hottest 'new retro' acts doing the business right now: whether straight-up rockabilly, 50s R&B with a twist, or surf guitar acts with a unique style, all these artists have taken the original music they know and love and given it a shot in the arm, for both original fans and younger, hip rockers alike. We've inevitably missed out numerous others... *this* time. Even so, let us know who are your favourites, as we'll be doing another roundup: there are simply too many good artists around now to ignore.

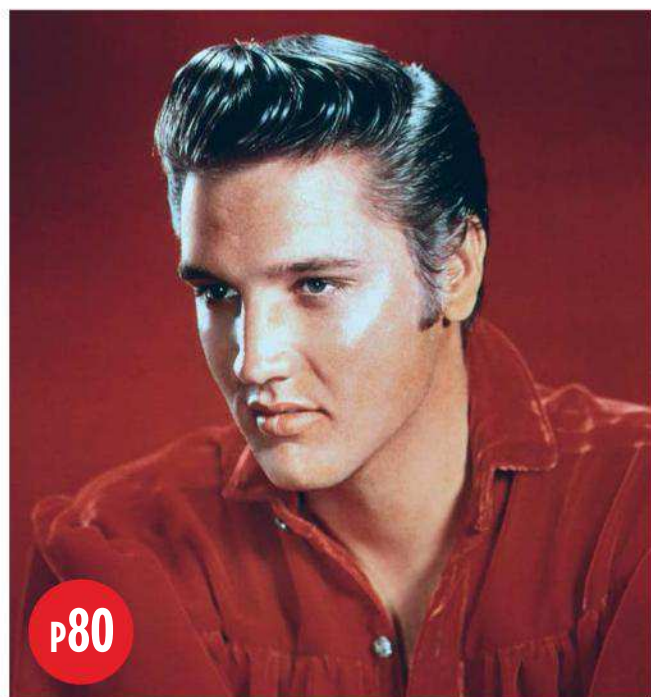
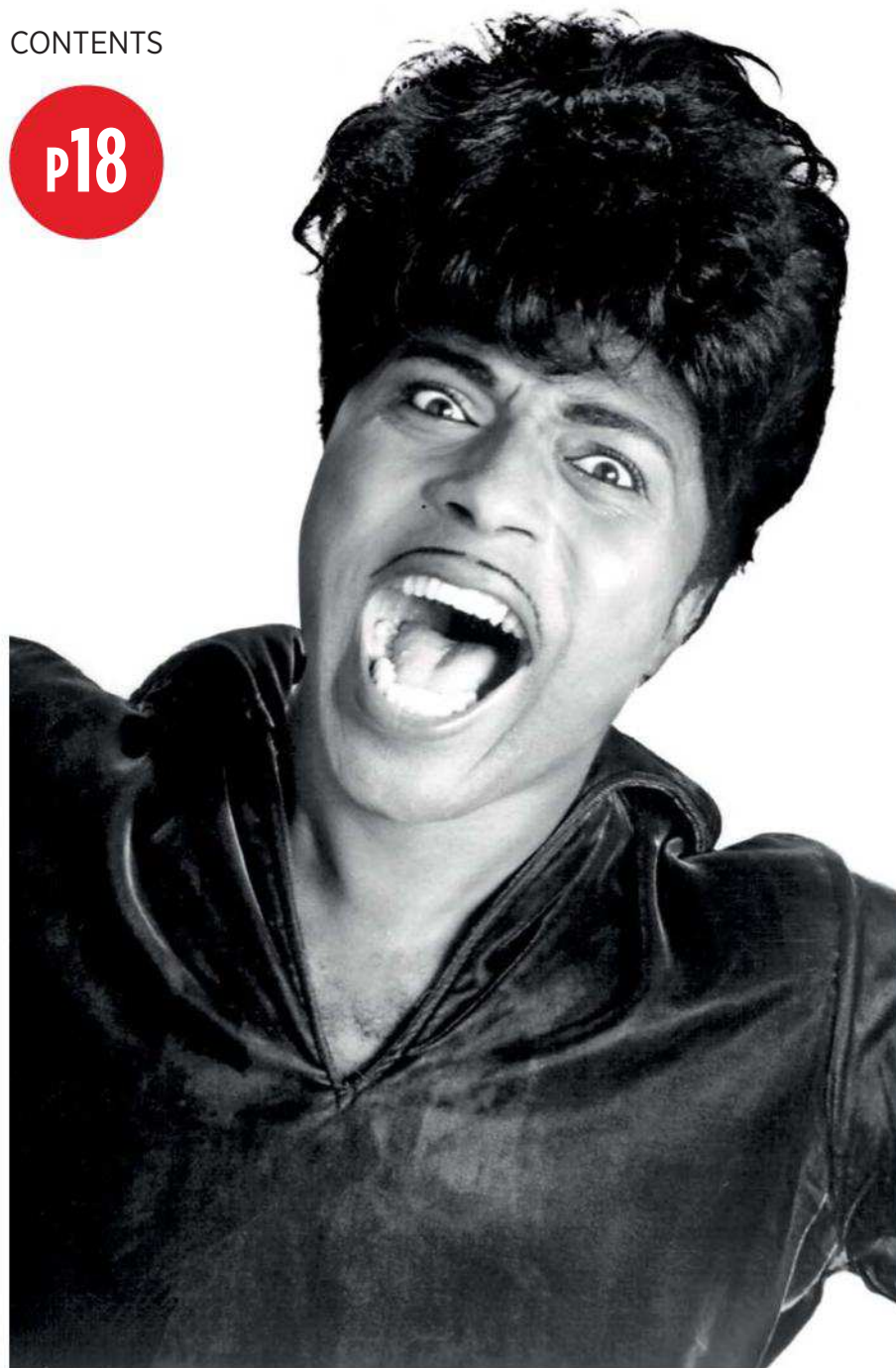
And hats off, too, to another young act, The Bluejays. They're touring the UK with a new show featuring those classic 50s breakthrough songs and make no mistake, they still sound as vital as they did all those years ago. The story of real rock'n'roll is going to run and run...

Enjoy the issue...

Michael

Michael Leonard
Editor

p18



CONTENTS

COVER STORY

- LITTLE RICHARD** 18
We celebrate the second coming of The Georgia Peach as he returns to the world of rock'n'roll after dedicating his life to preaching the word of God

THE FEATURES

- JERRY LEE LEWIS** 28
We meet The Killer's cousin, father-in-law and bassist JW Brown

- SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS** 34
David Burke looks back at a truly bizarre rock'n'roll original

- CHAS HODGES** 42
The Chas & Dave piano pounder recalls his early session days under Joe Meek and backing Jerry Lee Lewis and Gene Vincent

- CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE** 50
Garth Cartwright talks to the legendary blues harmonica player

- BEST RETRO ACTS** 56
10 killer contemporary acts whose roots run deep

- SHAKIN' STEVENS** 66
A look at the rock'n'roll revivalist's explosive debut album with *The Sunsets – A Legend*

- THE BLUEJAYS** 76
Inside The Bluejays' new Rock And Roll Revolution show

- ELVIS PRESLEY** 80
Music academic Mark Duffet documents and evaluates key Elvis songs and places them in his personal order of merit

THE REGULARS

- ALL MAMA'S CHILDREN** 6
The latest happenings in the world of rock'n'roll

- LEGENDS OF ROCK** 14
Chris Montanez's extraordinary rock'n'roll life

- ON THE RADAR** 16
Meet Laura Palmer, lead singer for the Screamin' Rebel Angels

- SUBSCRIPTIONS** 48, 74, 99
Never miss a copy of *Vintage Rock!*

- NEW! 7" SINGLES & EP REVIEWS** 86
Features a series of limited edition singles by Little Richard

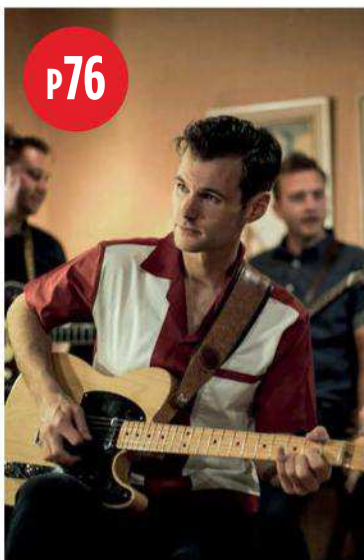
- LP REVIEWS** 88
With new vinyl releases from Hank Williams and Wanda Jackson

- CD REVIEWS** 90
Includes Elvis Presley, Sam Cooke and Roy Orbison

- LIVE REVIEWS** 94
Hemsby's 60th weekender, Viva Las Vegas' 21st year and more

- SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE** 112
The Shadows' Hank Marvin and the music that changed his life

- CODA: JANIS MARTIN** 114
'The Female Elvis' and her all-too-brief rockin' career



ALL Mama's CHILDREN

“Kerching!” Of Rock’n’Roll

White gold watch covered in 44 diamonds, gifted to Elvis Presley by RCA Records, fetches an astonishing £1.4m in a Geneva auction

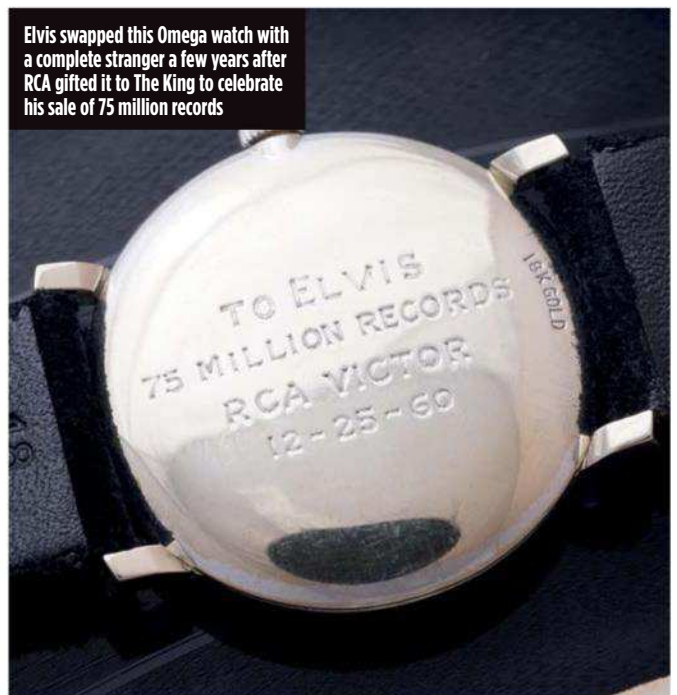
Just a year ago, in May 2017, a UK YouGov poll claimed of Elvis Presley that the value of “the late star’s rare merchandise has fallen dramatically.” Really? That may be the case of plastic “wobbly legs” Elvis clocks, but certainly no one has told the vintage watch market.

On 12 May, an Omega watch gifted to Elvis by RCA Records – to celebrate his sale of 75 million records – fetched over £1.4m (\$1.812m) at auction in Geneva. It is the highest price ever paid for an Omega watch, and completely eclipsed the seller’s estimate of \$100,000. The 18k white gold watch has the back engraved “To Elvis, 75 Million Records, RCA Victor, 12-25-60” and came with added documentation that this was a watch The King regularly wore.

Elvis was actually a keen trader of wristwatches. The story behind this one is that The King was later sitting in a restaurant when he was approached by a man who said, “nice watch.” Elvis glanced at the man’s own timepiece, a diamond-set Hamilton, and replied: “I like your watch too. Do you want to trade?” And his RCA presentation Omega was gone. The watch was consigned to auction in May by the trading man’s nephew.

The buyer at this auction? It was actually the Omega Museum itself, in Biel/Bienne, Switzerland, where it will go on display. ➔

Elvis swapped this Omega watch with a complete stranger a few years after RCA gifted it to The King to celebrate his sale of 75 million records





A week later, at a New York auction, a heavily-embellished white leather belt Elvis wore at a 1972 performance in Hawaii and in his "Thunderbird" ensemble, gifted to Jack Lord, sold for \$354,400, and a 1968 rosewood-bodied Fender Telecaster made for him fetched \$115,200. "Nice" items one and all, but proof that any magic trace of Elvis DNA commands amazing prices. If these prices are falling "dramatically", we'd hate to think what happens when they rise again.

Not to be outdone, Beatles memorabilia continues to fetch astonishing prices. At the same Julien's



A pair of gold wire rim glasses owned by John Lennon, expected to fetch between \$20,000 and \$30,000, went unsold

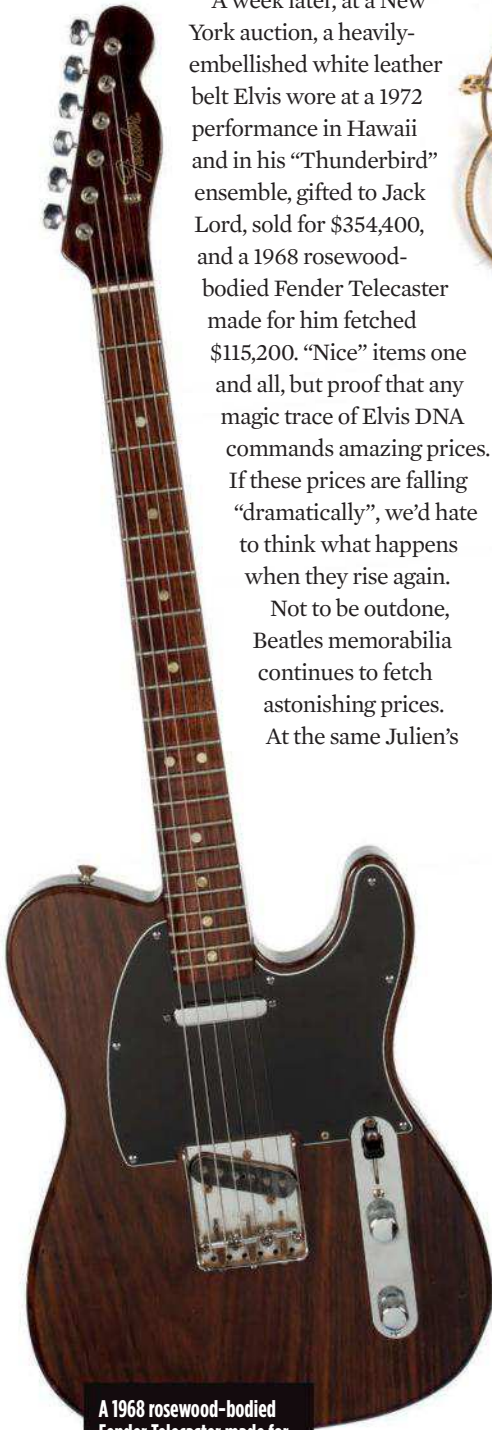
Auction of 12-13 May, George Harrison's first electric guitar, a Hofner Club 40 sold for £430,000.

In 1965, Harrison was asked to donate his guitar to a band competition that would help promote The Beatles' 1966 German tour. The guitar was autographed with the Beatles' names by their road manager, Neil Aspinall and was won by the German band Faces. Frank Dostal, the singer and guitarist of Faces, owned the guitar until he passed away in 2017. His widow, Mary, who was a member of the Liverpool girl group The Liverbirds, offered it for auction.

Andy Babiuk, author of *Beatles Gear: The Ultimate Edition*, said: "George Harrison considered the Hofner as one of his favourite guitars. It is one of the

most historically important guitars as it marks the chapter in music history when The Beatles transitioned to a rock'n'roll band playing electric guitars." *

Elvis items photos courtesy of Phillips Auctioneers (Omega watch) and Julien's Auctions (custom belt, ring and Fender Telecaster). Photos of George Harrison Hofner guitar and John Lennon spectacles courtesy of Julien's Auctions.



A 1968 rosewood-bodied Fender Telecaster made for The King fetched \$115,200

"GEORGE HARRISON'S HOFNER IS ONE OF THE MOST HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT GUITARS"



A star ring that Elvis gave to a fan in 1975 went for \$100,000



George Harrison's Hofner Club 40 has sold for £430,000



A leather belt, that Elvis wore during a 1972 performance in Hawaii, sold for \$354,400

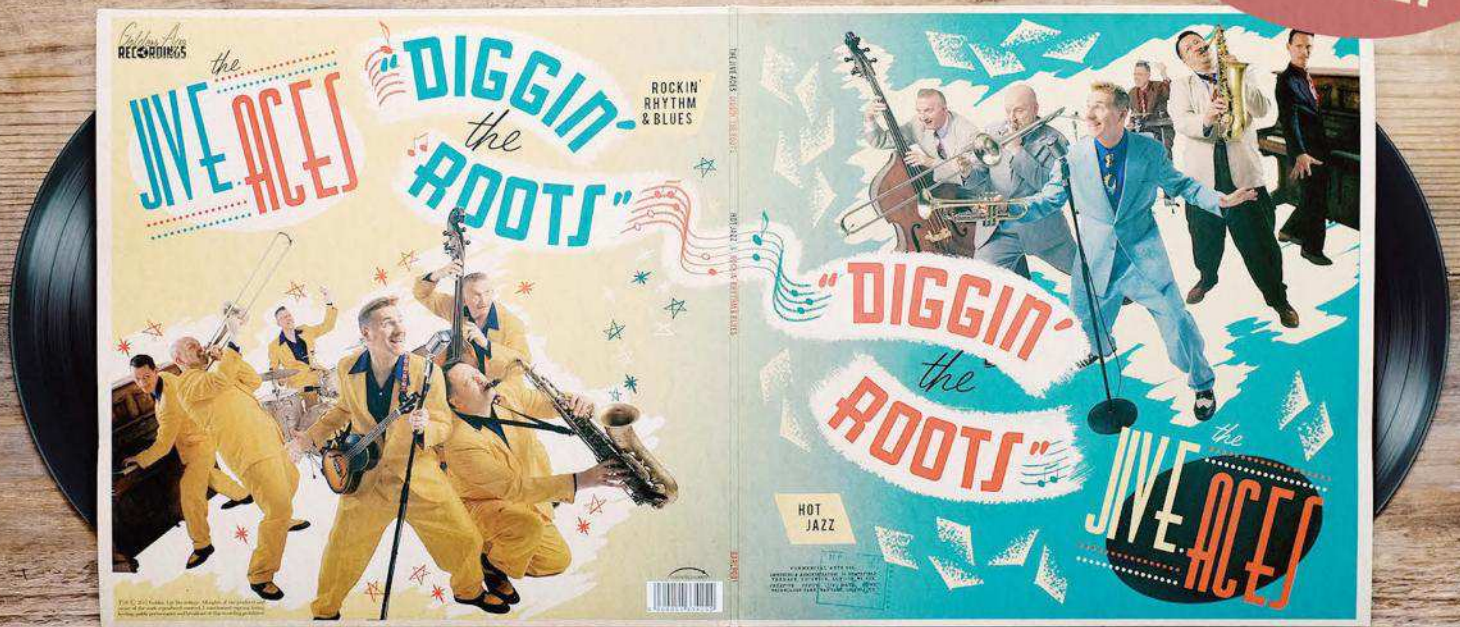
THE JIVE ACES

GO BACK TO THEIR

Roots

To celebrate their 20th year together, the UK's No.1 jive and swing band, The Jive Aces, have released two brand new album paying homage to the branches of music that make up their sound. Rockin' rhythm & Blues and hot jazz.

NOW ON
VINYL!



“Diggin’ The Roots Vol.1: Rockin’ Rhythm & Blues” and “Vol.2: Hot Jazz” are available now on CD, download and a special limited edition double album vinyl from Amazon, HMV, iTunes and independant record stores or direct from the band along with tour dates at:

www.jiveaces.com

Link Wray Rumbles Into Hall Of Fame

The recent campaign to get Link Wray into the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame as an artist may have lost out in a fan vote to Bon Jovi, but Wray's landmark 1958 single *Rumble* has now been inducted into the very first class of Rock & Roll Hall of Fame's Singles.

Also included in the new category were *Rocket 88* by Jackie Brenston And His Delta Cats (1951), *The Twist* by Chubby Checker (1960), *Louie Louie* by The Kingsmen (1963), plus *A Whiter Shade Of Pale* by Procol Harum (1967) and Steppenwolf's *Born To Be Wild* (1968).

The singles were chosen from acts who are not members of the Rock Hall – yet. It doesn't mean that they will not someday be inducted. "Very happy to see Link Wray's *Rumble* get its much deserved recognition by the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame," said Dan Auerbach, whom *Vintage Rock* talked to in VR35. "It's a song that changed everything and influenced all that came after it.

It's now time for that impact to be fully recognised and for Link to be inducted to the Rock Hall as an artist, where he always belonged."

Auerbach's label, Easy Eye Sound, recently released *Son Of Rumble* (left), Link's intended, but hitherto unreleased follow-up to the song that introduced the world to power chords and intentional distortion.



Roy Young 1934–2018

Vintage Rock was saddened to hear of the death of Roy Young, UK boogie woogie pianist who played with (and could have joined) The Beatles. Young also played with Chuck Berry, Cliff Bennett And The Rebel Rousers and David Bowie as well as fronting his own bands.

A Londoner, Young's precocious piano skills saw him audition for producer Jack Good in 1958 and his performance of *Long Tall Sally* led him to becoming a regular on the BBC's *Oh Boy!* In 1959, Young recorded his first single *Just Keep It Up / Big Fat Mama*, and began extensive tours with Cliff Richard and The Shadows, playing clubs, theatres, variety shows around the UK. By 1961, he'd begun playing at The Top Ten Club in Hamburg and, with Tony Sheridan and Ringo Starr, he formed The Beat Brothers – he went on to be piano-playing guest with the fast-rising Beatles at Hamburg's famous Star Club. Young later told the *Oxford Mail* that after coming off stage one night, manager Brian Epstein said to: "The four lads asked me to ask if you would be interested in going back to England and join them to get a record contract."

Young declined. He joined Cliff Bennett And The Rebel Rousers and formed his own Roy Young Band, releasing numerous albums in the 70s. He *did* eventually record with The Beatles (he's joins Paul McCartney on piano on *Got To Get You Into My Life*) and he's also on David Bowie's *Low* album. His final recorded release was his 2006 album, *Still Young*.

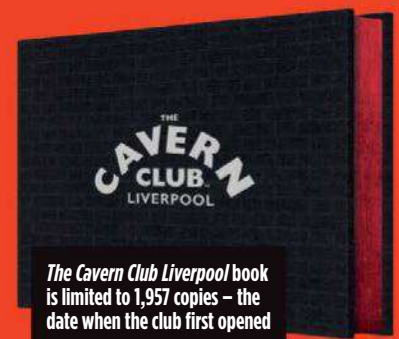
Cavern Celebrates With 1,957 Books

Copies of *The Cavern Club Liverpool*, a lavish book printed as part of the club's 60th year celebrations, are available online and *Vintage Rock* highly recommends it.

Limited to just 1,957 copies, it features many never before seen items including: George Harrison's handwritten letter written to Cavern Club DJ Bob Wooler from Hamburg, unseen Paul McCartney images from his historic performance at The Cavern Club in 1999 and Bob Wooler's handwritten notes entitled "An introduction to the Cavern" from his personal collection.

The package also features colour images of The Cavern Club/Mathew Street circa 1966 from Ray McFall personal collection and an exclusive 250gsm art print by original Cavern poster designer Tony Booth.

The 304-page book is packaged in an individual anniversary slipcase, and has a foreword by Paul McCartney.



The Cavern Club Liverpool book is limited to 1,957 copies – the date when the club first opened

A Rock'n'Roll Romance...

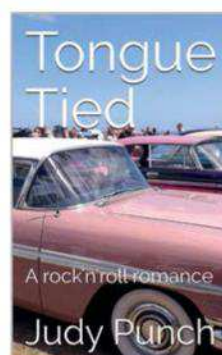
If you fancy a trip back to the rockabilly revival of the 70s, look no further than *Tongue Tied*, a new romantic novel by one Judy Punch.

The nostalgic tale follows the adventures of Lauren McGuinty, a 40-year-old Memphis music teacher who gets a call out of the blue from English promoter Barrie 'Lightning' Bolt to tell her that *Tongue Tied Gal*, a long-forgotten record that she made has become a surprise hit in the UK's rock'n'roll clubs. Brought out of retirement for one last tour, Lauren sets out on a journey through a world of teddy boys, classic cars and 50s revival festivals. But can she recapture her youth and manage not to fall in love with

Lightning before she has to head home?

"*Tongue Tied* was inspired by the real-life stories of rockers like Hank 'Jungle Rock' Mizell, who were startled to be discovered by European rockabilly fans long after they were forgotten in the US," says Punch. "I wanted to capture the feeling of those rock'n'roll days."

Oh, and did we mention that Punch is a pen name of *Vintage Rock* writer Douglas McPherson? *Tongue Tied* is available to buy from Amazon.



NOW TAKING BOOKINGS FOR 2019
PETE GILL & THE GOOD TIME CHARLIES
 Piano Pumping Rock 'n' Roll, Boogie and Blues

Telephone: 07702 253638
 Email: petergill@live.co.uk
 www.petegill.com

ROCKABILLY RADIO PRESENTS...

The Vinyl Vault
 WITH DJ DEANO

PLAYING RARE 45'S & 78'S
 ROCKABILLY • HILLBILLY • RHYTHM & BLUES

THURSDAY
 6PM UK • 1900 CET • 1PM USA EASTERN • 10AM USA PACIFIC

SATURDAY
 9PM UK • 2200 CET • 4PM USA EASTERN • 1PM USA PACIFIC

MONDAY
 10PM USA EASTERN • 7PM USA PACIFIC

TUESDAY
 3AM UK • 0400 CET

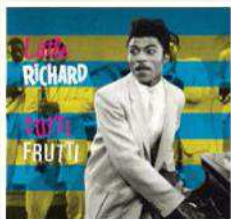
MIXCLOUD
 DJDEANOROCKABILLYRADIO-

24 HOURS A DAY • 7 DAYS A WEEK
 LISTEN AT
 WWW.ROCKABILLY-RADIO.NET
 OR tunein



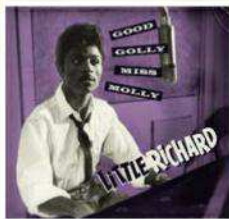
*Oh my soul...
 sure gonna get these!!!*

Limited Edition Deluxe Releases, 7 Inch Dinked Singles, Housed In Picture Sleeves With Inner Bag



Vipvop45001
 Tutti Frutti
 Ready Teddy

Little Richard
 Vipvop45002
 Good Golly Miss Molly
 Keep -a -knockin'

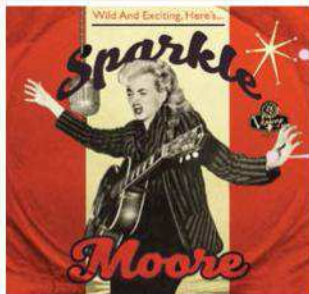


Vipvop45003
 The Girl Can't Help It
 Rip It Up

Little Richard
 Vipvop45004
 Lucille
 Long Tall Sally



**ALL 4 LITTLE RICHARD BUNDLED 45s
 AT A SPECIAL PRICE SEE WEBSITE**



Wild And Exciting, Here's....Sparkle Moore
 VIPVOP014
 4 track 10 Inch, Rock-a-bop+Skull & Crossbones, Killer+ Tiger

Check Out These VipVop Long Players

Chuck Berry: Rockin' At The Hops Ltd Edt Remastered Vinyl LP + CD
Chuck Berry: After School Session Ltd Edt Remastered LP + CD
Eddie Cochran & Gene Vincent: The Sat Club Ltd Red Vinyl + Free Poster & Ticket
Johnny Burnette VARIOUS Rock-a-Billy Boogie: Vol 1 & 2 Remastered on Red Vinyl+CD
Vince Taylor: Jet Black Machine Remastered Red Vinyl + CD



Gene Vincent
 Vipvop45005
 Say Mama
 Catman

In Memory of designer Sophie Lo who was taken far too soon

Direct from www.easyaction.co.uk

distributed by **CARGO RECORDS**

or from your local...



RARE Rock 'N' Roll RECORDS

Vinyl can be an appreciating asset, so it's wise to keep an eye on the market. This month www.omegaauctions.co.uk evaluate discs by The Skee Brothers, Little Richard, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Billy Barrix and Champion Jack Dupree...



WHILE I'M AWAY (EPIC, S-9275) THE SKEE BROTHERS

Michigan's The Skee Brothers, aka Jim and TJ Shedlowsky, started out together in 1958 and have recorded for numerous labels. *While I'm Away* is completely infectious, haunting and difficult to find! **MINT VALUE: £150 (DEMO), £100 (STOCK)**



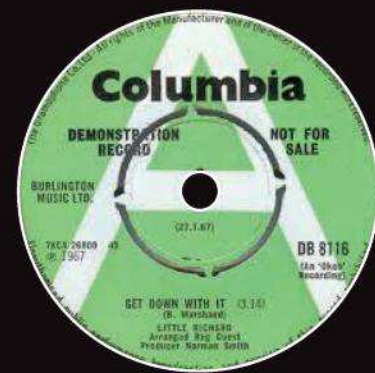
COOL OFF BABY (CHESS, 1662) BILLY BARRIX

This hiccupping rockabilly shaker is held in extremely high regard to collectors. The 45 was withdrawn almost immediately as it was deemed to plagiarise *Baby Let's Play House*. **MINT VALUE: £5,000**



I PUT A SPELL ON YOU (US, 10" 78RPM, OKEH 7072) SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS

Lifted from the album *At Home With Screamin' Jay Hawkins*, this is probably Hawkins' most successful recording, but the original 78 on Okeh rarely turns up in 'E' condition or better... **MINT VALUE: £150**



GET DOWN WITH IT (UK, COLUMBIA, DB 8116 DEMO) LITTLE RICHARD

Here we have Lord Penniman at his ever-raucous self – come on get in line and stomp your feet to this one! This one is also a big playout side for Northern DJs who don't mind a little extra spice. **MINT VALUE: £150+**



BARRELHOUSE WOMAN (UK, DECCA, F 1261) CHAMPION JACK DUPREE

A nod to the great Professor Longhair here from big Jack with this coruscating 45 pimping up the riff from *The Mardi Gras*. Most of Dupree's UK releases were on Atlantic and Blue Horizon, this 7" on Decca is almost impossible to locate... **MINT VALUE: £500 (DEMO), £200 (STOCK)**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Sun Records The Concert 23 JUNE-29 JULY

FEATURING The songs of Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, Roy Orbison, Carl Perkins, Rufus Thomas and scores more.

VENUES 23 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke; 24 June, Grand Opera House, York; 13 July, Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl; 14 July, New Theatre, Oxford; 26 July, The Playhouse, Weston Super Mare; 27, Queen's Theatre, Barnstaple; 29 July, New Theatre, Wimbledon...

ongoing dates through 2018.

BOOKING @Sunrecordstheconcert on Facebook



The Wildest Cats In Town 2018 6-9 JULY 2018

FEATURING Charlie Gracie, Huelyn Duvall, Rocky & Billy Burnette, Velvet Candles, Crazy Cavan, Matchbox, Gene & Eddie featuring Darrel Higham and Cliff Edmonds, Spunbybs, Danny Reno, Crazy Teds and many more **VENUE** Pontins Pakefield, Lowestoft NR33 7PF

ADMISSION From £159

BOOKING tennesseecub.net/events/wildcats-summer2018.html

EMAIL rg1958@freuk.com



Atomic 50s Weekend 28-29 JULY

FEATURING The Go Getters, Lily Moe, Cherry Casino & The Gamblers, The Wheelgrinders and more. Five indoor venues, jive classes and contests, classic and custom car show, drag racing, vintage market...

VENUE Sywell Aerodrome, Northants NN6 0BN **ADMISSION** From £39 per day.

Weekend £80, under 16s free.

BOOKING www.AtomicFestival.co.uk or 01435 81250



Jukebox & Retro Fair 28-29 OCTOBER

FEATURING Jukeboxes, vintage clothing, retro hair and makeup, retro homewares, classic cars, jive dancing competitions. Live music from The Hicksville Bombers, Don Sibley's Vee 8s, Rusti Steel, Sharna-Mae And The Mayhems **VENUES** Chessington Community

College, KT9 2JS

ADMISSION £8 (adult), £3 (children)

BOOKING www.jukeboxfair.co.uk



Halfway To Paradise – The Billy Fury Story 4 OCTOBER-15 NOVEMBER

FEATURING Colin Gold as Billy Fury backed by original members of Furys Tornados

VENUES 4 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-On-Trent; 5 Oct, Princess Theatre, Torquay; 6 Oct, Pavilion, Weymouth; 8 Oct, Pavilion, Bournemouth; 10 Oct, City Hall, Hull; 11 Oct, City Hall, Sheffield; 12 Oct, Prince Of Wales Theatre, Cannock; 20 Oct, Royal Hippodrome, Eastbourne; 27 Oct, Embassy Theatre, Skegness; 15 Nov, The Castle Wellingborough

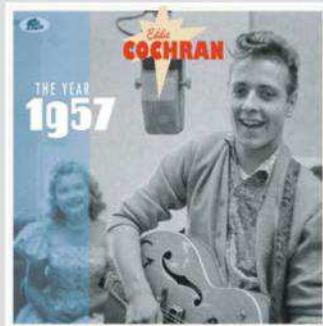
BOOKING www.billyfurystory.com

ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK!

EDDIE COCHRAN THE YEAR 1957

CD digipac with 52-page booklet •
30 tracks • 72 min.
BEAR FAMILY RECORDS BCD 17554

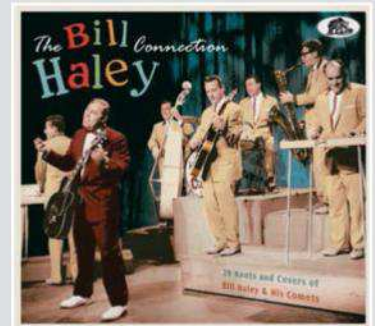
10-Inch Vinyl • Gatefold cover with
24-page booklet • 20 tracks
BEAR FAMILY RECORDS BAF2 14005



- His 1957 LIBERTY sessions, re-issued on CD and double 10" vinyl
- Based on the original 'Singing To My Baby' album with additional tracks for enhanced listening pleasure.
- Both formats come with fabulously illustrated booklets.
- Feat. liner notes by Bill Dahl, a full 1957 discography and a whole lot of great pictures shot during the recording sessions.

THE BILL HALEY CONNECTION

CD digipac with 52-page booklet •
29 tracks • 74 min.
BEAR FAMILY RECORDS BCD 17531



- A smart compilation with the songs that inspired Bill Haley – plus: the most important cover versions of his classics!
- 1938 - 1959 recordings, from Rock 'n' Roll and R&B to Pop songs.
- Feat. Count Basie, Jimmy Preston, Big Joe Turner, Faye Adams, Little Richard, and many others.
- Comprehensive booklet with artist biographies and discographic information by Chris Gardner.

www.bear-family.com

SPECIALIST ROCK & POP AUCTIONEERS THE NO 1 AUCTION HOUSE WORLDWIDE FOR VINYL AND THE FASTEST GROWING FOR MEMORABILIA



REGULAR SPECIALIST AUCTIONS OF RARE & COLLECTABLE VINYL AND MUSIC MEMORABILIA PLUS ONE OFF SPECIALIST SALES. IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO SELL A SINGLE ITEM OR ENTIRE COLLECTION OUR NO. 1 PRIORITY IS TO ENSURE YOU GET THE BEST POSSIBLE PRICE. GENRES INCLUDE ROCK, PROG, PSYCH, INDIE, PUNK, ROCK N ROLL, JAZZ, FOLK, BLUES, NORTHERN SOUL, SOUL, DISCO, MOTOWN, FUNK & MORE... TO INCLUDE LPs, 7", 12", ACETATES, DEMOS, POSTERS, PROGRAMMES, TICKETS, STAGE CLOTHING, INSTRUMENTS, AWARDS, SIGNED ITEMS, PHOTOGRAPHS, PERSONAL EFFECTS, DOCUMENTS AND MORE...

WE ACCEPT CONSIGNMENTS WORLDWIDE

TUESDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER: ROCK & POP MEMORABILIA | WEDNESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER: RARE & COLLECTABLE VINYL RECORDS



Chris Montez rocked his way into the Top 5 on both sides of the Atlantic in 1962 with his single *Let's Dance*

Scott Dudelson/Getty Images

Chris Montez

From going to school with Brian Wilson to touring with The Beatles via a meeting with pop idol Ritchie Valens, Ezequiel Christopher Montanez has lived an extraordinary rock'n'roll life

WORDS BY JOHN HOWARD

Chris Montez landed on the rock'n'roll map courtesy of his 1962 million seller *Let's Dance*, but constant touring has kept the affable Mexican-American there. Fit, healthy, still with a full head of black hair, the 75-year-old could pass for someone 30 years younger. *Vintage Rock* caught up with him during one of his visits to Spain.

Is Chris Montez your real name?

I was born Ezequiel Christopher Montanez in Hawthorne a suburb of Los Angeles. Everyone called me Zeke, but my first record company didn't think that worked for a future rock'n'roll sensation.

How did you start in the business?

I grew up playing guitar with my brothers, a more traditional music known as

ranchera. But I loved early rock'n'roll. R&B music was popular with Hispanic Americans long before Bill Haley arrived.

Where did you attend school?

In Hawthorne. One of my classmates was Brian Wilson, later of The Beach Boys. When he told me he was going to call his group The Beach Boys, I thought that was funny. I was the surfer, not him. I used to spend as much time on the beach, in the water, as I could. I used to play occasionally with Brian and his brothers.

I believe Ritchie Valens was a big influence on your formative years...

Indeed, he was. Ritchie was hugely popular, and I actually got to meet him. He was playing a local hop which was sold out and I was in the back and I couldn't see

anything, but I could hear the music which was good enough for me. I turned and found he was standing next to me. He was incredibly pleasant and polite. I decided there and then that if I ever became an artist, I would treat my fans in the way Ritchie treated me. I remember when Elvis broke through he was dubbed The King of Rock'n'Roll. I thought, how can that be? Ritchie Valens is the King of Rock'n'Roll.

When did you first record?

I saved up \$25 that bought me half an hour of studio time to make a demo record. I was proud of it, but didn't expect to do anything with it. My first release was called *All You Had To Do Was Tell Me* which I wrote, and it did well locally.

Did you write *Let's Dance*?

No, that was one of my producers, Jim Lee. I'd never been out of Los Angeles before *Let's Dance*. I toured all over the States on package shows for Dick Clark, and appeared on his TV show *Bandstand*. Then I went to England for the first time in 1963.

Didn't you have some interesting support on that tour?

Do you mean Tommy Roe? (Laughs) I know you are referring to that new group The Beatles. I experienced Beatlemania first-hand, the girls were trying to tear their clothes off... and mine, too! I got along very well with them. I have toured the UK many times since then and I always enjoy returning. In fact, I have been recording recently in Britain, some new songs including one I particularly like entitled *Leicester Girl*.

After your initial success with hot rockers like *Let's Dance* and *Some Kinda Fun* we next heard you on ballads like *Call Me* and *The More I See You...* What happened?

Although I had chart hits, I made very little money in terms of royalties and I was a little disillusioned with the record business. So when Herb Alpert, from A&M Records approached me to record for him, initially I turned him down. However, I was persuaded to sign for him, and he had this idea for me to record softer material. Personally, I'd have preferred to continue singing rock'n'roll, but, commercially he was right and I found a whole new audience. At my live shows now, it's all rock'n'roll, so I got my way in the end! ★

“I experienced Beatlemania first-hand, the girls were trying to tear their clothes off... and mine, too!”

Sleazy RECORDS PRESENTS:

the ROCKIN' RACE Jamboree

7-8-9-10
FEBRUARY 2019

25TH
ANNIVERSARY

THE BLASTERS JOHNNY KNIGHT (MR R&R GUITAR)

THE ORIGINAL PLANET ROCKERS THE PALADINS

LOS STRAITJACKETS FEAT. JD MCPHERSON

HOT BOOGIE CHILLUN JOHNNY TEDESCO

DALE WATSON FEAT. CELINE LEE PAT CAPOCCI

DEKE DICKERSON & HIS SPECIAL SHOW

THE PHANTOM SURFERS SPRAGUE BROTHERS

WALTER BROES & THE MERCENARIES MITCH POLZAK

SMOKESTACK LIGHTNIN' DRY RIVERBED TRIO

SARAH VISTA DAVE PHILLIPS & THE HOT ROD GANG

BABE MILLER EDDIE & THE HEAD-STARTS LOS TORONTOS

PORTUGUESE PEDRO & HIS BAND THE NUT JUMPERS

THE KABOOMS MIKE BELL & THE BELLTONES

EDDIE ANGEL'S GUITAR PARTY THE RADIONS

& MORE TO COME

2 SURPRISE BANDS
+ MIKE HILLMAN & HIS LATIN HILLBILLIES

THE MISSING BAND OF 1ST
ROCKIN RACE JAMBOREE

PLUS

THE DASH

1/8 MILE CLASSIC CAR SPRINT

WITH CAR SHOW, FOOD TRUCKS & VENDORS!
ORGANIZED BY COAST CLASSICS

TOP INTERNATIONAL DJS

- SILVIA
- TALL MARK
- STEVE STACK-O-WAX
- BE BOP KAZ
- BATMAN
- ROB'S BIG BEAT
- ALEX
- POOLY



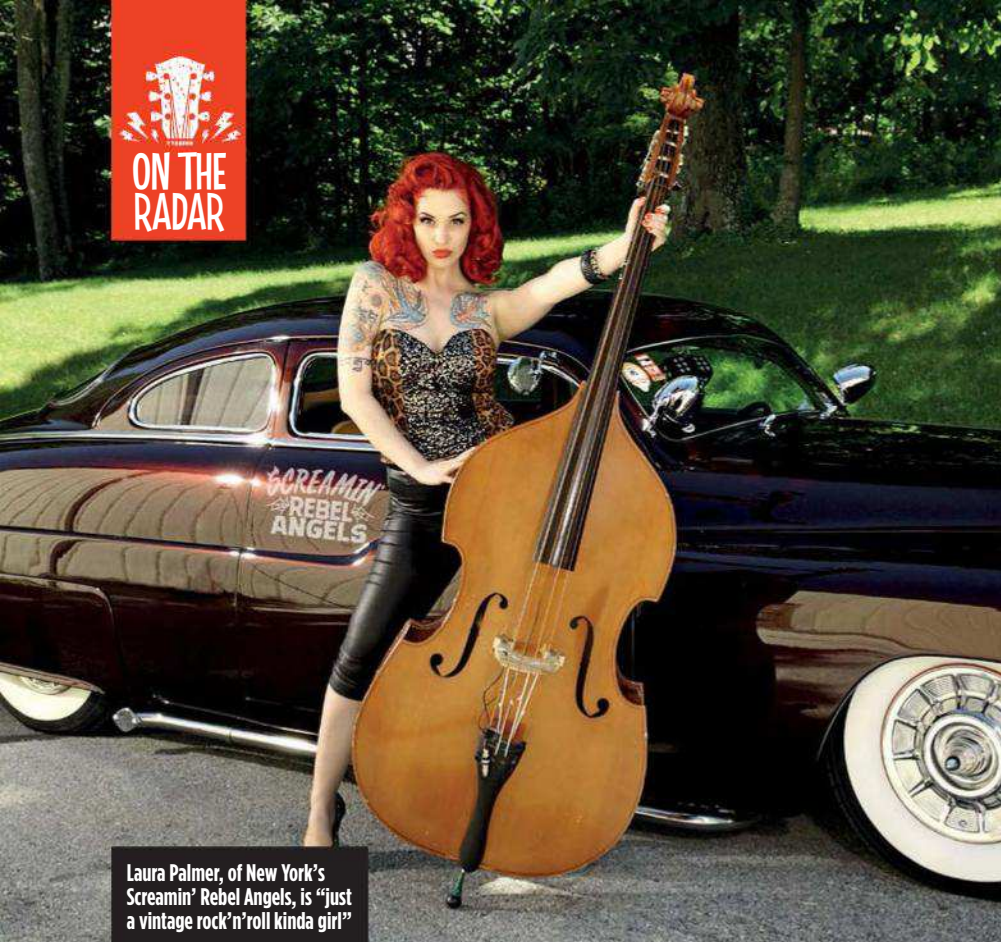
Torremolinos
AYUNTAMIENTO

AUDITORIO
PRINCIPE DE ASTURIAS
HOTEL
LA BARRACUDA

COSTA DEL SOL
TORREMOLINOS
MALAGA (SPAIN)

More booking info at: WWW.ROCKINRACE.COM

ART: IÑAKI LÓPEZ



Laura Palmer, of New York's Screamin' Rebel Angels, is "just a vintage rock'n'roll kinda girl"

Screamin' Rebel Angels

From classical violin to high octane rockabilly and garage rock, Laura Palmer leads her Screamin' Rebel Angels to rockin' heaven, pausing only for a music history lesson.

WORDS BY DAVID WEST

Laura Palmer, queen bee of New York's Screamin' Rebel Angels, took a roundabout route to rock'n' roll. She studied classical piano, flute and violin as a kid, travelling and performing with the Manhattan School Of Music, before picking up a guitar and learning her first power chord. "I've had the rock'n'roll disease ever since! Music makes me feel connected, and alive and I can't imagine not doing it," says Palmer who's still a multi-instrumentalist, playing upright bass and guitar and singing too. "At the base of it all, I'm just a vintage rock'n'roll kinda girl."

What first inspired you to start playing music?

In short, being a lonely little kid isolated in rural Pennsylvania with no friends or neighbours my age, an old out-of-tune piano in the basement, a beat-up guitar in the corner, and a dad who could play anything by ear. Music is and was my

comfort and best friend, next to my dog of course. But my dog passed last year, after I spent three years caring for him, which is why I didn't tour or write a new record, and now I have the bandwidth again to tour and write Screamin' Rebel Angels music.

Do you consider yourself a traditionalist, musically-speaking?

We interpret traditions for a modern audience, and I try to capture the energy and intensity of original era rock'n'roll and R&B in our delivery and songwriting. There is a certain authenticity that comes

"Music is and was my comfort and best friend, next to my dog of course..."

with giving yourself the freedom to play what comes straight out of your gut, and not ascribing rules to follow in the writing and recording process. Rock'n'roll is about breaking rules, not following them. I also love to read about our collective musical history, I devour as many books and documentaries as I can.

So you have a good sense of history?

Yeah, I've recently been digging into the Field Recordings the Lomaxes did for the Library of Congress and trying to explore the roots of American Music from a Folklorists perspective. It's really a mind-blowing moment when you start to make the connections of how music evolved in the United States with the confluence of cultures and communities. You start to see links that are so obvious, you wonder how you missed them.

For instance, the contributions that Native Americans made to rock'n'roll, which are really overlooked, from the four-on-the-floor beat, to Charley Patton, Link Wray, the jazz of New Orleans. Rock'n'roll would not be the same without these contributions.

Any plans for a new album?

Yes! We are releasing a new album for autumn 2018, just in time for a Canadian, UK and European tour. It's been five years since we released our first full-length record *Hitch Hike* and I can't wait for everyone to hear how we have grown as a band. When I started the band, I was on guitar, and now I have been playing upright bass, so for this record I'm excited to be playing multiple instruments on some of the tracks, including guitar, upright bass, fiddle, keys, and I might add some primitive drumming here and there."

That all sounds high tech and polished. How is the new material shaping up?

Our last albums were all recorded straight on to two-inch tape, completely analogue, but there are certain limitations in that which I don't feel will serve the new songs by being so rigid. It's exciting and it takes me out of my comfort zone, but I think that's needed in order to push yourself to create something new. Brian [Hack, lead guitar] has been experimenting with genres and instrumentation over the years, so I am really excited to see where this all is leading! ★

For further information visit screaminrebelangels.com.





ACE CAFE LONDON



HOT ROD NIGHT

THE BULLTOWN BOYS

DJ LITTLE CARL

6PM – 11PM

ENTRY FREE

WEDNESDAY 4TH JULY



Ace Cafe London

Ace Corner, North Circular Road
Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD

TEL 020 8961 1000

london.acecafe.com
acecafe.com

GOOD GODD I'M BACK!

WORDS BY RANDY FOX

After turning his back on rock'n'roll to spread the word of God, Little Richard made a dramatic return in the early 60s. *Vintage Rock* celebrates the second coming of His Majesty...

In the early 60s, Little Richard was at the second major crossroads of his life.

In 1958 he had made the decision to walk away from money, fame and rock'n'roll to pursue a life in the ministry with his Little Richard Evangelistic Team.

He was primarily faithful to his promise – attending seminary school, forming an evangelical crusade, preaching sermons and recording gospel music for a variety of record labels. In 1962 he accepted an offer to tour the UK under the assumption he would perform only gospel. His attitude quickly changed once he found himself in competition with soul music heartthrob Sam Cooke on the same tour, and after he witnessed the eagerness of British audiences for rock'n'roll.

In October 1963, he returned to the UK fully prepared to rock the house, but kept the nature of the tour a secret from his family. After five weeks of touring with the Everly Brothers, Bo Diddley, and a new British group, The Rolling Stones, Little Richard closed out the tour with a triumphant performance at Granada Television's Manchester studio, whipping the audience of British teens and Teddy Boys into an excited frenzy.

Little Richard headed back to the States and within a few weeks he chose his path. The "true" King of Rock'n'Roll was ready to make his return. The first step was a call to his old boss, Art Rupe at Specialty Records.

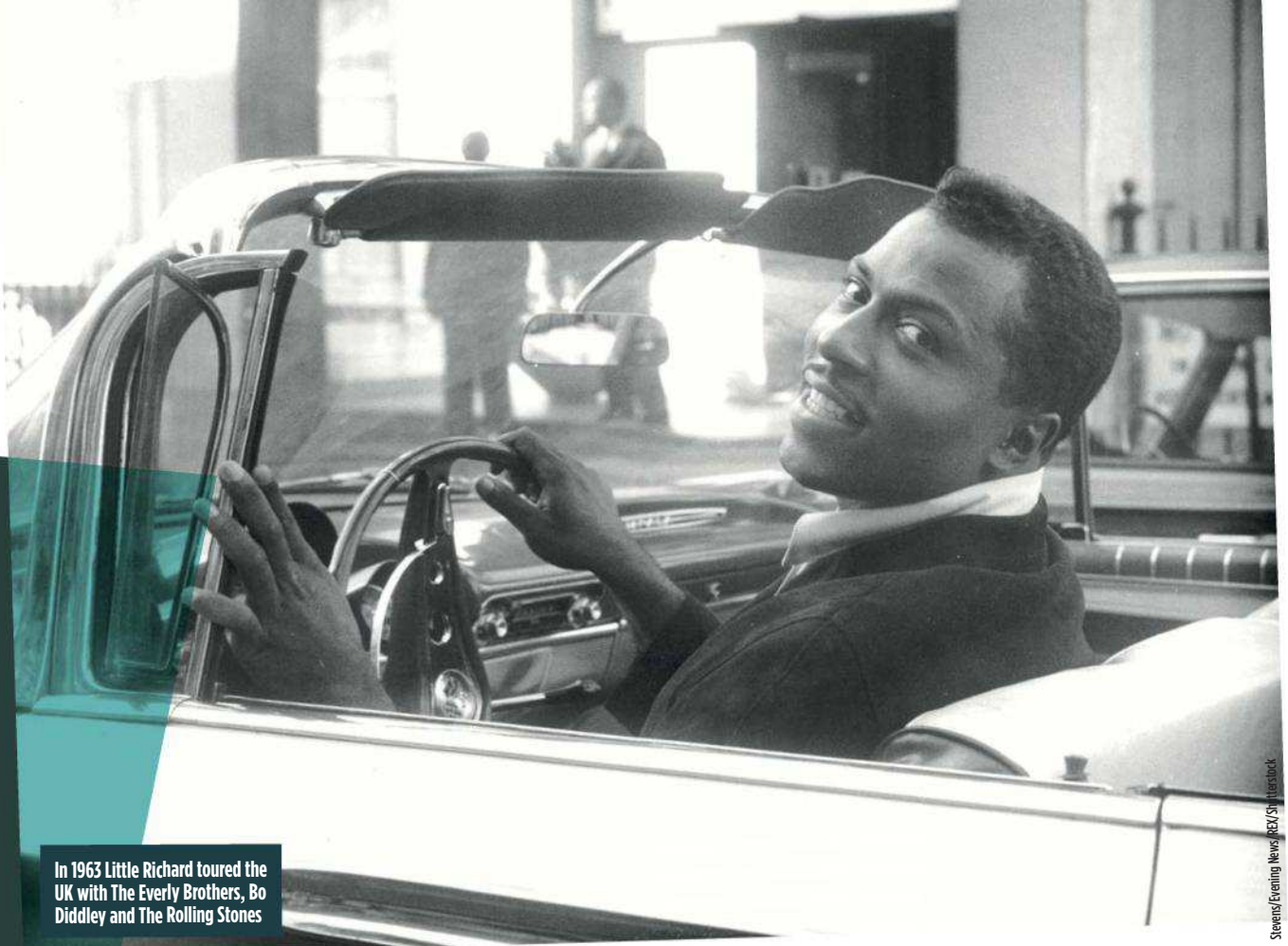
Tiring of the music business, Rupe had effectively quit producing new music for Specialty Records in 1960, releasing only reissues of older material. ➔



Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

Having scored hits with tracks like *Tutti Frutti*, *Long Tall Sally* and *Good Golly, Miss Molly*, Little Richard left rock 'n' roll behind in 1958, before an offer to tour the UK tempted him to rip it up again

In 1963, Little Richard was fully prepared to rock the house... The "true" King of Rock'n'Roll was ready to make his return!



Stevens/Evening News/REX/Shutterstock

In 1963 Little Richard toured the UK with The Everly Brothers, Bo Diddley and The Rolling Stones

He agreed to restart the label for one more single at Little Richard's request. In May 1964, Little Richard returned to the studio with a band, including Glen Willings on guitar, Earl Palmer on drums, and former Specialty stars Don & Dewey (Don "Sugarcane" Harris and Dewey Terry) on bass and guitar. The resulting single, *Bama Lama Bama Loo*, was a frantic return to the spirit of Little Richard's 50s hits, while also updating sonic form by exchanging honking saxophones for hot electric guitars. Little Richard was confident the single would take him roaring up the charts.

Unfortunately, just as the single was released in April 1964, the US radio waves were conquered by The Beatles and a host of other British rockers – the same musicians in awe of Little Richard during his UK tours. *Bama Lama Bama Loo* struggled to No.82 on both the R&B and pop charts. Ironically, it fared better in the UK, rising to No.20. Despite its anemic domestic performance, an offer from Vee-Jay Records meant Little Richard was determined to try again.

Back in business

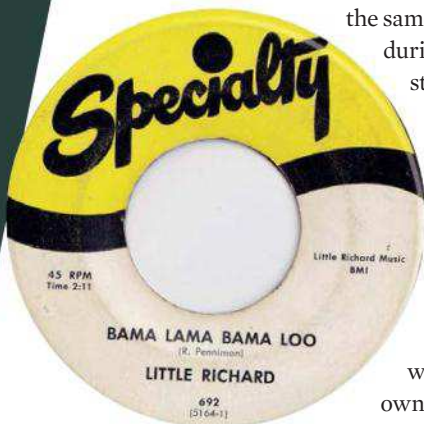
Founded in 1953, Vee-Jay Records was one of a handful of African-American owned record labels during the 50s. Scoring big with a string of blues, R&B, and rock'n'roll

US teens were in the grip of British beat fever and had little interest in a "has been"

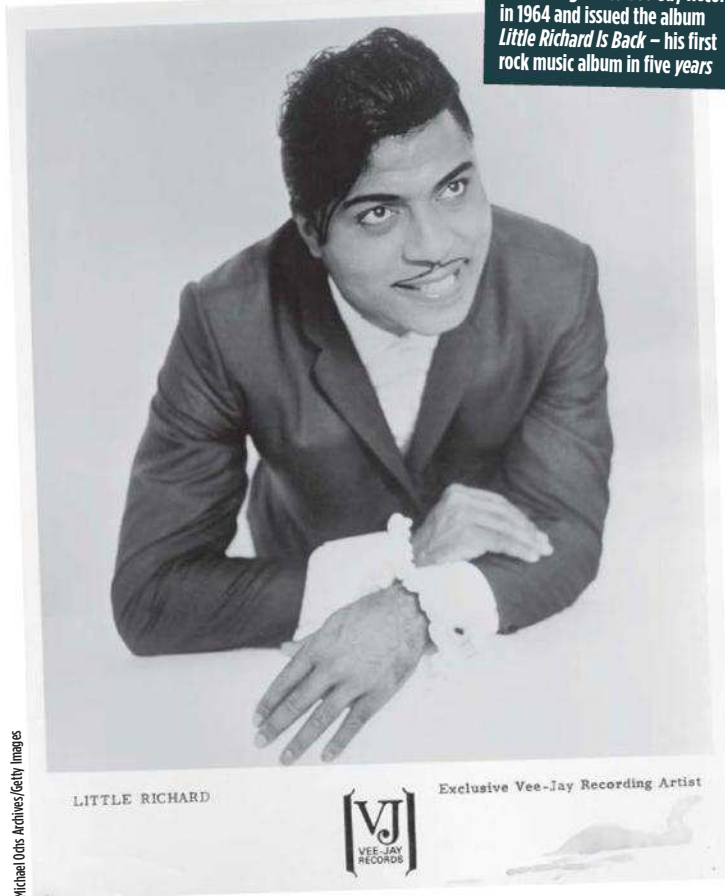
hits, Vee-Jay became one of the largest independent labels in the US by the beginning of the 60s – racking up big hits with acts like the Four Seasons and Jerry Butler, and securing the US rights to the first Beatles album. Despite huge successes, the label was on hard

times by 1964. Little Richard had no knowledge of the behind the scenes financial problems and was eager and excited about recording rock'n'roll again.

In June 1964, he cut 12 songs for his first Vee-Jay album, *Little Richard Is Back (And There's A Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On!)*. Released in August 1964, the album crackles and sparks with the same exuberant and flamboyant energy that marked the best of Little Richard's Specialty recordings. Opening with an evangelical rock'n'roll altar call referencing his recent British tour, Little Richard launches a blistering version of Jerry Lee Lewis' hit *Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On*. He then follows with



Richard signed to Vee-Jay Records in 1964 and issued the album *Little Richard Is Back* – his first rock music album in five years



constant touring during the latter portion of 1964. Despite that problem, some of the hastily recorded remakes popped with energy and verve, but re-visiting past glories instead of creating new ones was plainly the wrong course.

Between January and May 1965, Little Richard returned to studio several times, cutting new material for Vee-Jay and demonstrating a focused effort update his sound. Because of the chaos at Vee-Jay much of this material sat unreleased for months or even years.

One highlight appeared in October 1965. *I Don't Know What You've Got But It's Got Me – Parts I & 2* was a brilliant slice of deep Southern soul stretching across two sides of a 45. Written

by soul star Don Covay and featuring beautiful, bluesy guitar work from a young Jimi Hendrix (billing himself as “Maurice James”), the single hit No.12 on the soul chart and crossed over to No.92 on *Billboard's* Hot 100.

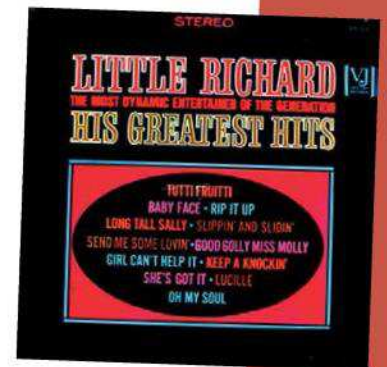
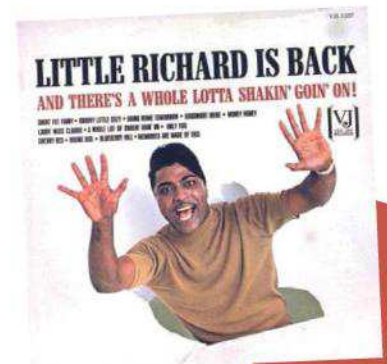
While Little Richard had returned to the charts, a strong follow-up was in order. Instead, he soon lacked a contract courtesy of Vee-Jay's ongoing financial problems and eventual bankruptcy. Signing with Modern Records

in December 1965, Little Richard was still burning bright on the concert trail and in the studio, but there was little hope of success at Modern.

Launched in Los Angeles in 1945, Modern Records was one of the major R&B labels of

the 50s, scoring big hits by BB King, Etta James, the Flairs and others. By 1965 Modern's days as a hit maker were in the rearview mirror. The majority of the label's business was low-cost LPs for the bargain bin market. Even though Modern released three outstanding singles by Little Richard in 1966, their main goal was recording enough new material to release bargain-priced albums to be sold at discount stores, drugstores, and corner markets.

Little Richard was still burning bright on the concert trail and in the studio





By the late 60s, Richard had well and truly returned to the decadent showbiz lifestyle he had turned his back on in 1957

Echoes/Reformers/Getty Images

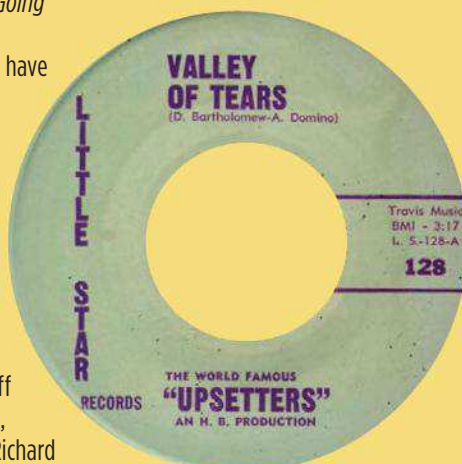
I'M IN LOVE AGAIN... THE "SECRET" COMEBACK LITTLE RICHARD RECORDINGS

After Little Richard's departure from rock'n'roll in 1957, his band The Upsetters continued touring – playing Little Richard's songs along with new material. Between 1958 and 1960 the group cut one-off singles for the Falcon, Gee and Fire labels with little success. In 1962 they recorded three singles for producer H.B. Barnum's Little Star label. Hoping for a hit, the band persuaded Little Richard to join them in the studio, and he did so under the condition that his contributions remain anonymous.

Released in July 1962, The Upsetters' first Little Star single 'Tater Machine' backed with *Let's Get A Thing Going* delivered a pair of hot R&B instrumentals. Although many have suggested that Little Richard played on the record, there's little evidence that he did so. That wasn't the case for The Upsetters' next release. In December 1962, the group delivered a pair of Fats Domino covers – *I'm In Love Again* and *Everynight About This Time*. From the opening riff on the piano to the first vocals, there's little doubt that Little Richard

was back with all of his trademark energy and vocal gymnastics.

The Upsetters third and final Little Star single, *Valley Of Tears* backed with *Freedom Ride*, appeared in early 1963. Cut at the same session as *I'm In Love Again*, it also had the indelible mark of Little Richard upon it as he and the band tear through another Fats Domino cover along with turning in a fine R&B instrumental on the B-side. Although it would be almost two years before Little Richard fully returned to rockin', the Little Star recordings show that he had lost none of his edge and energy.



Little Richard's first Modern album, *The Incredible Little Richard Sings His Greatest Hits – Live!* was released in 1966 and fit the bill perfectly. Drawn from several nights of live recordings at the Domino Club in Atlanta, Georgia, along with one studio track, it was recorded quickly and cheaply with overdubbed applause to pump up the energy. Despite the low-rent production, Little Richard delivered a live set full of excitement.

The second Modern LP, *The Wild And Frantic Little Richard*, didn't appear until December 1967, almost a year after Little Richard left Modern. While it's a mixed bag, it's another example of Little Richard's talent and charisma triumphing over so-so material and lacklustre production. The album combined left over live material from the Domino Club recordings with several hot studio tracks cut at Sam Phillips Recording Studio in Memphis, like the Sam the Sham-style novelty tune *Holy Mackerel* and the self-aggrandising rocker, *I'm Back*.

Ultimately, Modern considered its association with Little Richard a success as various reissues of both albums populated bargain bins well into the 80s. When Modern's contract ran out at the end of 1966, Little Richard received an offer from Okeh Records, thanks largely to the efforts of his old friend and Specialty labelmate, Larry Williams. Williams began his career in the late 50s as a Little Richard-style rocker with a string of hits on Specialty. However, a 1960 drug dealing conviction brought his career to a halt, but after serving three years in prison, he returned to music, teamed up with guitarist Johnny "Guitar" Watson and was enjoying a moderate comeback on Okeh Records.

Soul lotta love

Little Richard's Okeh recordings proved to be an artistic game changer. Okeh was a subsidiary of Columbia Records, the largest record label in the US. With more money and promotional resources behind him, Little Richard had a new opportunity to adapt his music to the modern rock and soul sounds dominating the charts.

As producer, Williams put together a crack band, including Watson and two longtime members of Little Richard's road band – Glen Willings

Poor Dog (Who Can't Wag His Own Tail) was a perfect fusion of 60s soul "SOCK!" and Little Richard's rock-powered "POW!"



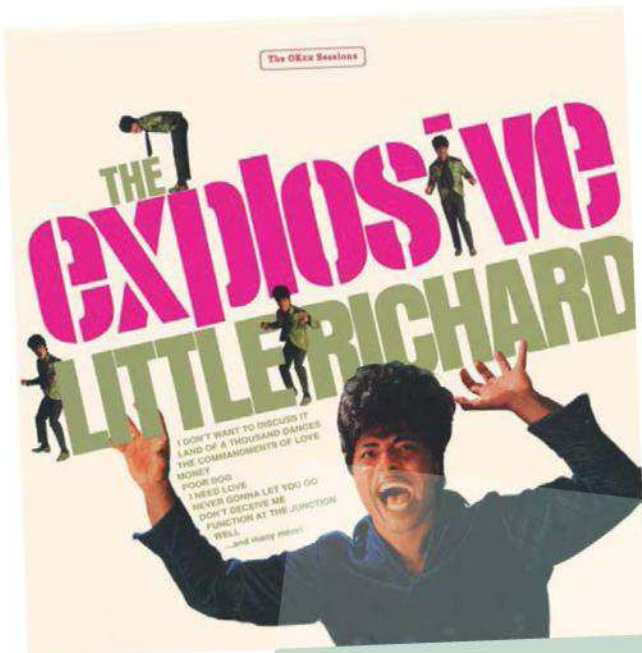
LITTLE RICHARD & THE BEATLES

BACK IN 1962, EVEN THE FAB FOUR WERE SUPPORT ACT TO ROCK'N'ROLL ROYALTY

It's no secret how huge an influence Little Richard was on The Beatles. All four Fabs were fans – throughout the Quarrymen/Beatles' existence, they played at least 11 Little Richard songs in live shows – but Paul McCartney was the keenest disciple.

"I could do Little Richard's voice, which is a wild, hoarse, screaming thing, it's like an out-of-body experience. You have to leave your current sensibilities and go about a foot above your head to sing it!" he remembered in his autobiography. McCartney liked Little Richard so much that he celebrated his last day of term at the Liverpool Institute in 1960 by taking in his guitar, climbing on a desk and singing his two party pieces, *Long Tall Sally* and *Tutti Frutti*.

On 12 October 1962, The Beatles even supported Richard at the Tower Ballroom, New Brighton, and had their picture taken with him. Two years, later, Richard was back on US TV being asked how come *he* knew the world's biggest stars.



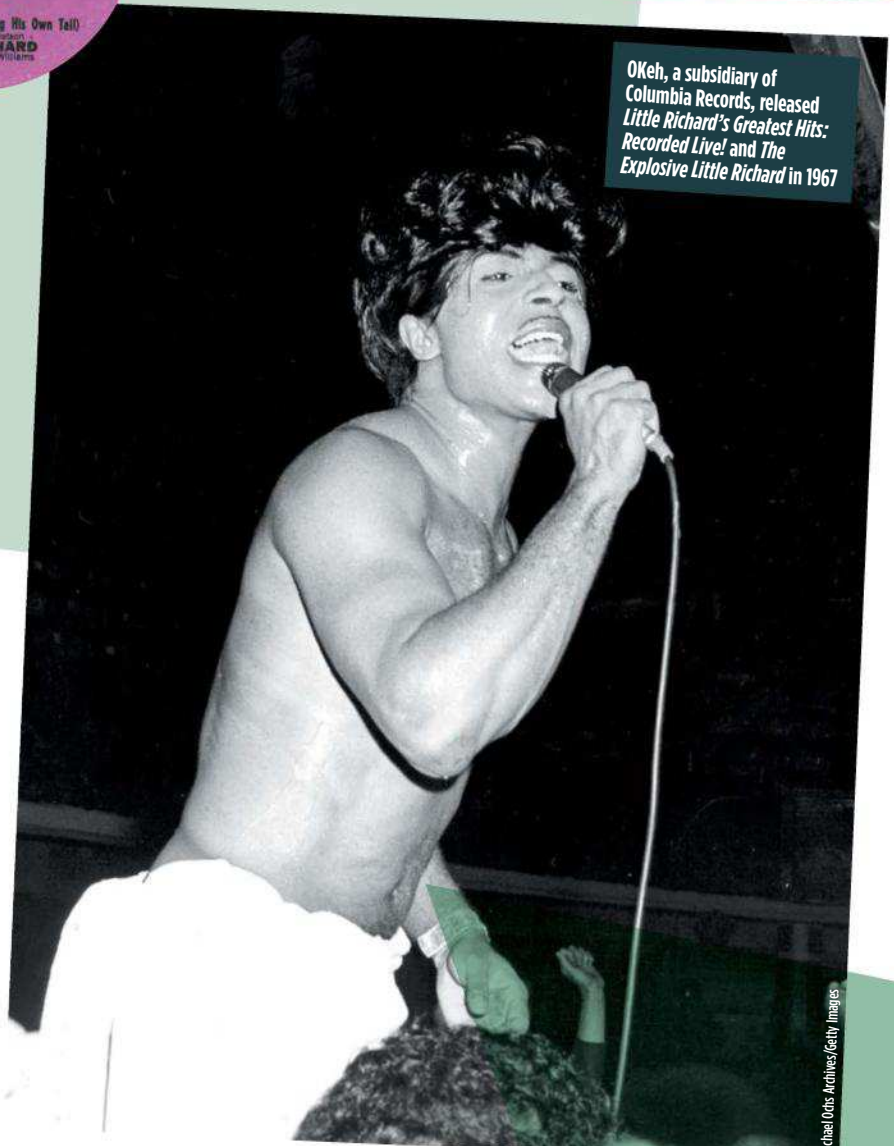
on guitar and Eddie Fletcher on bass. On 5 February 1966, the assembled group cut *Poor Dog (Who Can't Wag His Own Tail)*. Written by Williams and Watson for Little Richard, the brassy, horn-driven soul stomper was a perfect fusion of mid-60s soul "SOCK!" and Little Richard's rock-powered "POW!"



Released in June 1966, *Poor Dog (Who Can't Wag His Own Tail)* was paired with *Well All Right*, a supercharged rewrite of Sam Cooke's *It's All Right*. *Cash Box* (magazine) picked the single as a "Best Bet" and described it as a, "thumping, soulfilled, shouting tune." Quickly picking up airplay in several regional markets, it entered the R&B chart in late August, rising to No.41. In late August, Little Richard, Williams and the band returned to Columbia's Studio "D" in Los Angeles to cut tracks for an album. Recorded in three sessions, 30 August, 2 September and 15 September 1966, *The Explosive Little Richard* hit the racks in January 1967.

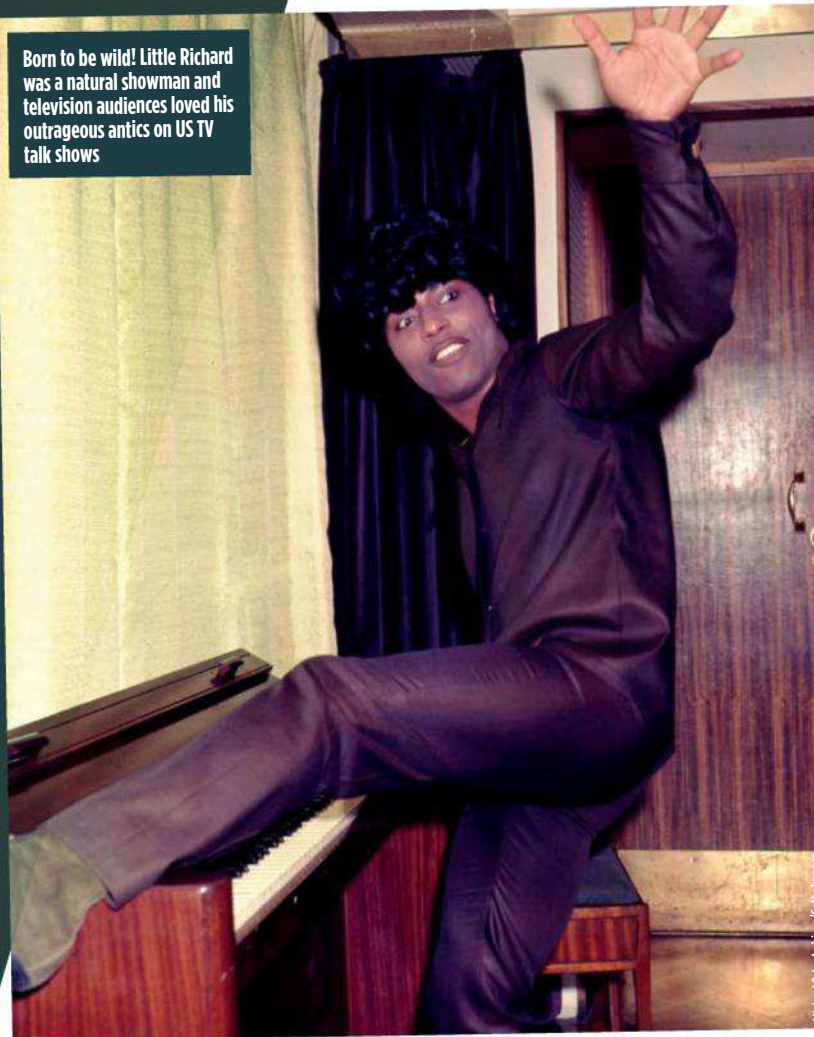
Opening with a smokin' cover of Bobby Marchan's *Get Down With It*, the album winds through 10 more tracks, mixing blistering, Little Richard-fied covers of big rock and soul hits (*Land Of A Thousand Dances*, *Money (That's What I Want)* and *Function At The Junction*) with new songs perfectly matched with Little Richard's strengths as both a rocker (*I Don't Want To Discuss It* and *I Need Love*) and as soul balladeer (*The Commandments Of Love* and *Never Gonna Let You Go*). The album was focused and unified, showcasing Little Richard's talents, charisma and personality in a way never before captured on one long player.

Despite the artistic triumph of *The Explosive Little Richard*, the album's sales fizzled, and Okeh considered returning to the tried and true method of re-recording hits. Fortunately, Larry Williams' presence at the production board yielded a slightly different approach. Williams added organist Billy

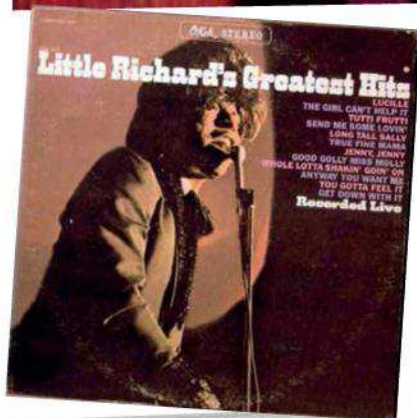


Okeh, a subsidiary of Columbia Records, released *Little Richard's Greatest Hits: Recorded Live!* and *The Explosive Little Richard* in 1967

Born to be wild! Little Richard was a natural showman and television audiences loved his outrageous antics on US TV talk shows



Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images



Preston to the studio band at Columbia's Studio "D" as well as a small audience. On 25 January 1967, Little Richard tore through a blistering live set of several of his Specialty recordings and a few new songs. Imaginative liner notes from KGFJ-Los Angeles DJ Jim "Doctor Soul" Witter discussing the ambiance of the imaginary "Club Okeh," were added to complete the illusion of a hot and frantic set delivered in a LA club, and the album was released as *Little Richard's Greatest Hits Recorded Live* in July 1967.

Reviewing the album in *Rolling Stone*, Ken Harris called it "...one of the few really exciting live rock and roll recordings on the market today." Fans responded, making it the first Little Richard album to chart since his 1957 debut LP – hitting No.28 in the UK.

Despite the moderate sale success, Okeh dropped Little Richard's contract in late 1967. Years later, after an acrimonious falling out with Larry Williams, Little Richard had few kind words about his Okeh recordings. In Charles White's book, *The Life And Times Of Little Richard: The Quasar Of Rock*, Little Richard claimed that he "tore up" his Okeh contract and said: "Larry Williams was the worst producer in the world. He wanted

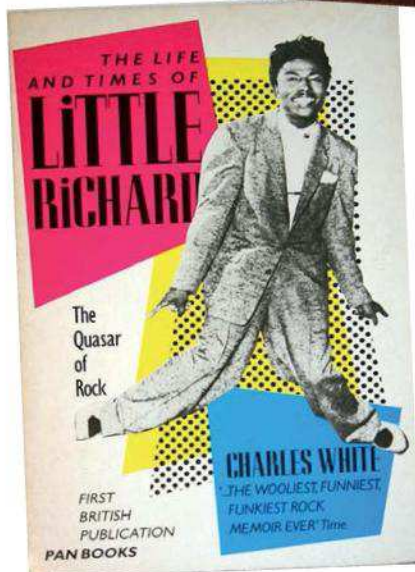
me to copy Motown and I was no Motown artist. They made me use their band, which was all trumpets. It got so I wanted to throw all the trumpets in the world in the river." Despite his disdain for the horn-powered soul sound of his Okeh recordings, Little Richard displayed no aversion to brass immediately after working with Larry Williams. In September 1967, the singer signed a one year contract with soul label Brunswick Records. The three singles he recorded over the next year doubled down on his commitment to the funk-soul sound with horn sections fully deployed on hot numbers like *Try Some Of Mine*, *Soul Train* and *Can I Count On You*.

None of Little Richard's Brunswick singles cracked the charts, and he again found himself without a recording contract in late 1968. For the next 18 months he continued the gruelling tour schedule he had maintained since returning to rock'n'roll in 1964 – pushing the flamboyant and campy style of his live shows to new heights and sliding further in the decadent showbiz lifestyle he had repudiated in 1957. Despite the toll his new life was taking on his health and spiritual commitment, show biz flash provided the path out of his creative cul-de-sac.

On 22 September 1969, Little Richard appeared on the nationally syndicated *Della Reese Show*. With his outrageous, over-the-top performance style and flamboyant persona, Little Richard was a natural for television and audiences loved him. What had been scandalous to adults in Middle America in the 50s, captivated a new generation of grown-ups remembering Little Richard from their youth.

In February 1970, he appeared on *The Dick Cavett Show* on the ABC network and offers for more talk show bookings began to pour in. With newfound attention focused on Little Richard, he approached his friend Mo Ostin, head of Warner Brothers Records about a new recording deal. Ostin quickly signed him to Warner's Reprise imprint. Little Richard was determined to take advantage of the new opportunity. Booking time at celebrated FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, Little Richard produced the sessions himself, mixing his band members with members of the renowned FAME Rhythm Section. The result was *The Rill Thing*, a Southern soul-funk-country-rock masterpiece.

**WITH HIS
OUTRAGEOUS STYLE
AND FLAMBOYANT
PERSONA, LITTLE
RICHARD WAS A
NATURAL FOR TV**



King of rock'n'roll

Released in August 1970, the album garnered rave reviews and the debut single, *Freedom Blues*, co-written by Little Richard and Esquerita, hit No.28 R&B and No.47 pop, making it his highest charting single since 1958. With high hopes, Reprise released a second single, *Greenwood, Mississippi* and highly promoted the album, but neither the second single nor the album managed to dent the charts. Nevertheless, the album was one of Little Richard's proudest achievements. Subsequent generations recognised its charm with the title track of the LP, the deep groove instrumental, *The Rill Thing*, becoming a favourite of hip-hop artists, sampling it on countless records.

Despite the disappointing album sales, Little Richard's profile continued rising as he became a regular on TV talk shows, often appearing with the cream of Hollywood glitterati. His increasing popularity as a TV personality also boosted his reputation as a live performer, leading to bookings at larger and better paying venues.

In May 1971, he gave it another go, recording his next album in Hollywood with soul and pop producer HB Barnum at the board.

Released in October 1971, *The King Of Rock And Roll* put the funk and country elements on the back burner, and moved the campier elements of Little Richard's rock'n'roll persona to the forefront. The result was a fun, yet definitely "fluffier" record than its predecessor. Many of Little Richard's diehard fans loved the country soul grit groove of *The Rill Thing* and were disappointed. Writing in *Rolling Stone*, Vince Aletti said: "Much of the album seems designed around the talk show personality rather than the singer, giving it the sticky veneer of a jive extravaganza." In terms of sales, the campy Little Richard proved even less successful than the deep soul brother, as *The King Of Rock And Roll* barely dented the charts at No.193 and the sole single from the album, *Green Power*, missed the charts entirely.

For his third Reprise album, *The Second Coming*, Little Richard turned to his old producer "Bumps" Blackwell. Looking for a sweet spot between retro and modern, Blackwell recruited several young rock musicians and took a more back-to-basics approach in terms of material. Released in September 1972, the album failed to please almost everyone and didn't dent the charts. With time, the album's critical reputation has improved but is hampered by overproduction with Little Richard's powerhouse performances often buried in the mix.

In May 1972, four months before the release of *The Second Coming*, Little Richard and Bumps Blackwell returned to the studio to cut material for a fourth Reprise album. The next album, *Southern Child*, was completed and ready for release when Reprise cut their losses and shelved it. The "lost" record was eventually released in 2005 as part

On 27 October 1969, Little Richard appeared alongside Claudine Longet on the *This Is Tom Jones* TV show where he performed *Lucille* and *As Time Goes By*



Donaldson Collection/Getty Images

LITTLE RICHARD'S ODDS AND ENDS

Although Little Richard was officially without a record contract from 1973 to 1976, he recorded three excellent one-off singles that remain some of his most obscure recordings. *In The Middle Of The Night* and *Where I Will Find A Place To Sleep This Evening* were two beautiful gospel-infused soul ballads written by Jimmy Holiday. Produced by Charles Greene for his Greene Mountain Record Company label and released in June 1973, the single sank into undeserved obscurity quickly.

Released in 1975, *Call My Name* b/w *Steal Miss Liza* (*Steal Liza Jane*) features Little Richard in full funk mode with a pair of self-penned songs. Released by Manticore Records, the label owned by prog rock group Emerson, Lake & Palmer, the B-side was originally recorded by Little Richard in 1971 following the sessions for *The Rill Thing* album, but that version remained unreleased until 2005.

Try To Help Your Brother backed with the instrumental *Funk Proof* was another shot of funk-powered get down music that appeared in 1975. Both songs were

written by co-producer Keith Winslow.

Released on Bob Shad's Mainstream Records label, it was yet another excellent Little Richard single that deserved more exposure than it received.





At FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, Little Richard worked with songwriter and producer Robert "Bumps" Blackwell (centre) and producer/studio owner Rick Hall (right), as well as members of the renowned FAME Rhythm Section, to record *The Rill Thing*

HIS INCREASING POPULARITY AS A TV PERSONALITY ALSO BOOSTED HIS REPUTATION AS A LIVE PERFORMER...

For the next three years, Little Richard continued touring while his lifestyle swirled out of control. In 1976 he recorded yet another set of "Greatest Hits" remakes for the TV marketed-record label K-Tel and left rock'n'roll for the second time. As he recalled in a 1985 interview for the British television network Channel 4 programme *The Tube*: "I gave up rock and roll in 1976. I had a lot of death in my family, my brother fell dead, he had a heart attack, he was 32 years old. I had another friend who got shot in the head, another friend of mine got cut up with a butcher knife, another friend of mine had a heart attack, then my mother died. Then my nephew shot himself in the head, and so I decided I would just give my life to being an evangelist."

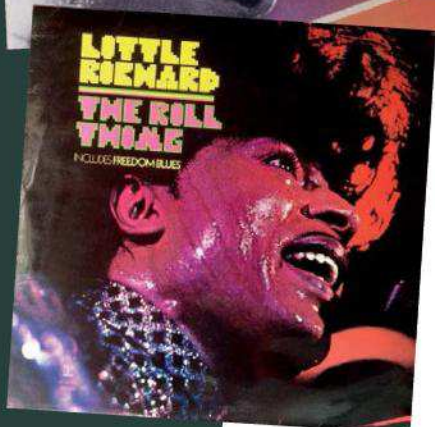
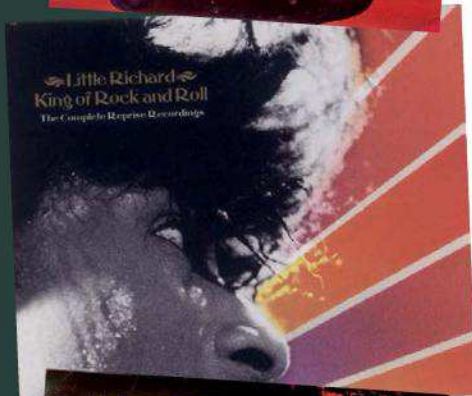
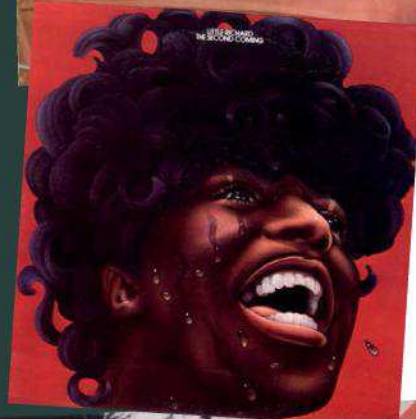
Little Richard eventually returned to rock'n'roll in the mid-80s, at last finding a balance between serving the Lord and the temptations of rock'n'roll. Although they are often overlooked and unjustly disparaged, Little Richard's 1964 to 1976 recordings are a fascinating treasure trove for fans of rock'n'roll at its finest. ★

of the Rhino Handmade boxset, *King Of Rock And Roll: The Complete Reprise Recordings*.

After leaving Reprise in late 1972, Little Richard appeared in the documentary/concert film *Let The Good Times Roll*, delivering a scorching live set, filling one side of the film's 2LP soundtrack album released by Bell Records. As demand for live appearances increased, he abandoned recording with one notable exception. As he explained to Charles White: "We were about to start a tour and we needed some money. So Robert "Bumps" Blackwell and me got a deal for one album with an advance of \$10,000 from (Modern Records). We went into the studio and did it in one night."

Recorded in January 1973 at FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals, *Right Now!* proved to be the purest expression of Little Richard's talents since *The Rill Thing*. Simply recorded with no commercial aspirations, Little Richard's raw talent was on display as he runs through eight perfect examples of gritty Southern soul.

Released in early 1974 on Modern's "United" imprint, the album went straight to the bargain bins, supplying many Little Richard fans a treasury of great music for only \$2.98.



**WHAT HAD BEEN
SCANDALOUS TO
ADULTS IN MIDDLE
AMERICA IN THE 50S,
CAPTIVATED A NEW
GENERATION**



Rock'n'roll royalty: Little Richard's 1971 album, *The King Of Rock And Roll*, brought the campier elements of the singer's rock'n'roll persona to the forefront

Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

JERRY LEE LEWIS

SHAKE UP THE WORLD

WORDS BY
WILLIAM
BROWNING

JW Brown was bassist, also later manager, of Jerry Lee Lewis when the Ferriday Fireball exploded on to the rock'n'roll scene in 1957 with *Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On*. In a rare interview, 91-year-old Brown candidly recalls the wildness and unpredictable nature of his cousin The Killer as the rocket-ride to fame began.

The name JW Brown may not be well known, but what we know as rock'n'roll might sound a whole lot different without him.

Jay 'JW' Brown, an aspiring musician, left his home near

Memphis one day during the autumn of 1956, heading for Louisiana, where he hoped to find a young, piano-playing cousin of his and convince him to pursue a music career in Memphis. He found him in a juke joint and talked it over with him. A little while later, the young cousin moved in with Brown. His name was Jerry Lee Lewis. As Brown, now 91, is fond

of saying: "And that's when all hell broke loose."

Within a year, Lewis went from a country boy with raw talent to a rock superstar, and Brown had a front-row seat to the transformation. As bassist, he took part in more than a dozen recording sessions at Sun Records — including playing on the classic version of *Whole* ➔

"MY GRANDMOTHER SAID: 'JAY, ARE YOU GOING TO SEE JERRY? I'M TELLING YOU. THAT BOY WILL RUIN YOUR LIFE'. I GUESS HE HAD ALWAYS BEEN WILD"



The Killer goes wild in New York in 1958 alongside his cousin, father-in-law and bass player JW Brown

Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

Lotta Shakin' Going On – and toured extensively with Lewis. Brown also played with him during his TV debut on *The Steve Allen Show* in the summer of 1957. A scandal came later that year when Lewis married Brown's teenage daughter, Myra Gale. Though initially at odds over the marriage, Brown and Lewis eventually worked their

differences out and continued playing together, off-and-on, for more than half a century. They last performed together in 2010. That same year, Brown self-published *Whole Lotta Shakin'*, a memoir of his early years with Lewis.

Wanting to know more about Brown's extraordinary life, I travelled to Georgia and spent some time with him. Brown is known by some as the “world's oldest rock'n'roller”, and he still performs live occasionally. His fame as a bassist is also considerable: he was the first to play a Fender Precision electric bass on national US TV, and that itself was hugely influential. He is a kind man full of good humour, and over the course of two hours, he sipped an afternoon beer and told about his involvement in the early days of rock'n'roll and of his legendary cousin nicknamed The Killer.

“My mother was a Lewis, and all of them played music. My mother played music. Jerry's daddy played music. His daddy and my other uncle, his brother, used to play when they had them old country dances. One of them played fiddle and the other played guitar. And they'd sit over in the corner when people would dance. I remember seeing that when I was just a kid.

“My daddy was a sharecropper. Raised cotton. Jerry's daddy, I don't think he ever was a farmer like we were. He just kind of worked around doing odd jobs. His daddy and mamma used to come by the house, and my daddy would load them up with tomatoes and vegetables in their old stripped-down car. Didn't even have a windshield on it. His daddy was a good ole man. That was my uncle, kind of my favourite uncle. Uncle Elmo was a good man.

“I had an old guitar that my brother traded a .22 rifle for, to a black guy who lived over in the field. Later, my brother learned to play a little bit. My other brother played the mandolin and my mother played the piano, we played American Legion Hall a lot of times and over in Natchez, Mississippi. My band was called The Mississippi Hotshots.”

Around 1951, Brown moved from Louisiana to Memphis to take a job as a lineman with Memphis Light, Gas & Water. The utility company's offices, he said, were not far from a recording studio Union Avenue. “You could throw a rock and hit Sun Records,” he recalls. One day, while Brown climbed a 70-foot pole, a live electrical wire struck him, and the accident nearly killed him. The incident would change the course of rock'n'roll history.

“I had a feeling. As I went up that pole I told the truck driver that I was fixing to get out of that line of work. I said I had a cousin down in Louisiana that can play the devil out of a piano. I said: ‘I think I'm going to go and get him and bring him back up here and start me a band.’

“The tail of (that wire) came whipping up through and that thing was a ball of fire as big as a couch. There was four of us up there, and it just so happened I was the only one it caught. The tail hit me in the back and I had my hand on the pole. I was wearing a metal watch and it burned right off my arm. It also set my clothes on fire.

“I fell on down. About that same time, an ambulance came by and saw it, and

“THEY CARRIED ME TO THE HOSPITAL AND I THINK THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE MY ARM OFF...”



Everett Collection Inc / Alamy Stock Photo

In the 1989 movie *Great Balls Of Fire*, John Doe starred as JW Brown opposite Trey Wilson as Sam Phillips and Dennis Quaid as Jerry Lee

Joe Bonomo's book, *Jerry Lee Lewis: Lost And Found*, is a superb study of the Ferriday Fireball

as soon as they got me down off the pole, I was put in the ambulance.

“My arm was so numb, I said: ‘I done lost my arm.’ And the first thing I thought about was playing my guitar. They carried me on to the hospital and I think they were going to take my arm off, but later on the feeling started coming back in it. So they bandaged my arm. It was all burnt up pretty bad. They called my wife and told her I was up there in the hospital. The first thing they do is, they pull your boots off and set your boots out in the hall. A lot of times you’re dying when they do that, you know? She saw them boots out in the hall and thought I had done died.”

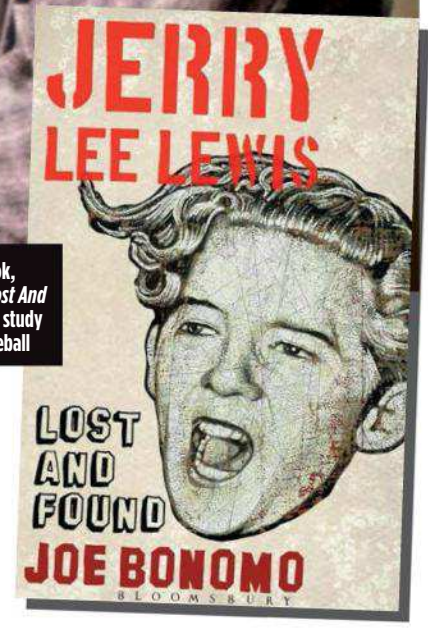
Chasing Cousin Jerry

Memphis Light, Gas and Water agreed to pay Brown’s salary while he recovered from the accident, and with a steady income and some time on his hands, he went to Louisiana to find his cousin, the 21-year-old Jerry Lee Lewis.

“I went on down there and stopped off in Ferriday. While at my grandmother’s house I said: ‘Do you know where Jerry is? I’m trying to find him. I want to hear him play that piano.’ She said: ‘Yeah, I can tell you where he is, he’s over at The Hilltop’. Well I had

played at The Hilltop when I was about 15 years old and knew right where he was playing. My grandmother said: ‘Jay, you going over there to see Jerry?’ I said: ‘Yes, mam, I’m going over to check him out’. She said: ‘Oh I’m telling you. That boy will ruin your life’. I guess he had always been wild around there.

“So I went over there and I heard that piano and a drummer going with somebody singing. They had this blind man – his name was Mr Paul – he was playing piano and Jerry was playing drums and singing. I went in there. That was the first time we had met when we were grown, I had to introduce myself to him. I said: ‘I’m your cousin from Memphis and I want to hear you play’. He said: ‘Well, you just wait a little bit and I’ll get on that piano and

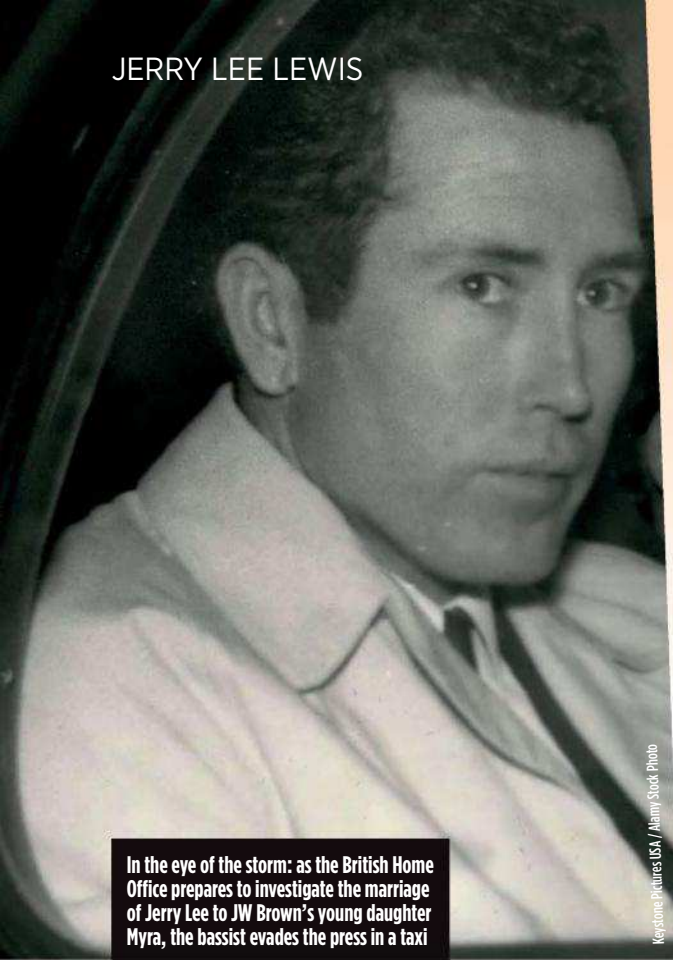


“JERRY GOT ON THE PIANO AND, MAN, I AIN’T NEVER SEEN SOMEBODY WHO COULD PLAY THE PIANO LIKE THAT!”

show you what I can do’. After the band had taken their break, he got on the piano. And man, I ain’t never seen somebody who could play the piano like that.

“We hit it off good. I had me a few beers and I told him: ‘If you’ll come to Memphis, I’ll help you get a record out. I ain’t doing nothing [else]. I got hurt’. He said: ‘I’ve been up there and they listened to me and they said they’d call me and nobody did’. I told him where I lived and all that and told him: You come on up there in a few days and we’ll go to Sun Records and we’ll get something going. He said: ‘I might just come up there’.

“That was our little conversation. I stayed there ‘til they were through. So we went outside, and I was driving this big old blue Cadillac that I had bought. I went out there and my hood was standing straight up. Jerry said: ‘Yeah, ➤



In the eye of the storm: as the British Home Office prepares to investigate the marriage of Jerry Lee to JW Brown's young daughter Myra, the bassist evades the press in a taxi

Newstone Pictures USA / Alamy Stock Photo

Jerry would have ever got off the ground if I hadn't been there to help him.

"I think he might have just been a musician in them honky tonks."

For several months, Brown and Lewis and a band played small clubs in and around Memphis. Around this time Brown, who had been playing a guitar, decided to change instruments.

"I had a guitar. We'd go in one of them honky tonks, and Jerry was playing the piano and didn't have it amplified either. I was just playing rhythm guitar. I'd beat it so hard I'd tear the strings off of it. Jerry said: 'You're gonna have to get you

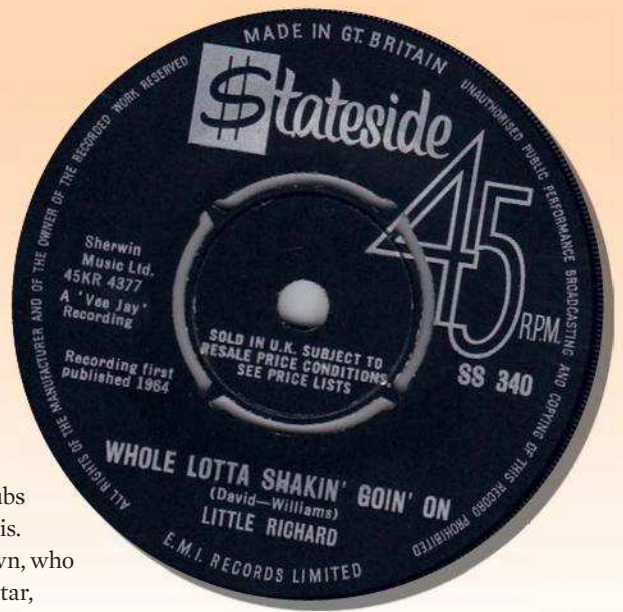
something you can play a little more. You're tearing that guitar up. Let's go down there and get you a set of drums'. Jerry was actually a pretty good drummer, playing behind that blind man. He said he would teach me how to play drums."

When they walked into a Memphis music store, though, an electric Fender bass caught Brown's attention. He had played an upright bass in his younger days and the electric instrument – which had debuted in 1951 – intrigued him.

"So I bought it, carried it home and tried to tune it up. I was twisting it so hard, trying to tune it in the wrong key, and I broke the strings. Carried it back up there and said: 'Man, something's wrong with this thing. I broke that string'. He said: 'It's a wonder you haven't broke the neck off'. He said: 'Let me put you a string on there and I'll tune it up for you.' So that's what I was wanting him to do. So he tuned it up for me.

"I had a piano at home, and Jerry sat down playing that piano. I just picked it up, playing the lick he wanted. I was playing on a session in about two weeks with it. And nobody else was playing those things. I was the first one."

Writer Peter Guralnick, in his book *Sam Phillips: The Man Who Invented Rock'n'Roll*, says that one night in February, 1957, during a four-hour show in Blytheville, Arkansas, Jerry Lee and the band played a song called *Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On* for the first time.



"When we played over in Arkansas at them old honky tonks, Jerry just played. He come up one time playing *Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On*. After he did, the only thing all them beer drinkers wanted to hear was *Whole Lotta Shakin'...* 'Play that shakin' song', they'd say. It had that beat they liked. So we went into the studio and we were playing *Down In The Little Green Valley*. Jack Clement [Sun engineer], he liked that kind of stuff, that was his style of music. I said: 'Jerry, let's play that shakin' song! Man, them people eat that up!'"

According to Brown, Clements was less than enthused with the *...Shakin'...*, but allowed them to record it.

"He cut down on a *Whole Lotta Shakin'* and the one you hear on the record was the first cut. It's got that sound. If you'll listen to it, it's the darndest thing. You can play *Whole Lotta Shakin'* now and you can see these people just start moving."

Released in April of 1957, *Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On* became one of the biggest selling Sun Records singles ever.

Meanwhile, Lewis toured the country performing live shows. Out on the road, Brown watched his cousin develop his famous habit of being hard on pianos.

"We'd be going down through Arkansas and Mississippi, and they had heard how bad he was on pianos. So they would roll out an old piano that was just a piece of junk. 'We don't want him playing our good piano'. Man, when Jerry got through he'd tear that thing up. He'd jerk the front off it, throw it out in the floor, pull the keyboard cover off, throw it out there, and then reach in there and grab those hammers and start throwing them out on the floor. Well he got the name then, tearing up pianos. That's right. Ain't nobody else going to play this piano.

"One time we were down in Alabama, we were supposed to play under this tent.

someone has tried to steal your battery, they're bad for that around here."

And did the would-be thieves get Brown's battery?

"Naw, they didn't. I guess I got out of there in time. One more beer and it would be gone. I went home and the very next night the phone rang. Jerry was up there at the drugstore, wanting me to come get him."

All Shook Up

Writer Joe Bonomo, in his book *Jerry Lee Lewis: Lost And Found*, says Lewis called Brown on a Sunday night in October 1956. Brown went and picked Lewis up and let him move in with him, his wife Lois, and his two children, Rusty and Myra.

"He stayed out there with me, I guess... I can't remember just how long. It was about six months. That was in 1956. Of course, he'd been to Nashville and got turned down. Then he went to Memphis and got turned down. So I really don't believe that

"THE ONLY THING ALL THEM BEER DRINKERS WANTED TO HEAR WAS *WHOLE LOTTA SHAKIN'* ..."

It had rained and the water had gotten into the piano – now you know what water can do to a piano, it will swell it up where you can't play nothing. Well, here we went out there and started to try and play, but that piano was full of water. Jerry got so mad he started cussing. I mean on the mic, and he was using some bad language. He said: 'These sons o' bitches', and just walked off the stage. So, anyway, we walked out to the car and went on to the motel. I said: 'God almighty. This is bad.' After a while I looked up and I could see a line of cars coming. I mean a whole line of 'em. We was just in a little old country motel. I said: 'Jerry it looks like they coming after you'. He said: 'I don't give a damn'. He walked out there in front of his room and just stood there, like with his arms folded. He figured they were coming to get him. So they pulled up there and some of them big old giants stepped out and they said: 'Mr Lewis, we just wanted to come down here and apologise to you'. Well, after that, he *really* got bad..."

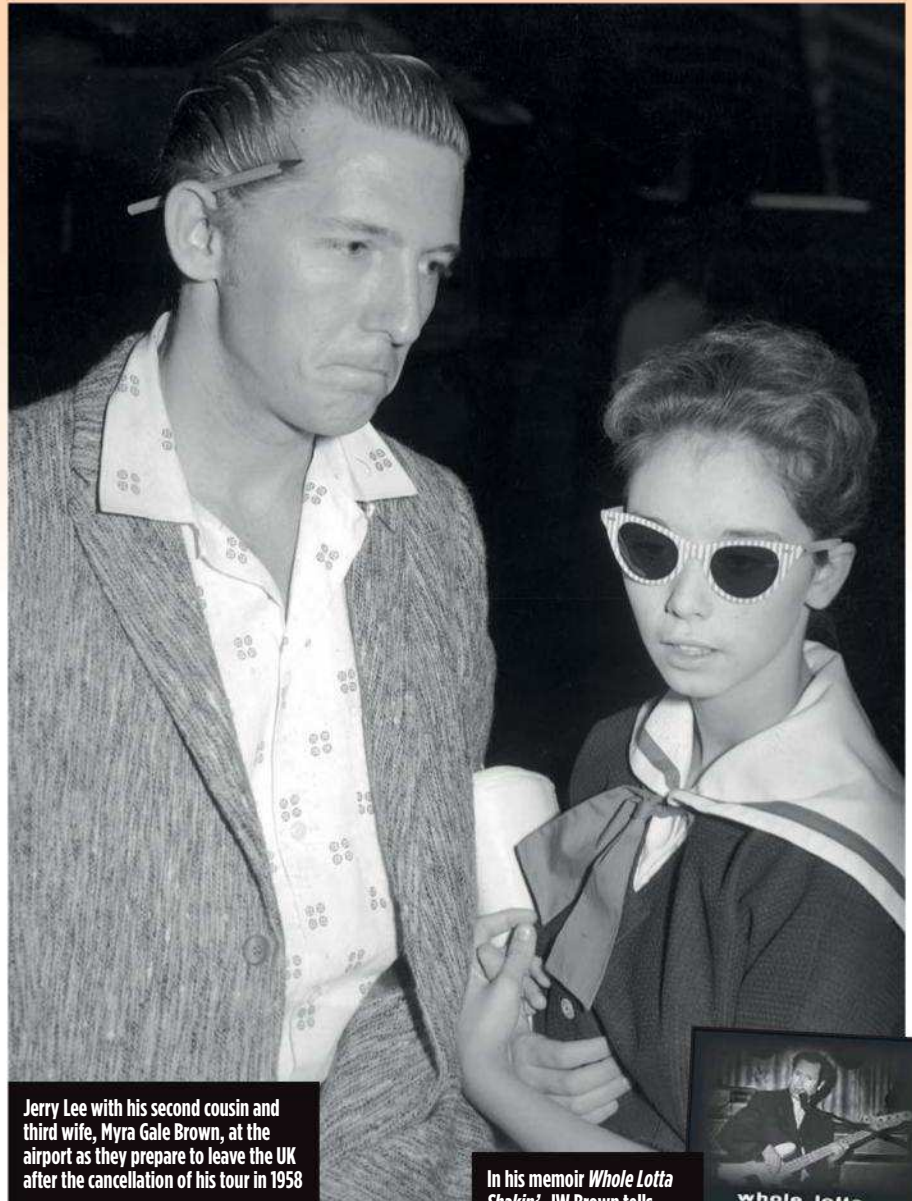
Great Balls Of Scandal

On 28 July, 1957, Lewis, Brown and live drummer Russell Smith performed *Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On* on *The Steve Allen Show* on NBC. Near the end of the performance, Lewis, overtaken by the moment, kicked his chair out from under him while continuing to play his piano and sing. The Sunday evening broadcast made him a superstar.

"We went in that afternoon and they had, not a rehearsal exactly, but where everybody was going to be, you know. Live TV! I mean, when they turned that red light on, you knew you was on and the whole nation was watching.

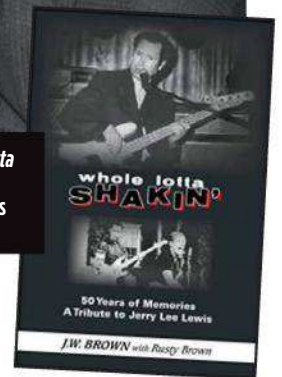
"They had a bar across the street and Jerry liked them Martinis then... Me and Russ, well, we just followed along in his tracks. We went over there, and we drank about four or five of those Martinis.

"Russ, he couldn't drink much, you know how little he was. Jerry said he was afraid Russ had drank a little too much to play them drums. But we was sitting there watching the monitor and *The Steve Allen Show* was going on and we said: 'Well, I guess we better go back over there'. We walked in that door and they said: 'Where have you been? Get out there on that stage'. We managed to get out just on time.... That's country boys for you."



Jerry Lee with his second cousin and third wife, Myra Gale Brown, at the airport as they prepare to leave the UK after the cancellation of his tour in 1958

In his memoir *Whole Lotta Shakin'*, JW Brown tells Jerry Lee's story from his own unique perspective



By the end of 1957, *Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On* had reached the top of multiple charts. The meteoric rise of Lewis was about to stall, though. Later that year, on 12 December, Lewis married Brown's 13-year-old daughter, Myra. The following May, when the press found out about the marriage, Lewis' career suffered. "He must have been crazy about her. They stayed married 14 years," says Brown. "We got a lovely granddaughter."

After Myra and Lewis divorced, in 1970, Myra moved to Georgia. Brown eventually

moved to the area, too, in the late 70s.

He worked manual labour for a while but kept playing shows, here and there, with Lewis through 2010.

These days, Brown lives with his wife, Lois, and remains close to Myra and his son, Rusty. He still perform the occasional live show, too, playing the bass and singing. I asked him what he gets out of performing shows, now that he has done it for way more than half a century?

"I don't know. It never enters my mind. You just go up there and do it. I still like playing that electric bass. I sing them ole country songs!" ★

"JERRY MUST HAVE BEEN CRAZY ABOUT MYRA. THEY STAYED MARRIED 14 YEARS AND WE GOT A LOVELY GRANDDAUGHTER."

William Browning is a US journalist and writer who contributes to *Smithsonian* magazine, *Rolling Stone*, *Guideposts*, and more.

WORDS BY DAVID BURKE

Spellbound!

A star in the 50s, oft forgotten in the decades that followed, Screamin' Jay Hawkins came back to life in the 80s via some famous friends in Hollywood. *Vintage Rock* looks back at a truly bizarre rock'n'roll original.


The spell-binding witchdoctor Screamin' Jay Hawkins was the ultimate shock'n'roller

For someone whose live performances involved climbing out of a coffin, it came as no surprise that Screamin' Jay Hawkins resurrected his career in the 80s, with a little help from some hip fans who became friends. Among them were garage rockers The Fuzztones and cult film-maker Jim Jarmusch. Arguably the latter played a pivotal role in Hawkins' revival, using his signature song, *I Put A Spell On You*, in 1984 movie *Stranger Than Paradise*, and then casting the eccentric singer as the night clerk of a run-down Memphis flophouse in 1989's *Mystery Train*, a triptych of stories evoking the spirit of Elvis Presley.

According to Jarmusch, Hawkins had no rights to *I Put A Spell On You*, and so he had to pay a licensing fee to some amorphous industry body to feature it in *Stranger Than Paradise*. The director

recalled: "I knew that money never got to Jay. That really bothered me. Then I had to find him and make sure that he was OK with the song in the movie, and to make sure that he gets paid. We found him and he was living in a trailer in New Jersey and he had no phone."

The soundtrack, Hawkins reckoned, got his music across, "to the young kids who weren't even a gleam in their Daddy's eye when I started all those years ago." He said: "They weren't even a smile on a man's face when he knows he's gonna get involved in horizontal recreation."

Subsequently, Jarmusch created the character of the porter in *Mystery Train* especially for Hawkins – though the singer himself had his own idea of how he should appear. "He wanted to make the character like Screamin' Jay all the time. I wanted parts of Screamin' Jay, but I also wanted him to be someone *else*." 

"I Put A Spell On You is not a curse. It pays the rent, it makes my wife happy" – Screamin' Jay Hawkins



Rhanel Macia / Redfem / Getty Images

"One time he got mad at me and said: 'I don't understand – it's like you ordered a nuclear device, and now you're instructing it not to explode.'"

Rolling Stone described his portrayal as "remarkably low-decibel", though he was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award as best supporting actor alongside Steve Buscemi, alias Charlie The Barber.

Hawkins told Ian Johnson in 2010 that Jarmusch convinced him he could be an actor. Despite Hawkins' scepticism ("I can't even remember the lyrics of my own songs – how do you expect me to be an actor?" he reportedly asked Jarmusch), it was money that sealed the deal.

"My God, the man made me an offer I couldn't refuse. He's done for me, in 1988, what Alan Freed done for me in 1952, and Alan Freed helped make my act. This man changed my life," he said.

Alan Freed, of course, was the US disc jockey influential in the rise of rock'n'roll before the payola scandal – payment by record companies for the giving air time to

certain artists and recordings on commercial radio – destroyed his reputation. In 1956, after the success of *I Put A Spell On You*, the broadcaster offered Hawkins \$300 if he would emerge from a casket onstage. Hawkins accepted and a maverick legend was born.

Madness Of A Maverick

The genesis of the eccentric star lay in Cleveland, Ohio, Hawkins' home city. It was here where he studied classical piano as a child, before learning guitar in his 20s. He wanted to sing opera, and would often cite Paul Robeson as his idol in interviews. His lofty ambition thwarted, he started out paying his dues in the blues.

Hawkins was a member of R&B stalwart Tiny Grimes' band in the late 40s and early 50s, featuring on a jazzy version of *Loch Lomond*. His stint with Grimes not only enhanced his musical education but

instilled in him an appreciation of image and how it could be used to project personality to the public. And, as far as Hawkins was concerned, the weirder the image, the better.

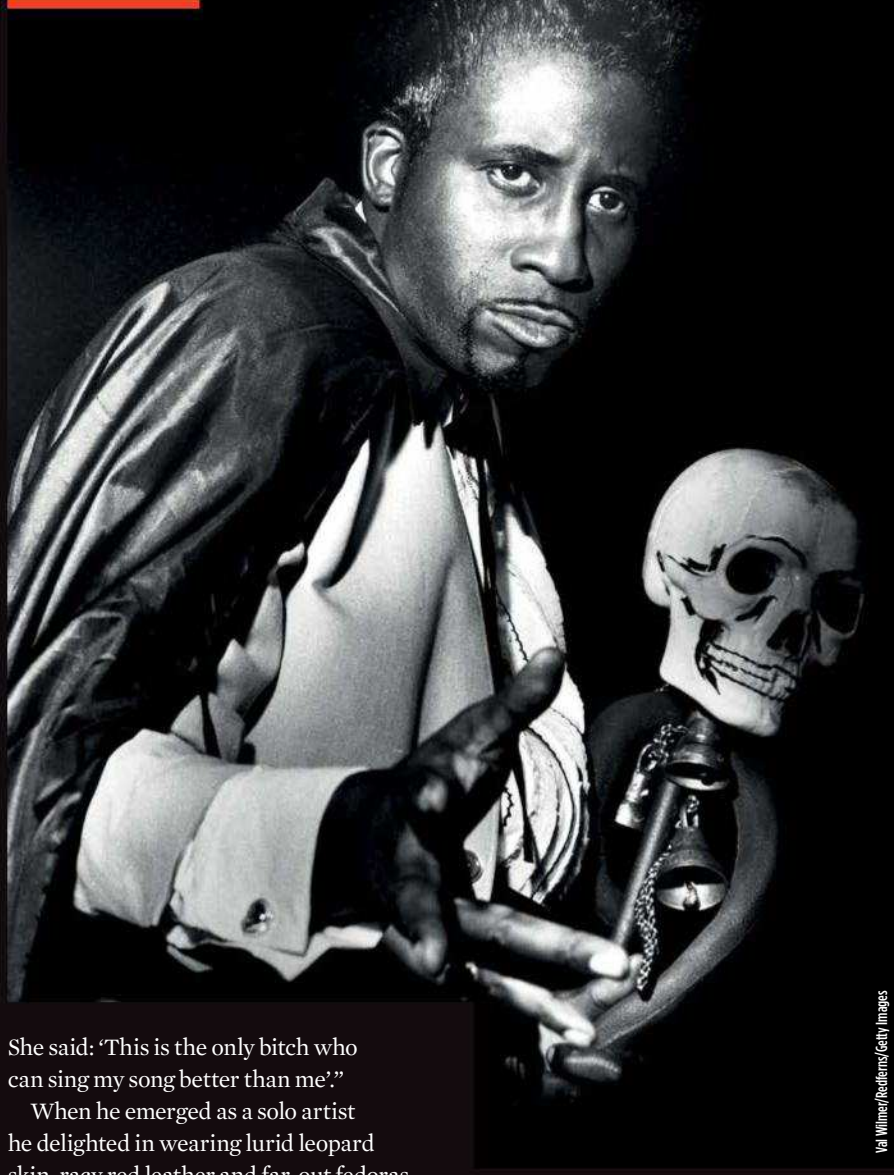
"I'd come out in a Scottish kilt, and I'd have these two small Carnation milk cans hanging off my chest, like tits. I sang *Mama, He Treats Your Daughter Mean*, and the cans would be jiggling all over the place. Ruth Brown came to see me.



Hawkins was a member of Tiny Grimes' Rocking Highlanders and appeared on *Loch Lomond*

"Jay said: 'I cannot stop the rain, but I can tell you if it will rain or not'. He took his little leather bag out and rolled his bones on to the table..." DIRECTOR JIM JARMUSCH

Voodoo Chile: Hawkins cultivated a reputation for outlandish stage outfits and props including a smoking skull called Henry



Val Wilmer/Redferns/Getty Images

She said: "This is the only bitch who can sing my song better than me?"

When he emerged as a solo artist he delighted in wearing lurid leopard skin, racy red leather and far-out fedoras. At Herman's in Atlantic City, Hawkins would don colour-co-ordinated outfits "down to the socks and cufflinks" of orange, pink and fluorescent blue.

His songs too were strangely strange, especially *I Put A Spell On You*. Even though it failed to chart for him, it was chosen by the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame – in Cleveland, coincidentally – as one of the 500 songs that shaped a genre. Hawkins originally conceived the track as a refined ballad. But when he and his musicians got drunk in the studio, the ballad evolved into something else entirely – something wonderfully wicked.

"When we started recording, we started out with a slow version. A week later, I was sitting at home and they bring me a 78 of

the thing. I put it on, I played it again and again. I thought they'd lied to me. This couldn't possibly be me singing like that. So, I tried to see if I could reproduce that style of singing. I contorted my mouth this way and that. I couldn't do it. Finally, I poured myself some J&B Scotch, poured that down, and then I was able to do it like the record."

And then came that proposition from Freed, one which engendered Hawkins' outlandish persona, replete with voodoo props – including a smoking skull on a stick that went by the name of Henry – and rubber snakes. He played the role with comic chutzpah, not least on *Constipation Blues*, described by its writer as a composition "about real pain". In 1999,

Screamin' Jay: Voodoo Weather Forecaster

The story goes that Screamin' Jay Hawkins was abandoned by his mother as a baby, and later adopted by Native Americans. He dabbled in the dark, mysterious practice of voodoo – as Jim Jarmusch found to his advantage on the set of *Mystery Train*.

On the final night, the director was filming a scene in which Japanese couple Masatoshi Nagase and Youki Kudoh were approaching the Arcade Hotel, where Hawkins manned the front desk.

"It rained and I didn't want rain, because I don't like that wet-down look that a lot of people intentionally use. I didn't want that look because I'd have to repeat it in all the other stories.

"We repeatedly swept down the street, but it continued to rain. The weather reports said rain all night. I said to Jay: 'I don't know what I'm going to do'. He said: 'I cannot stop the rain, but I can tell you if it will rain or not'. I was ready to wrap for the night, but I said: 'OK'. He took his little leather bag out and rolled his bones on to the table and examined them and said: 'Jim, shoot – it will not rain'.

"It didn't rain for the rest of the night and we got the scene."

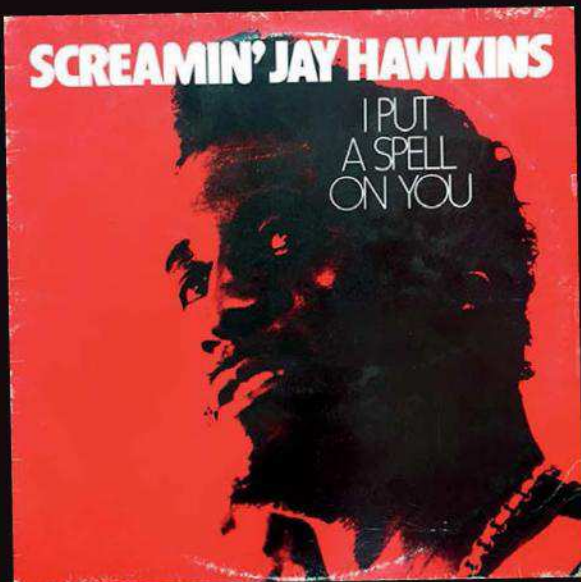
Jarmusch was never entirely sure how much of it was down to coincidence, or how much was Hawkins' dabbling in that old black magic.

"I don't know. I would believe he had something to do with it, I'm not sure. He was a very magical guy."

Hawkins actually played it at festivals in Paris and Chicago while sitting on a toilet.

While he never achieved the kind of success enjoyed by his contemporaries, Hawkins made a reasonable living throughout the 60s and 70s with regular tours in Japan and Europe, where he also cut the occasional record.

But it wasn't until *American Hot Wax* – a biopic of none other than Alan Freed – and Jarmusch's advocacy via *Stranger Than Paradise* and *Mystery Train*, that Hawkins' profile increased, and his cool cachet was acknowledged. Around this time, he hooked up with The Fuzztones. Frontman Rudi Protrudi first encountered him doing a residency at a rib joint in New York.



The Magic Of I Put A Spell On You

"I Put A Spell On You is not a curse. It pays the rent, it makes my wife happy," Screamin' Jay Hawkins told the *NME* in 1986.

The song he cut when he was, to coin the vernacular, half cut in 1956, became his biggest seller, shifting more than a million units, yet had the dubious distinction of never charting – at least not under his name.

Other artists have fared better though. Nina Simone, in particular. Her scat-heavy improvisation – which featured on an album titled *I Put A Spell On You* – reached No.23 on the US Billboard R&B chart in 1965, peaking at 49 in the UK the same year (and No.28 when it was reissued four years later). Simone even named her autobiography after the track.

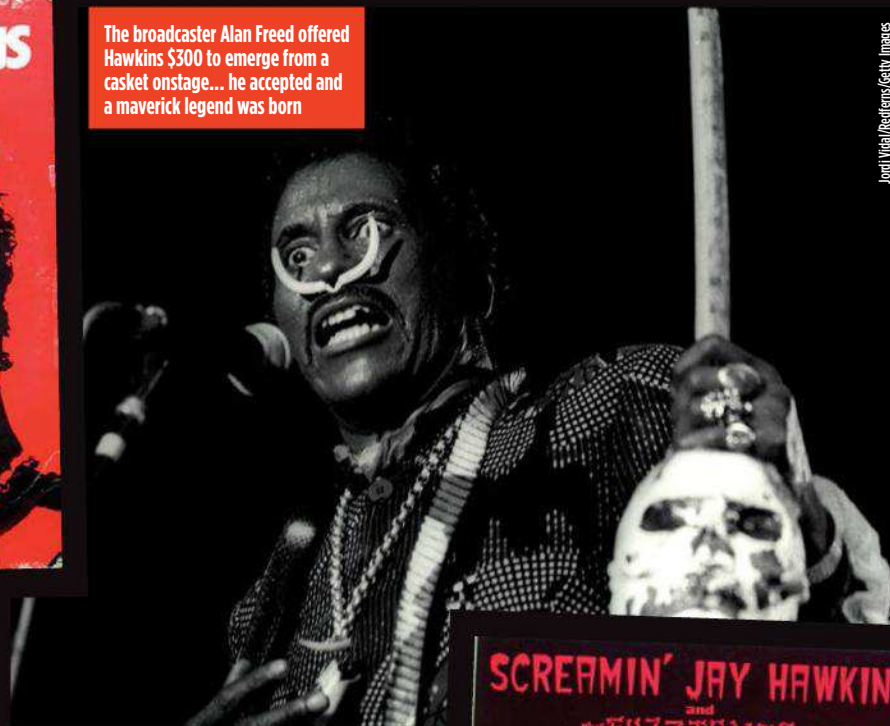
Elsewhere, it has been covered by The Alan Price Set – whose 1966 rendition broke the British Top 10 – Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Crazy World Of Arthur Brown, Manfred Mann, Bette Midler, Nick Cave, Bryan Ferry, Marilyn Manson and Annie Lennox.

Guitar legend Jeff Beck and Joss Stone's 2010 two-hander was nominated for a best rock performance by a duo or group with vocal Grammy Award.

And among the more odd versions are Dutch singer Dee Dee's 1978 European disco hit and 20 years later as a 90s club anthem by Sonique.

But of course, none of them come close to Hawkins' original, which remains the template for rock'n'roll at its brilliant, batty best.

The broadcaster Alan Freed offered Hawkins \$300 to emerge from a casket onstage... he accepted and a maverick legend was born



Joel Viteri/Redferns/Getty Images

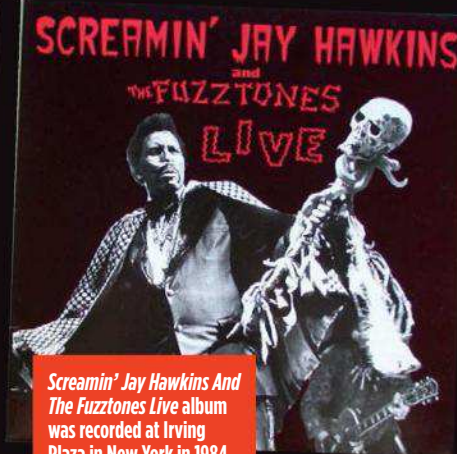
He remembered: "I was shocked, because he had a piano but no band. And he wasn't even playing his own material – he was playing oldies, like Fats Domino and Little Richard. He was playing for a yuppie crowd, maybe 30 people, and they had no idea who he was. As he would play the owner would harass him throughout the set, giving him orders, telling him what to do, what to play. It was really infuriating.

"Every night after the show I would talk to him. And by the third night I said to him: 'I have a band, I'm on a record label'. I told him it's nothing big. The very first thing he said to me was: 'I don't like white people'. And I said to him: 'Jay, I don't like any people'. That just seemed to break the ice."

Hawkins' collaboration with The Fuzztones resulted in the album, *Screamin' Jay Hawkins And The Fuzztones Live*, recorded at Irving Plaza in the Big Apple.

The Bizarre Years

A fortuitous 1990 meeting with Robert Duffey in a Los Angeles club ended with



Screamin' Jay Hawkins And The Fuzztones Live album was recorded at Irving Plaza in New York in 1984

Hawkins recruiting a new manager and securing a deal with Bizarre Records. Duffey was a producer, A&R man and partner at Bizarre Records, for which Hawkins recorded three albums between 1991 and 1994.

"He told me I was crazy for wanting to become his manager," Duffey tells *Vintage Rock*. "He kind of asked me – I didn't go after it. He said: 'We have to have a meeting with my agent'.

So, we went to the Hollywood cemetery and we met with Jayne Mansfield, who

"Ninety-nine percent of the time what Jay was telling me was a figment of his imagination. He said he had half of his brain blown off in the war. He was raised by wolves and Indians. It was non-stop entertainment."

MANAGER ROBERT DUFFEY

"He was a very magical guy..." - Jim Jarmusch on a true ambassador of US outsider-dom



Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

Black magic: Screamin' Jay performing at 1996's Chicago Blues Festival



Jean Marc Giboux/Getty Images

was buried there. It was just a tourist thing – she wasn't really buried there. It was just a headstone. So, I had to meet with Jayne, and she OK'd the whole thing."

Duffey believed Hawkins was a perfect fit for Bizarre. "We had kind of wacky acts – Wild Man Fisher did some things for us. Alice Cooper at the time. Zappa... And I really liked the guy. Ninety-nine percent of the time what he was telling me was a figment of his imagination. He said he had half of his brain blown off in the war. He was raised by wolves and Indians. The majority of what he was saying was entertaining, non-stop entertainment.

"What I wanted to get down was what he wanted to do. People had recorded him before and a couple of things came out, but he told me it was never what he wanted. It wasn't Screamin' Jay Hawkins, it was whoever the producer was. He was getting up in age. I wanted him to be happy with something he did, not some guy that has his concept of what Jay was."

Hawkins' Bizarre debut, 1991's *Black Music For White People*, is a crazy cornucopia that revives his own *I Put A*

Spell On You alongside Oscar Hammerstein and Jerome Kern's classic *Ol' Man River*, while the contemporary demographic is served by a brace of Tom Waits songs, *Ice Cream Man* and *Heartattack And Vine*, the last of which gave him his only whiff of UK chart action, reaching No.42 on the back of being used in a Levi's TV advert. Composer Waits was far from pleased though, and soon engaged the corporation in a lawsuit. Three years on from filing the case, Waits received a grovelling apology in the form of full-page newspaper ads.

Discussing the selection of material for that Bizarre debut, Duffey says: "I would bring songs in and he would yay or nay them. He picked the songs. At first, I liked his selection, but I thought it was a little erratic. But again, it was Jay who was a little erratic. So, I decided to go along with it. We had long, long conversations about 50s music and 60s music, so I went back and put together about 30, 40 songs he

could listen to and let me know if he liked them or not.

"He had stories about each song. The stories had nothing to do with reality, but they were his stories. He remembered when his girlfriend left him, and he wrote *I Hear You Knockin'*. She was trying to break into his house to stab him. The problem is he never wrote the song [it was penned by Dave Bartholomew]. You just go along with it. In his world he wrote the song. So, as far as I was concerned, he wrote the song.

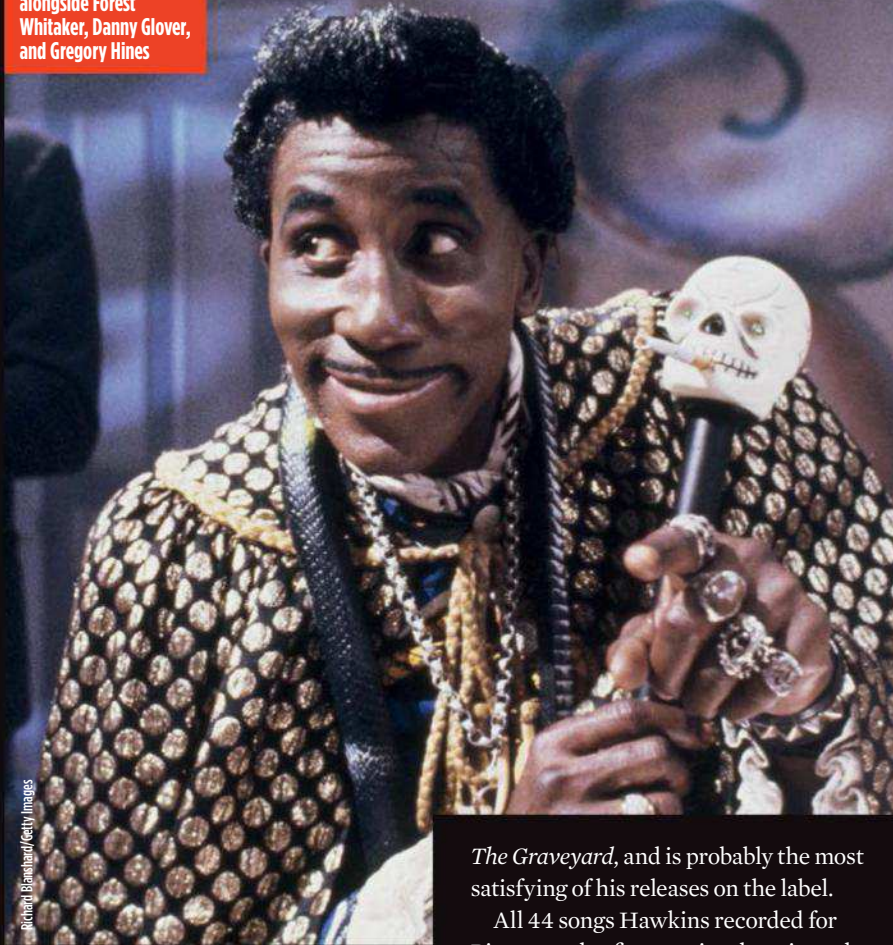
"There was nothing on the record that we did that wasn't OK'd by him. After each song you could hear Jay and his wife go back and forth. We recorded the songs and let the tape roll. Sure enough, after each take Jay would say something that was hysterically funny – it wasn't supposed to be, but was.

"He had married this young Japanese girl, who, from what he told me, was very friendly with musicians who would come to Japan. I think she was 19 or something. He would bring her into the studio. They would go back and forth all day, and we would get it on tape. We ended up putting

"He wasn't a circus clown. He was a clown when he needed to be, and he knew exactly what he was doing."

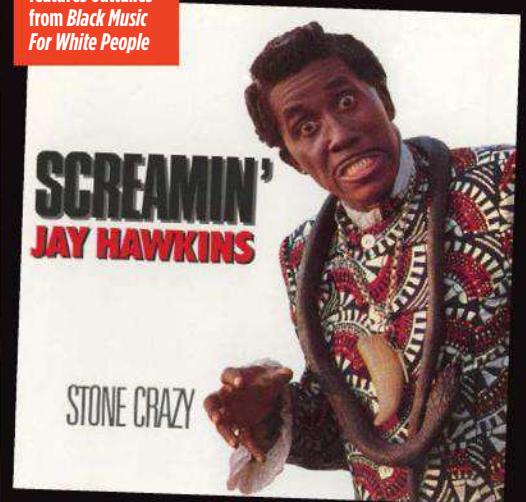
ROBERT DUFFEY

Hawkins appeared as himself in the 1991 film *A Rage In Harlem* alongside Forest Whitaker, Danny Glover, and Gregory Hines



Richard Blahard/Getty Images

1993's *Stone Crazy*, features outtakes from *Black Music For White People*



it on the album. He was alright with it. It was his wife and he wanted her on the record. He didn't care that she was talking about finding balloons in the garbage, crazy stuff. She was slightly off-centre also, but the banter between the two of them was hysterical."

The follow-up album, *Stone Crazy*, comprises outtakes from *Black Music For White People*. The third Bizarre outing, 1994's *Somethin' Funny Goin' On*, features another Waits composition, *Whistling Past*

The Graveyard, and is probably the most satisfying of his releases on the label.

All 44 songs Hawkins recorded for Bizarre – plus five previously unissued bonus tracks – have now been collated on the new compilation, *Are YOU One Of Jay's Kids?*, the title a reference to his far-flung brood of illegitimate children which numbers somewhere between 57 and 75.

So, how important a phase in Hawkins' trajectory were the Bizarre years? How did he evolve during this period?

Duffey again: "He did what he considered a dance version of *I Put A Spell On You*, so he considered himself a modern, relevant artist, not an old 50s artist. I don't know if Jay ever evolved.

"I think he just did what he did. The band and I talked about it, and it was like being back in the 50s, the way he talked about things. I think Jay was just Jay – he was: 'This is who I am. I'm not looking to evolve, I'm just looking to do my music'. That was all somehow related to that era, the 50s and 60s.

"He was the sweetest guy, a very, very nice guy. The only problem with him, he would take morphine at around one o'clock in the afternoon. And by two o'clock he was incoherent. There was nothing that could be done. But that was from having

half his brain blown out in the Japanese war, the way he tells it!

"I worked with a lot of artists. I've probably produced 60 records in my life, but I've never worked with anyone like him – I've never met anyone like him. Duffey continued to manage Hawkins following the latter's relocation to France in the mid-90s.

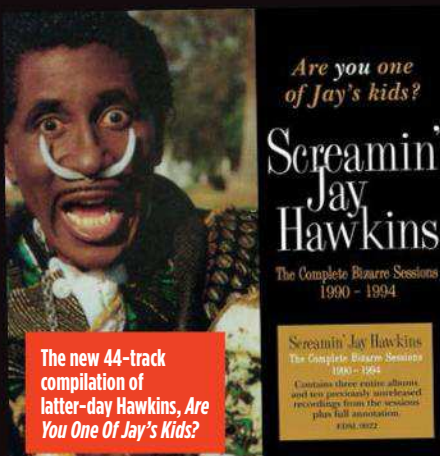
"When he moved to France, he was pretty dejected. He moved there because he felt people there respected him, and he didn't feel like people in America really respected him. Europe was a whole different story to him. He never really worked too much after moving to Paris.

"I'm happy that I could have done something for him before he left us. Nobody wanted to touch him. They made fun of him more than anything else, and that's one thing he didn't want. In the States they basically thought he was a clown, and he was a clown but not how they looked at it. He wasn't a circus clown. He was a clown when he needed to be, and he knew exactly what he was doing. He was at times a little twisted, but he knew what he was doing."

Screamin' Jay Hawkins died of a haemorrhage on 12 February, 2000 in hospital in the Neuilly suburb of Paris, where he had undergone an operation earlier in the week on an obstructed bowel.

For Jim Jarmusch, his passing meant the loss of a true ambassador of American outsider-dom.

"He was really a sensitive man," said Jarmusch. "What a strong man to go through all the shit that he went through, just racially and how he grew up, and then in the music business, being so incredibly talented but not getting treated with the dignity he deserved." ★



THE KILLER'S APPRENTICE

Chas Hodges is better known for his “rockney” knees-ups with Dave Peacock in Chas & Dave, but the piano pounder has a richer history than most. *Vintage Rock* talks to him about his early session days under Joe Meek and backing Jerry Lee Lewis and Gene Vincent in the 60s.

WORDS BY GARTH CARTWRIGHT

That day changed both of our lives,” says Chas Hodges as he reflects on seeing Jerry Lee Lewis perform on 24 May 1958 in Edmonton at the Regal Cinema.

“Not that I knew it then. I was a teenager and I’d missed Buddy Holly when he played The Regal a few months before – I’m not sure why, as I liked his records – but I went along to see Jerry Lee with my mates and, no doubt about it, his performance was the greatest thing I’d ever witnessed. A life changer.”

If it’s clear how that day would have influenced the course of Hodges’ life one does immediately wonder: how had it changed Lewis’?

“I found this out much later on,” Hodges continues. “It was that afternoon Jerry Lee had met the press in his hotel in London and they’d asked questions about his wife. So, I now see it, that on 24 May 1958 Jerry Lee Lewis changed my life radically for the better – seeing him perform absolutely blew my mind, changed everything. I knew upon seeing him that I wanted to spend the rest of my life playing rock’n’roll! – and he also changed *his* life because of all the controversy surrounding his ‘child bride’

meant he lost his status as a star and got banished for a number of years. That’s a strange irony, isn’t it? I often think about that. Jerry Lee is, to me, the greatest rock and roller. He made such wild, exciting records. His *Mean Woman Blues* – the UK B-side of *Great Balls Of Fire* – has the best piano solo on any rock’n’roll record ever.”

Chas Hodges is a passionate chap when it comes to discussing rock’n’roll. The chatty 74 year old is supposed to be promoting the new Chas & Dave album, *A Little Bit Of Us* – the album features the duo’s first new original material in more than 30 years; throughout the Cockney cowboys play and sing with a natural warmth, wit and skill that has always characterised their best work – but what obviously excites Hodges is speaking about the original rockers he idealised and then often got to play with. “I was so excited in those days,” says Hodges of his teenage

“Jerry Lee’s *Mean Woman Blues* has the best piano solo on any rock’n’roll record ever”

years. “I got hooked on skiffle via Lonnie Donegan – to me he never faded – and it was great playing in skiffle bands. We really had a lot of fun playing skiffle. It gave me that sense of what I wanted to do with my life. But when Jerry Lee and Little Richard came out it was a whole new world! It’s funny, Lonnie should have related to those guys as he was doing the same thing but he didn’t. He went his own way and I always loved what he did, but rock’n’roll was definitely more exciting.

“American music represented a whole new world! It could have been from Mars for all I was concerned – it seemed so different from England. We’d see American movies and they’d be eating hamburgers and driving big cars and have gadgets in their kitchens, so when the American rock’n’rollers started to come to the UK and we got to play with them it was a dream come true. More than that!”

Raised On Rock’n’Roll

Charles Hodges was born in Edmonton, north east London, on 28 December 1943. His mother was a pub pianist whose ability to get the locals singing Cockney favourites around the ‘old Joanna’ obviously



Before forming Chas & Dave with Dave Peacock, Chas Hodges worked with the producer Joe Meek and backed Jerry Lee Lewis and Gene Vincent



Jerry Lee Lewis pictured with The Outlaws featuring, from left, Ritchie Blackmore, Ken Lundgren, Chas Hodges and Mike Underwood

influenced young Charles. His family shifted to leafy Kent when Chas was aged three and it was here that his father, a lorry driver, committed suicide some six months later. This tragedy forced Hodges' mother to shift the family back to Edmonton where they lived with her parents. He relates his colourful growing up with dodgy stepdads and much mischief in his very readable autobiography *Chas & Dave: All About Us*. As noted, Jerry Lee Lewis changed Chas' life and, finding watch repair and factory work monotonous, the teenager set about earning a living as a rock'n'roll musician.

Having failed to learn piano early on, he developed into a competent guitarist and, very quickly, a phenomenally good bassist. And it was playing bass that got Chas work. (Ironically, in *Chas & Dave* he plays piano while Dave Peacock plays bass.) But the duo weren't to form as an act until 1975 – almost 20 years after they had become friends as teenagers.

Back in the late 50s they were both playing in separate bands and Hodges' first

bass amp had previously belonged to Jet Harris of The Shadows.

"It was the first British-built bass amp, huge and heavy as it was filled with sand. Back then bass amps had to be so they could create the big sound necessary."

Hodges' first professional work was when his band Billy Gray & The Stormers were booked to play a Butlins holiday camp. This not only provided a solid grounding in ensuring you got audiences up and dancing but allowed him to have "a new girlfriend every week. You'd watch them file in to the dance, smile at the one you fancied and you were away!"

The rock'n'roll lifestyle certainly appealed to Hodges and when the Stormers split he was quickly hired to play bass behind Mike Berry. And Berry had a recording deal with producer Joe Meek. Hodges' first record would be 1961's *Will You Love Me Tomorrow* by Mike Berry &

The Outlaws (as Meek named the band). It failed to hit the charts but their next effort, *Swinging Low*, entered the Top 50.

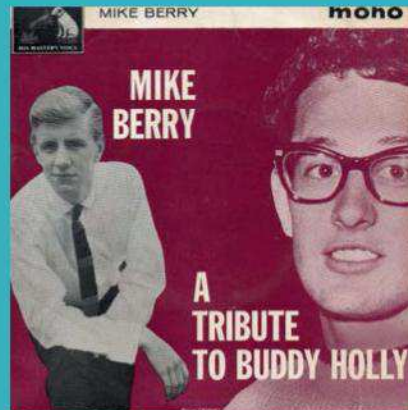
Meek was an eccentric character, as we know, and Hodges relates with much laughter how the producer asked him up for "a cup of coffee" and then lunged at the shocked teenager. Once Meek had apologised they got back to the business of making music and Chas' abilities on bass saw him play on lots of Meek sessions, including John Leyton's August 1961 *Johnny Remember Me* – "my first No. 1!"

The Outlaws would go through many line-up changes over the following years until they finally settled on a line-up featuring a young hot-shot guitarist called Ritchie Blackmore. "We were a rock'n'roll



CHAS HODGES' SESSION DAYS

AS A MEMBER OF THE OUTLAWS FOR JOE MEEK AND AS A SESSION PLAYER THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER, HODGES HAS ALSO PLAYED ON...



MIKE BERRY AND THE OUTLAWS
A Tribute To Buddy Holly



JOHN LEYTON
Johnny Remember Me



HEINZ
Just Like Eddie



CLIFF BENNETT & THE REBEL ROUSERS
Got To Get You Into My Life



JERRY LEE LEWIS
The Session... Recorded in London with Great Artists

band to be reckoned with," says Chas. So much so that Don Arden, the notorious band manager, hired them to back Jerry Lee Lewis for his 1963 European tour.

Hodges was in heaven – even if Meek insisted that The Outlaws support the hapless Heinz, who was booked as support to Lewis – and it appears that Jerry Lee was impressed by the young London band.

"Jerry Lee was a great guy to tour with. He was very approachable. None of this 'I'm the star' rubbish. He was open and enjoyed talking with us. I'll tell you, we worked really hard on that tour. One day in Berlin we did six performances... in one day! We started at 2pm and finished at 2am. We were playing American air bases and after our third performance we were on the bus on the way to the next concert and we found out that we'd left our plug box at the last concert. We mentioned this and our road manager said: 'Tough luck – you'll have to buy a new one' but Jerry Lee overheard this and overrode the tour manager. He ordered that the bus turn

around and we go back and collect the plug box. He said: 'These kids don't have much money'. He was on our side as musicians and was a good guy. I never saw him drunk or any drugs. He was a good humoured, hard working guy. And he always played superbly! Always drove the crowd into a frenzy. To me, Jerry Lee is the greatest."

One memory of those Lewis shows on that tour does stick out, where Hodges says something extraordinary happened.

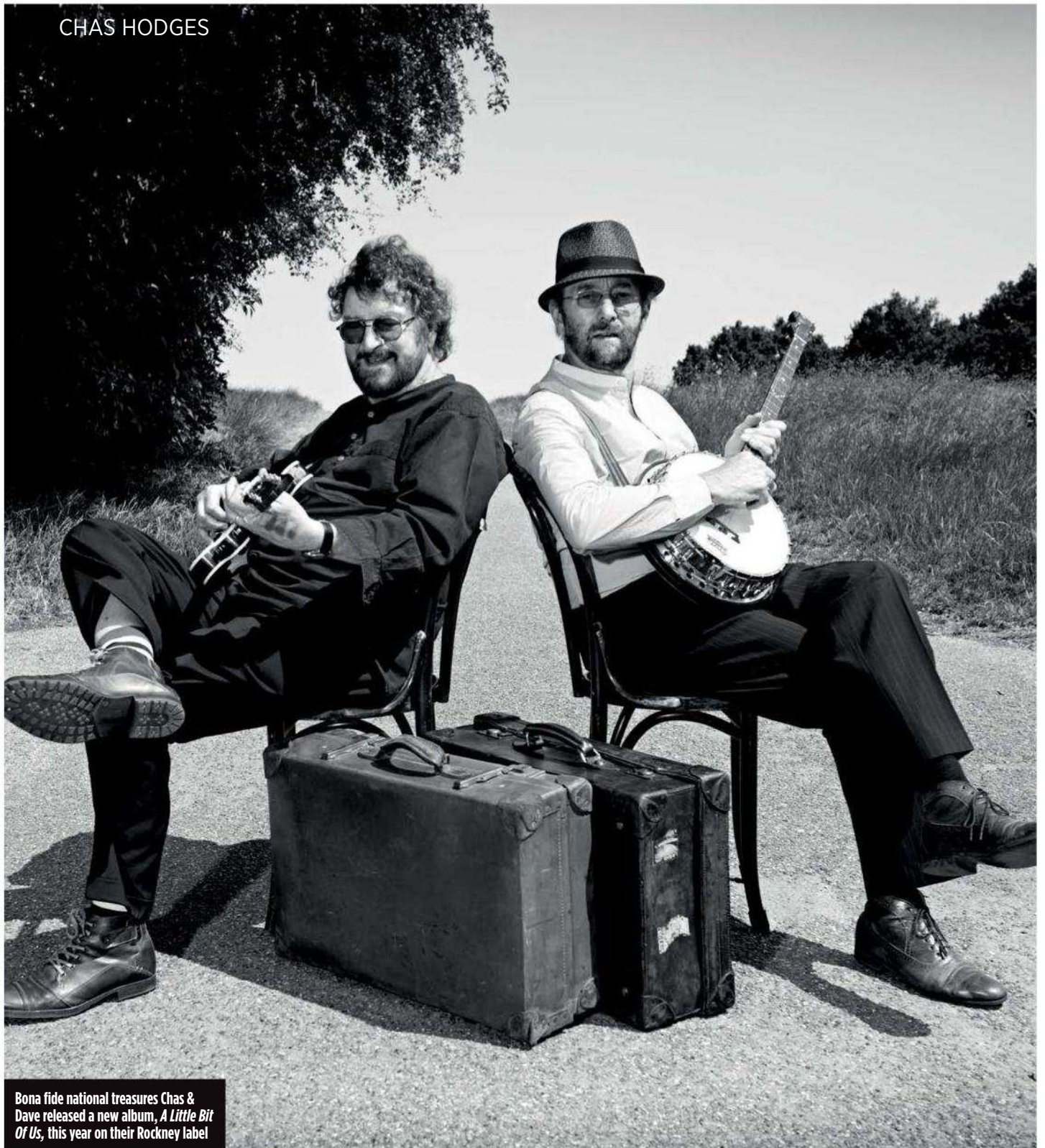
"One of our gigs the piano was a mess, really out of tune and not fit to play, so Jerry Lee says 'give me a guitar and I'll play that instead'. So he gets an acoustic guitar and tries to do (Ray Charles') *What'd I Say* on it. It doesn't work very well. I say: 'Jerry Lee, sing them some Hank Williams songs' because I loved country music and knew he did too. So he does. And it went

down really well with the audience. Later on Jerry Lee would record some great country records but, back then, I don't think he had really thought about it."

Perhaps most importantly for Hodges on the tour was the piano lessons he received on stage every night.

"I'm good at learning by observation – I got to learn to play guitar by watching Lonnie Donegan's hands whenever he was on telly singing *Rock Island Line* – so when I got to play bass behind Jerry Lee I was watching him play every night. When that first tour finished I had come on in leaps and bounds. It wasn't a case of me sitting down with Jerry Lee and asking him for lessons – I didn't, and he wouldn't have given them. And there were no soundchecks in those days. Whoever had the job of setting up the

"Jerry Lee was a great guy to tour with. One day in Berlin we did six performances in one day! We started at 2pm and finished at 2am."



Bona fide national treasures Chas & Dave released a new album, *A Little Bit Of Us*, this year on their Rockney label

gear would make sure the sound was right – and most of the time it was – so we’d just turn up and play.

“What I would do, after playing behind him every night, is when we were packing up I’d sit down at the piano and have a boogie, work on the things I was seeing him do. So I was learning fast. Years later I was told that he said I was his favourite bassist! Kenny Lovelace asked him who his favourite bassist was and he said: ‘That English guy.’ Kenny said: ‘Chas?’ and Jerry Lee said: ‘That’s him, Chas!’ I was honoured to hear that. Kenny told him I’d become more well known as a pianist

and so he gave Kenny a message for me – ‘I’m pleased to see you’ve mastered the piano’. Very nice to hear that from one of my all time heroes.”

Jerry Lee To Gene

When the Lewis tour was over Arden immediately hired The Outlaws to back Gene Vincent. The legendary rockabilly singer was now far more popular in Europe than the USA but Chas remembers Gene as a very troubled individual.

“I didn’t think beyond the tour and when the Jerry Lee tour finished I thought ‘right, we need some gigs’ but there weren’t a lot

going. Then Don Arden gets in contact and calls us into his office and s offers us the Gene Vincent tour. I thought the world of him so was looking forward to going out on the road with Gene. But it wasn’t like being with Jerry Lee where every night you played up a rock’n’roll storm. No. With Gene, when he was good he was very good. And when he was bad he was awful.”

The Outlaws back Vincent from late 1963 through to 1964, and Hodges then relates a story of how The Outlaws were on stage at Hamburg’s now legendary Star Club warming up a crowd who were enthusiastically waiting for their US hero.



A LITTLE BIT OF CHAS & DAVE...

INSIDE THE DUO'S FIRST ALBUM IN 30 YEARS TO FEATURE THEIR OWN SONGS

In 2013, Chas & Dave released *That's What Happens* their first studio LP in 18 years. The collection of covers, featuring the likes of *Railroad Bill*, *Look At Me* and *Midnight Special*, harked back to their skiffle and blues roots.

Now, five years on, the duo have returned with a new album *A Little Bit Of Us*, the first to feature original compositions in 30 years.

Chas said: "The bloke who owns the studio where we recorded much of this album is Brian Juniper. He introduced me to Dave back in 1963 – Dave was at junior school with him. I was at senior school with him when, as 13 year olds, we started a skiffle group."

Released on their rejuvenated Rockney label via Cooking Vinyl, the album features 13 tracks – including *When You Wore A Tulip*, *Last Kiss* and *Sling Your Hook*.

Chas said: "*When You Wore A Tulip* is an old song we rocked up, we've done it to a few old songs in our time, while *Last Kiss* is the kind of song that Carl Mann or Jerry Lee would have done, had it been around in the 50s."

Hodges, who was diagnosed with oesophagus cancer in 2017, says that he "wrote a special introductory verse" to the song *Sling Your Hook*, which is his personal "message to cancer."

"As soon as we got in the studio it seemed like yesterday that we were producing our last album. This is our first Chas & Dave-produced album for over 30 years. Tell you what, though, we ain't waiting another 30 years before we do the next one."

A Little Bit Of Us is out now.



Gene Vincent, pictured with his wife Margaret, wrote a song with Chas that would later appear on a Vincent boxset – with a publishing credit given to Margaret

“When Gene was good he was very good. And when he was bad he was awful.”

Yet when Vincent came on he refused to sing *Be-Bop-A-Lula*, instead deciding to chat to the audience about problems he was having with his leg then attempting a dire ballad called *Lavender Blue*. Cue audience disapproval and band disbelief.

"I knew Gene was a heavy drinker," says Chas. "But I came from a family of heavy drinkers and assumed Gene would be like them – you know, go down the pub and have a session and get plastered! But he wasn't. He was an alcoholic. And I wasn't used to alcoholics. I'd never encountered one before. But I came to realise that Gene was one. There was a suggestion that Gene's wife was being unfaithful and this was driving him to drink. I don't know if this was true but he certainly drank all the time. He'd just stay in his dressing room with a bottle of whiskey, not eating.

When I offered to get him a hamburger, he'd refuse. I went to get soup – the best soup, everyone loved this soup – but Gene wouldn't have any. That's when I got worried."

Gene and Chas wrote a song together and years later Hodges found it on a Vincent boxset with his publishing credit being given to one Margaret Russell.

"He gave our song to his ex-wife! And I doubt she's going to give it back to me." But, in the end, Chas Hodges laughs and says to just know he co-wrote a song with sweet Gene Vincent is reward enough in itself. "We'll never see the like of those rockers again." ★

Chas & Dave tour the UK throughout June and play the British Summer Time Festival at Hyde Park, 8 July (headlined by Eric Clapton)

SUBSCRIPTION FORM SSHA18

Please select the magazine(s) of your choice:

FOOD HEAVEN
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

BAKING HEAVEN
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

CAKE DECORATING HEAVEN
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

GLUTEN-FREE HEAVEN
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

VEGAN FOOD & LIVING
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

SIMPLY VEGAN
 3 issues for £3 - then £6.75 every 3 issues

COUNTRY MUSIC
 3 issues for £3 - then £13.45 every 3 issues

ITALIA!
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

COLOURING HEAVEN
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

CLASSIC POP
 3 issues for £3 - then £13.45 every 3 issues

LONG LIVE VINYL
 3 issues for £3 - then £15.75 every 3 issues

VINTAGE ROCK
 3 issues for £3 - then £13.45 every 3 issues

THE GUITAR MAGAZINE
 3 issues for £3 - then £11.20 every 3 issues

MUSICTECH
 3 issues for £3 - then £13.45 every 3 issues

YOUR DETAILS

Title _____ Forename _____ Surname _____

Email address** _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Daytime tel _____

Mobile** _____

** Please enter this information so that Anthem Publishing Ltd, can keep you informed about your subscription via email or free text messages. You may unsubscribe from these at any time.

Anthem Publishing would like to keep you up to date with news, events, and special offers, and occasionally request feedback from you. Please tick the relevant boxes to indicate how you would like to be contacted. You can choose more than one.
 Email Telephone SMS No thanks

If at any time you wish to stop receiving communications from Anthem Publishing, you can unsubscribe using the link in any email you receive or opt out via our Privacy Policy.

Please complete the Direct Debit form below:

INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY DIRECT DEBIT

Originator's Identification Number
8 3 7 1 8 1

1 Name of your Bank or Building Society

2 Name of account holder(s)

3 Branch sort code

4 Account number

5 Instruction to your Bank/Building Society Please pay Anthem Publishing Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Anthem Publishing and if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Send your completed form to **FREEPOST ANTHEM PUBLISHING**
This is all you need - please do not include the full address!

Code **SSHA18**.
 *Savings are available to UK Direct Debit and overseas Continuous Credit Card orders only. After your first 3 trial issues, your subscription will continue at the listed price every 3 issues thereafter, saving 25% off the shop price (15% for Australia). If the magazine publishes 6 issues per year, the payments will be every 6 months. If the magazine publishes 12 issues per year, the payments will be every 3 months. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. If you wish to cancel your subscription, you may do so at any time. We publish 12 issues of The Guitar Magazine, MusicTech, Italia!, Long Live Vinyl, Vegan Food & Living, Simply Vegan, Classic Pop, Gluten-Free Heaven, and Food Heaven per year. We publish 6 issues of Baking Heaven, Cake Decorating Heaven, Country Music and Vintage Rock per year.
Offer ends 30 September 2018.



FOOD HEAVEN SERIES
3 FOR £3
 THEN **£11.20**
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



BAKING HEAVEN
3 FOR £3
 THEN **£11.20**
 EVERY 6 MONTHS



COLOURING HEAVEN
3 FOR £3
 THEN **£11.20**
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



COUNTRY MUSIC
3 FOR £3
 THEN **£13.45**
 EVERY 6 MONTHS

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- Get 3 issues for just £3!*
- Then save 25% every 3 issues thereafter*
- FREE UK delivery direct to your door
- Never miss an issue

TRY 3 ISSUES FOR £3*

on this fantastic range of magazines!

Sit back and relax this summer with some great summer reads. You can try any of our magazines below for just £3 - saving up to 85% on the first 3 issues. Continue on subscription after the trial, saving 25%.



CAKE DECORATING HEAVEN
3 FOR £3
 THEN £11.20
 EVERY 6 MONTHS



VEGAN FOOD & LIVING
3 FOR £3
 THEN £11.20
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



SIMPLY VEGAN
3 FOR £3
 THEN £6.75
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



GLUTEN-FREE HEAVEN
3 FOR £3
 THEN £11.20
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



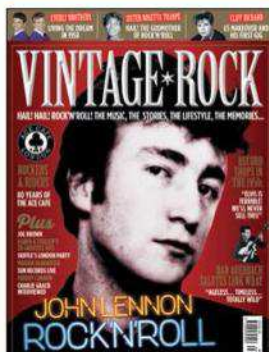
ITALIA!
3 FOR £3
 THEN £11.20
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



CLASSIC POP
3 FOR £3
 THEN £13.45
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



LONG LIVE VINYL
3 FOR £3
 THEN £15.75
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



VINTAGE ROCK
3 FOR £3
 THEN £13.45
 EVERY 6 MONTHS



THE GUITAR MAGAZINE
3 FOR £3
 THEN £11.20
 EVERY 3 MONTHS



MUSICTECH
3 FOR £3
 THEN £13.45
 EVERY 3 MONTHS

3 EASY WAYS TO ORDER



ONLINE AT
shop.anthem-publishing.com
 Enter code SSHA18



CALL US ON
+44 1371 853609
 USA TOLL-FREE 0800 428 3003
 Quote code SSHA18

OR COMPLETE THE ORDER FORM (OPPOSITE) UK Only

Memories Of Memphis

WORDS BY GARTH CARTWRIGHT

Charlie Musselwhite is now considered the granddaddy of blues harp, but as a kid growing up, he was neighbour to Johnny and Dorsey Burnette and hanging at parties with Elvis. *Vintage Rock* hears 'Memphis Charlie' talk about a unique musical education...

Charlie Musselwhite's voice resembles Tennessee bourbon: rich, smooth, warm. Yet his face, deeply lined and scarred, suggest a life lived the hard way. "I used to drink and go crazy," says the veteran blues musician, now 74, "but I stopped all that a long time ago." Musselwhite is in a reflective mood as he prepares to play Shepherd's Bush Empire with the much younger blues-rock guitarist Ben Harper. "I'm feeling kinda ragged," he says. "But I'm OK. I've been touring in Europe and, even when I was young I found touring tough and now, sleeping on a bus in a bunk bed, it's not getting any easier."

Not that Musselwhite is complaining. He's spent his lifetime playing blues harmonica and singing, never getting rich or famous but carving out a reputation as one of the best out there. Not for him the overloaded rock guitars that bedevil so many contemporary blues artists, Charlie keeps it soulful and down home. Very Memphis. For it is Memphis, Tennessee, where he grew up and soaked in so much great music.

"I was born in Mississippi hill country so my people were what you might call hillbillies. We shifted to Memphis when I was an infant. Memphis is a river town, kind of rough and musically very rich. As a child I'd follow these black street singers around and try and figure out how they did it."

Memphis in the 50s operated under laws that enforced strict racial segregation but young Charlie ignored both the law and the Ku Klux Klan, crossing the tracks

to befriend Gus Cannon, Will Shade and Furry Lewis, black bluesmen whose pioneering 20s recordings helped invent American music. Cannon, he recalls, would sit on his porch, sip cheap wine and play banjo, never dreaming his jug band tune *Walk Right In* would become a popular standard.

Sounds of the South

"My mother was a Mississippi Delta girl but she didn't fit any of the Southern stereotypes. She always taught me to respect everyone. I never thought of 'them and us', it was all of us. Those guys were good people. They were happy to have a young guy who wanted to learn how to play blues hanging around."

Indeed, Charlie's connection with the street musicians who played across downtown Memphis for tips ensured he was engaging with men who had once lead the Memphis Jug Band and Cannon's Jug Stompers. His connection to this now vanished era meant he appeared in the 2017 BBC TV series *American Epic*, speaking eloquently on a time when the sounds that would shape rock'n'roll were taking shape.

"The Memphis street singers were blues musicians, some of them well known and some not

known at all," he says when I ask about that era. "I got to know Will Shade and Furry Lewis, who both had enjoyed real success back in the 20s and 30s, but I also got to know plenty of other guys who weren't famous at all. One guy, Abe MacNeal, was a blind guitar player who played for tips on the street. He was really good. I got to know him via Will Shade as everyone was always visiting Will, he was held in such high regard by everyone, they'd turn up with a bottle of Golden Harvest sherry.

"One of the guys I met playing on Beale Street told me he had played with Sonny Boy Williamson. Recorded with him too. But I never got his name. The street singers would

perform on Beale Street and all over downtown. But Beale Street – back then, today it barely has any relationship to the Beale of the 50s and 60s – was where all of black Memphis would come to shop and party. It was full of pawn shops, cafes, bars and The Home Of The Blues record shop packed with people, mainly black. I loved going there!

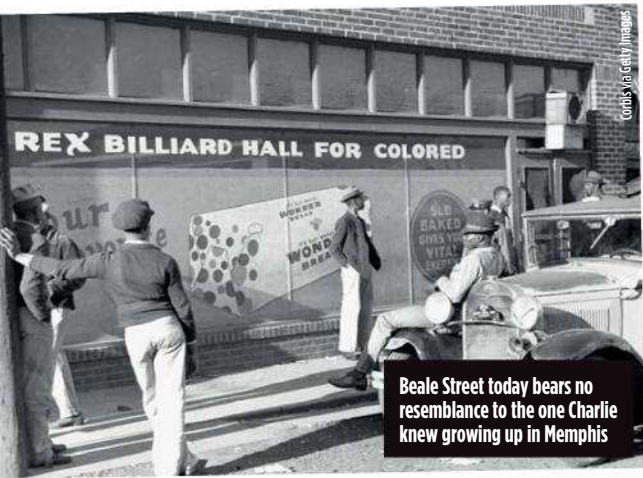
"I was on Beale the day they unveiled the statue of WC Handy (1960). They had Mahalia Jackson sing when they unveiled the statue. They had problems with the PA and Mahalia said: 'don't worry, I'll just sing without it' and she did and, man, what a magnificent voice she



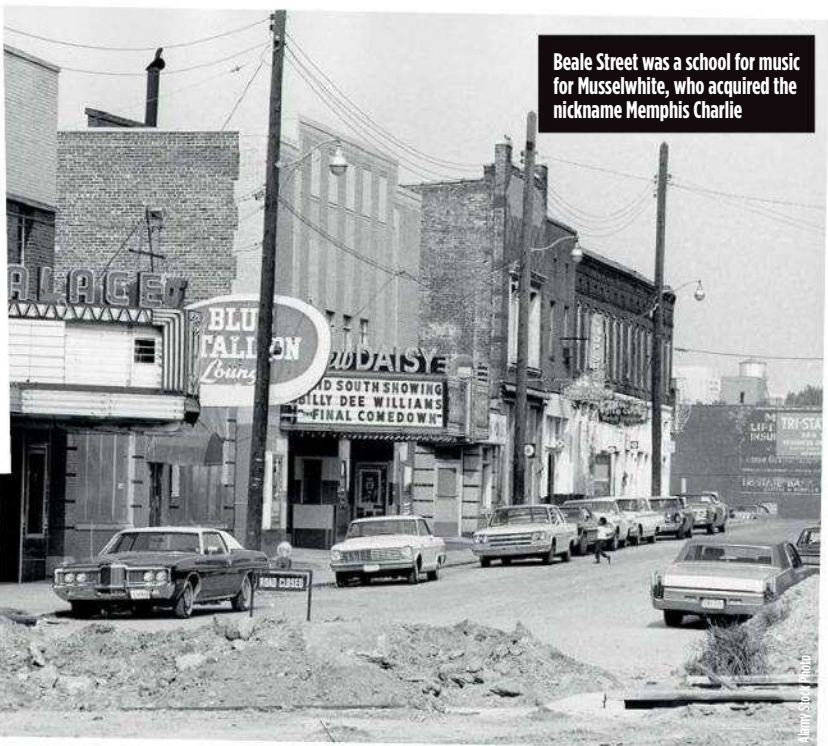
Charlie Musselwhite happened upon the unveiling of the WC Handy statue when he followed a marching brass band



“
As a child I'd follow these black street singers around and try and figure out how they did it..



Beale Street today bears no resemblance to the one Charlie knew growing up in Memphis



Beale Street was a school for music for Musselwhite, who acquired the nickname Memphis Charlie

had! It was a really hot day but I got goosebumps on my arms just listening to her sing. Ernest Withers took photos of that event. I've never seen them, but if you find them look and you might see one white face in the crowd – and that's me! Thing is, I didn't know they were going to present the statue on Beale Street that day. I was up on main street when this black high school brass band came marching past playing *St Louis Blues* and they sounded so good that I just followed them. When they turned into Beale Street they marched right up to the statue. I just got lucky!"

We ask Charlie about some other Memphis pioneers – the rockers who

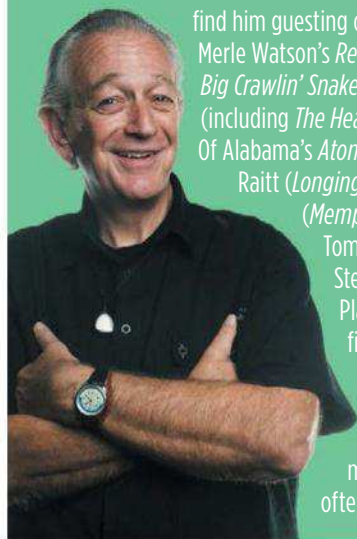
exploded out of the city in the mid-50s. He smiles and says that before even rock'n'roll had a name, he knew something was going on. Local radio DJ Dewey Phillips' show *Red, Hot & Blue* showcased new blues and R&B records and Charlie and all his friends listened in. While across the road lived the Burnettes...

"My neighbours were Johnny and Dorsey Burnette and, while they were a good bit older than me, they let me hang out with them. I remember as a kid seeing the Burnette brothers with bloodshot eyes and I'd never before seen anyone with red eyes, so went home and told my mom and she said: 'they've been doing some

Memphis Charlie On Record

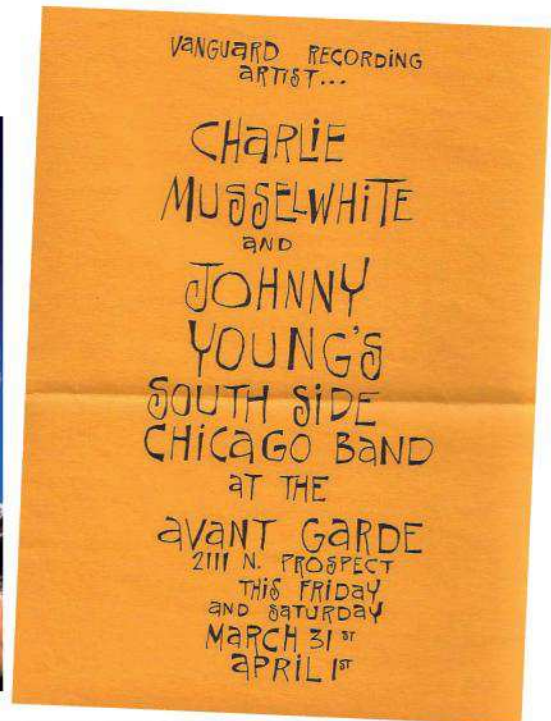
STUDIO SESSIONS WITH A HARMONICA LEGEND
Charlie Musselwhite first entered the studio in 1965 to play harmonica on John Hammond's *So Many Roads*. His solo debut was 1967's *Stand Back! Here Comes Charley Musselwhite's Southside Band* on Vanguard and, since then, he has released over two dozen solo albums.

Musselwhite's formidable talents as a harmonica player find him guesting on many albums. He's on Doc & Merle Watson's *Red Rockin' Chair*, Big Joe Williams' *Big Crawl'n' Snake*, several John Lee Hooker albums (including *The Healer*), gospel legends the Blind Boys Of Alabama's *Atom Bomb*, roots efforts by Bonnie Raitt (*Longing In Their Hearts*), Boz Scaggs (*Memphis*), Cyndi Lauper (*Memphis Blues*), Tom Waits (*Mule Variations*) and Cat Stevens/Yusef (*Tell 'Em I'm Gone*). Playing with real Memphis musicians finds Charlie on The Bo-Keys' *Got To Get Back!* He's also on British acoustic bluesman Dave Peabody's *Dream Of Mississippi* – the two musicians being good friends and often touring together.



Since his 1967 debut, Musselwhite has been a guest performer on albums by many other musicians, including Doc & Merle Watson, John Lee Hooker and Dave Peabody

“When I was young I found touring tough and now, sleeping on a bus in a bunk bed, it’s not getting any easier”
– Musselwhite on life on the road



drinking!” I didn’t know anything about alcohol back then. I’d sure learn plenty later on. Anyway, the Burnettes were local boys made good and we were proud of them.”

Rockin’ with The King

“I just thought the whole thing going on with rockabilly and rock’n’roll was so exciting! Everyone was excited for the Burnettes when *Train Kept A-Rollin’* came out (1956). The Rock And Roll Trio made great records, we all wanted them to do well. Because they – and especially Elvis – validated us.

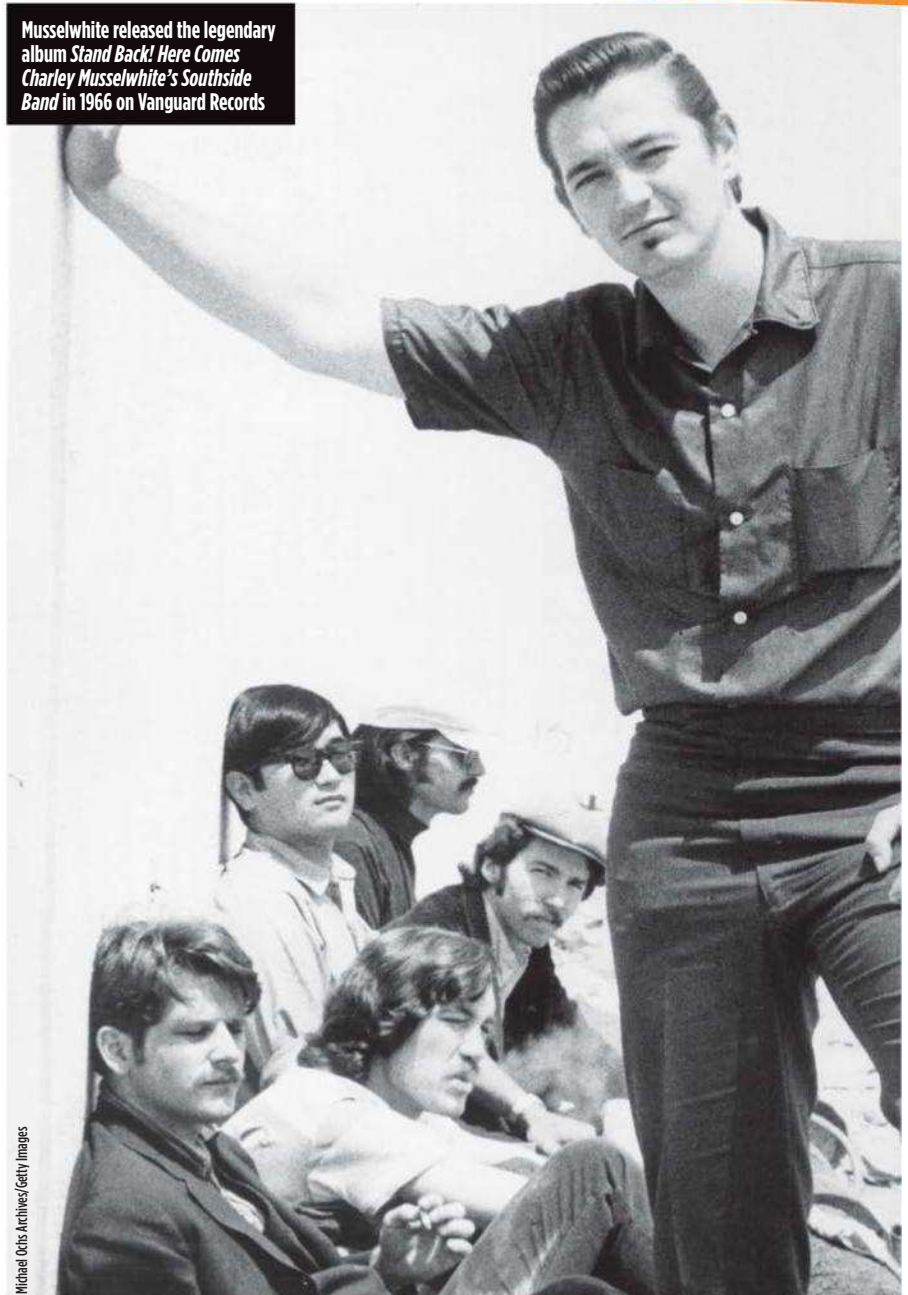
“In Memphis society you have the rich white cotton families at the top and the blacks at the bottom and us poor whites were right down there with the blacks. Not as oppressed, but treated with contempt.

“When Elvis broke through he represented us. We all had our hair long and greased into DAs like him – not long by today’s standards, but very long back then – and all shopped on Beale Street for wild shirts. We didn’t copy Elvis’ look, we were *all* dressing like that. And we sure as hell →

“

I just thought the whole thing going on with rockabilly and rock’n’roll was so exciting!

Musselwhite released the legendary album *Stand Back! Here Comes Charley Musselwhite’s Southside Band* in 1966 on Vanguard Records





Musselwhite has spent his lifetime playing blues harmonica, never getting rich or famous but carved a reputation as one of the best

Courtesy Charlie Musselwhite



Dan Montak

Ben Harper and Charlie Musselwhite's new album *No Mercy In This Land* follows their acclaimed 2013 collaboration, *Get Up!*, which won the Grammy for Best Blues Album

didn't look like other white people. Elvis was one of us and that meant something."

Memphis is a small city and its new rock'n'roll stars could regularly be seen around and about. Musselwhite recalls both Johnny Cash and Jerry Lee Lewis going to local hangouts.

"I went to high school with Johnny Cash's little brother Tommy, and we both played basketball and Johnny would come to all the basketball games. I was a big fan. I owned all his Sun singles and just loved their sound so I was always excited when I saw him. I don't think he ever sounded quite as good again after he left Sun. That said, he was a great man and had a very impressive career.

"I used to see Jerry Lee Lewis around town plenty. He had this orange red 57 Lincoln convertible and he'd tear around town in it, his long hair blowing behind him in the breeze. He liked the same hamburger place I used to frequent so I'd see him there often. Memphis was full of musicians, that's how it seemed to me. But I didn't know anywhere else as I'd never been anywhere else."

While Charlie saw less of Elvis around town – his sudden superstardom making

him retreat from public – he was fortunate enough to be invited to parties Presley would hold.

"When Elvis became popular it kind of validated all us po' boys from Mississippi. We all had immense respect for Elvis and I got to know him by going to these big Memphis parties he'd hold – he'd rent a movie theatre or a fairground or a skating rink from midnight 'til dawn and throw a party – and he was a real nice guy, had a great sense of humour.



When Elvis became popular it kind of validated all us po' boys from Mississippi



Musselwhite was reportedly the inspiration for the character played by Dan Aykroyd in the *Blues Brothers*

Jeff Kravitz/FilmMagic, Inc/Getty Images



“Thing I remember most strongly from those days is at the end of the party you would come out on the street and Elvis and his people would get in these long, black limousines and take off down Highway 51 to Graceland. Man, that just looked so... impressive.”

The Wild One

A more unsung hero of Memphis rock'n'roll is the DJ Dewey Phillips. His *Red, Hot & Blue* radio show played all kinds of new and exciting music – he famously played Elvis' *That's All Right* as soon as Sam Phillips gave him a copy so launching Presley's career – and Charlie remembers Dewey with real affection.

“Old Dewey Phillips was one of the great Memphis characters of those days. He loved basketball too so I'd see him at matches. He had his *Red, Hot & Blue* radio show which is where Elvis got his first ever radio play and it was a great show, just crazy like Dewey. Most people know about the radio show but they don't often know he had a TV show too. A local TV show. Initially it was on in the afternoon for the kids coming home from school but Dewey was so crazy, so out there, that they kept shifting it to later time slots until it was the last thing on, really late. And Dewey on TV,

he was just insane! I've never since seen any kind of TV like that. One day they just pulled the plug on it while it was being filmed. See, one of the guys in the studio had got this life size cut-out of Marilyn Monroe and started pretending to hump it in front of the cameras! That was it! Obscenity! Dewey got fired and banned! But, man, he made TV like no one else and none of it has survived, which is a real shame as he had so much great music on it too.”

Charlie chuckles at the memory then says: “I'll tell you what has to be the most memorable thing I've ever seen on TV and, of course, it was on Dewey's show. It's 1957 and Dewey has Jerry Lee Lewis as his guest. Jerry's got a new 45 out and he's discussing it with Dewey – Dewey is sat behind a desk covered in all kinds of crap – and what Jerry Lee can't see is that one of Dewey's sidekicks, Harry, is coming up behind him. Harry always wore this big overcoat and out of one of the pockets



Jerry Lee Lewis had this orange red 57 Lincoln convertible and he'd tear around town in it

he pulls a roll of tape. Dewey acts like nothing strange is happening and suddenly Harry is wrapping tape around Jerry Lee, literally taping him to the chair. Then Harry starts playing with Jerry Lee's really long hair. And you can tell from Jerry Lee's face that he didn't like it one bit! Then Harry takes the chair and starts dragging it around the studio with Jerry Lee taped to it. Then Harry lays the chair down on the floor and walks away and Jerry Lee is there, trapped. I just rolled on the floor laughing! No one could control Dewey! He was a crazy character and helped make Memphis special. It's such a shame there's no surviving footage.”

In 1962 Charlie would be forced to flee up the Hillbilly Highway to Chicago – the local police found out about a moonshine still he operated. Settling in Chicago, he began attending blues bars on the city's South Side and soon developed into a formidable blues harmonica player and singer. More than 50 years on and Musselwhite is celebrated as the inspiration behind the *Blues Brothers*, has called John Lee Hooker his best friend, won Grammys and much more. It's a remarkable career for a man often known simply as ‘Memphis Charlie’.

“It never occurred to me that I could do rockabilly,” says Musselwhite. “I loved rockabilly, country, gospel and blues. But I never thought of myself as a performer when I was growing up. When I got to Chicago I wasn't preparing myself for a career. If I had, I would have asked a lot more questions when I was around all those great musicians!” ★



WORDS
BY
DAVID
WEST

It's Alive!!! 10 Killer Retro Sounds For 2018

In an era of manufactured pop, so-called talent TV shows, and Auto-Tuned vocals, *Vintage Rock* celebrates 10 killer contemporary acts whose roots run deep into the fertile ground of rock'n'roll.

Frank Sinatra hated rock'n'roll... "It is the most brutal, ugly, desperate, vicious form of expression it has ever been my misfortune to hear," he declared in 1957. But it's easy to see why Sinatra felt threatened by this new, raucous form of music that made the old guard of crooners suddenly look out of date. Six decades later, while Sinatra's swing has been reduced to an identikit parade of Rat Pack tribute acts, the heart of rock'n'roll is kept beating wild and free by a new generation determined to stamp their mark on the music.

"Definitely not traditional," says North Carolina's Nikki Hill of her own approach. "I don't force a style, as that would just be a farce. Music of the past is a great guide and the best influence, you have to know your history. I think that helps people find their own way eventually."

"I always paint with the same palette of colours," adds New Zealand-based Tami Neilson. "Those colours being rockabilly, soul, country, gospel and blues which all compliment each other, springing from the same musical origins."

From rockabilly to rhythm and blues, surf guitar to blues shouters, from the UK, USA, New Zealand, Russia, Sweden, and Spain, the artists collected here may draw inspiration from the past, but they're never imitators merely trying to recreate a past that mostly exists in the imagination.

"I would say I'm pretty traditional, but I also love to draw inspiration from bands like Ramones and B52s," says Celine Lee, who has done more than most to provide a voice and platform for rockabilly and country with The Ameripolitan Awards.

Throughout the world, the rockin' scene thrives in music festivals, specialist

recording studios like Sugar Ray's in Essex, and dedicated record labels including Spain's Sleazy Records, Wild Records in California, Western Star in England, and Bloodshot Records in Chicago.

It's not just the major festivals like the High Rockabilly and the Rockin' Race that have provided Anita O'Night and the Mercury Trio with memorable gigs.

"There are lots of smaller rock'n'roll parties worldwide with crazy, funny, lovely, on-the-loose people that have made us feel great," says O'Night. "From Big Rumble to Rockin' Swarm, from Shake -A-Round to Vulcan Rockers, and obviously the place where we played our first Mercury gig - Rock The Joint R&R Club."

Sixty-plus years after Old Blues Eyes dismissed it as ugly, rock'n'roll remains in rude health.

Suck it, Sinatra...

It's
Alive!!!
10 Years
Anniversary
2018



"We never write trying to emulate this or that. Our music sounds different cause we play free"

Anita O'Night And The Mercury Trio **50s inspired goodness from the heart of Catalonia**

"As a teenager I came across a Wanda Jackson album," says Anita O'Night, frontwoman of the Barcelona rockabilly quartet that bears her name. "It was kind of awkward and strange for my generation, and I was amazed. That led me to dig into the style and pick up a guitar with the intention of playing the kind of sounds I had just discovered." Formed from the remnants of two other groups, Bang Bang

and The Quasars, O'Night And The Mercury Trio released their debut EP, *Call Me Up*, in 2016, followed by the excellent *Mercury Rising* last year, both through Spain's Sleazy Records. "We mainly play 50s rockabilly, but we'll never deny what is good for our music," says O'Night and the band's sound taps into Wanda Jackson, Gene Vincent, and Carl Perkins, alongside a touch of jazz and R&B. O'Night's stage

name pays tribute to swing queen Anita O'Day, they've covered one of her signature tunes *Honeysuckle Rose*, and Keely Smith and Bobby Darin are also influences. "We never write trying to emulate this or that. Our music sounds different cause we play free," says O'Night whose next release will be *Train Tracks*, a country single.

Listen: *Mice Trap, Pretty Boy*

Visit: anitaonight.wordpress.com

“Crowd-surfing with a double bass in a small bar in Hamburg has its charms”

The Troubled Three Slamming Swedish rockabilly with a punk-ish edge

Storming out of Stockholm, Sweden, The Troubled Three play fast, loud and ferocious. At first sight upright bassist Travellin' Tom, guitarist Huckleberry Jerry and drummer Rick LeMae might look like rockabilly diehards, but their sound has plenty of R&B and shout blues in its DNA. “We never really cared for the classic Sun stuff,” says Tom. “There is nothing wrong with that, but we listened to rhythm and blues music from the 40s, 50s and adapted it to a trio setting with a bit more of a modern sound. Playing as a traditional trio it will always sound ‘rockabilly’ to people outside of the scene but the purists can sometimes find our style too raw and punky.” After testing the waters with a self-titled debut album of covers, they showed their writing chops with their own tunes on 2012’s *Moving On*. They released a new single, *'Til The Dawn*, late in 2017 and are writing new material while indulging their proclivity for sweat-drenched live performances. “Playing the Erchie Rock’n’Roll Party in front of 6,000 partying Italians is hard to beat,” says Tom. “But crowd-surfing with a double bass in a small bar in Hamburg has its charms too.”

Listen: *Ride My Bike*, *'Til The Dawn*

Visit: [facebook.com/thetroubledthree](https://www.facebook.com/thetroubledthree)



Tami Neilson

Soul, rockabilly and country in one sassy package

If Tami Neilson looks like she was born to perform, there's a good reason for that. She grew up touring around Canada in The Neilsons, as a baby she was held in Roy Orbison's arms, and she's opened for legends like Johnny Cash and Mavis Staples. Now based in New Zealand, her sound has grown from her country roots to encompass the full range of her inspirations. "There's nothing that kills creativity more for me as an artist and songwriter than having any limitations or boundaries," says Neilson. "So, if I love Patsy Cline and Mavis Staples and Nina Simone and Dolly Parton and Sharon Jones, why can't I mix all my influences together into one delicious musical feast?" Her 2014 album *Dynamite!* is a stomping listen drenched in R&B and country, where 2015's *Don't Be Afraid* was written after she lost her father. "It had a lot the darker, deeper rich colours of blues and gospel but there's always a thread of country and soul," says Neilson. "The new album *SASSAFRASS!* is full of celebration and female power and swagger, so it's painted with a lot of bright, bold colours. Lots of soul and sass and rockabilly."

Listen: *Walk (Back To Your Arms), Holy Moses*

Visit: tamineilson.com

"Why can't I mix all my influences together?"



Barrence Whitfield & The Savages

Vintage R&B hollerin' from one of the most savage bands in the biz

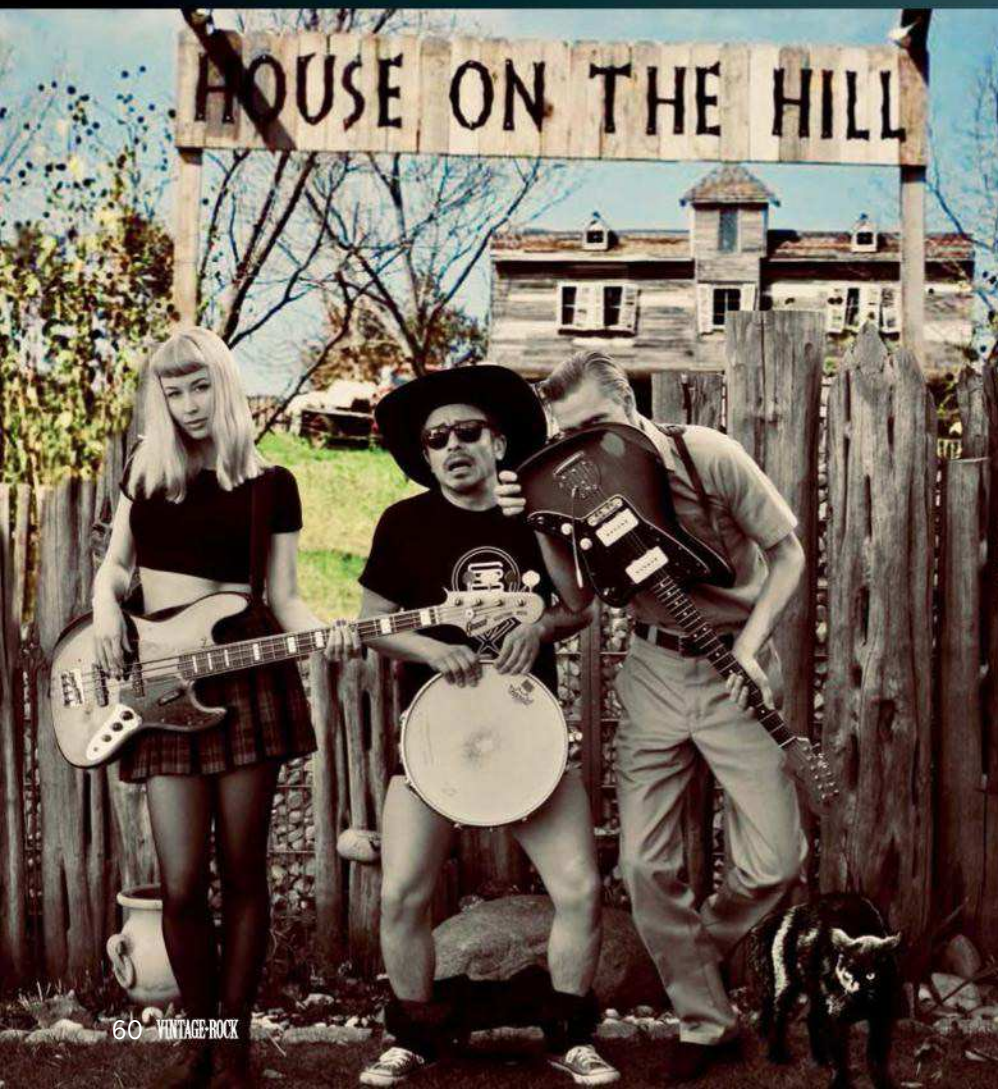
What's in a name? In the case of Barrence Whitfield & The Savages, there's a warning of the wildness that lurks within. Formed in Boston, Massachusetts, circa 1983, the veteran band blast out soul, blues and rock'n'roll with enough fire to melt the River Charles in the coldest frost. Feted in the UK in the 80s – "I think most people thought I was the next Little Richard" – the group disbanded in the 90s, only for the original line-up to reunite in 2010. Whitfield is equal parts Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Little Richard and Wilson Pickett, a practitioner of the darkest musical voodoo whose hollering could raise the dead. Since signing to Bloodshot Records they've kept the fires burning with 2013's *Dig Thy Savage Soul*, 2015's *Under The Savage Sky*, and this year's cosmologically-inclined *Soul Flowers Of Titan*.

Listen: *Tall, Black And Bitter, Hey Little Girl*

Visit: barrencewhitfieldsavages.com



"People thought I was the next Little Richard"



Messer Chups

Gothic rocking from Russia

"I just love music and immediately decided that I'd be engaged only in music and nothing else." So says Oleg Guitaracula, the founder of surf guitar trio Messer Chups. Based in St Petersburg, Russia, Messer Chups gleefully mash together the surf guitar twang of The Ventures and Dick Dale with movie soundtracks, snippets from old horror films and anything else that tickles their ghoulish fancy. "I love the classic rock'n'roll sound of the 50s, 60s surf music, as well as 60s lounge," says Guitaracula, who is joined by Dr Boris on drums and Polina Draculina on bass. Nothing if not prolific, the trio have an ear for a great album title, with releases including *Surf Riders From The Swamp Lagoon*, *Church Of Reverb* and *The Incredible Crocotiger*. Their live shows take place against a video backdrop featuring their favourite movie monsters, Bela Lugosi, Vampira, vintage pin-up girls, and clips from trash cinema heroes like Russ Meyer and Ed Wood.

Listen: *Midnight Call, Magneto*

Visit: messerchups.com

Nikki Hill **Late starter** **with a red-hot** **fiery voice**

Growing up in North Carolina, Nikki Hill wasn't looking for a career in music. "I never really dreamt about being a musician because where I came from, it just didn't seem possible," she says. "I come from a single-parent family, and work was just what was in the future, whatever paid the bills, and ideally something with steady income." Then she met her future husband Matt Hill, guitarist from The Buzzkills, and the music bug hit her hard. "I loved the energy and the wave of euphoria that came over me while singing. It was something I really had no idea was there until the last few years," says Hill, whose fiery delivery recalls great R&B belters like Etta James. "It was the most freedom I'd ever felt," she says. "I've just been chasing that ever since really. Any sense of freedom, joy, relief. Music is the only thing that gives that to me, so here I am." Her two superb albums, *Here's Nikki Hill* and *Heavy Hearts, Hard Fists*, drip with attitude, Matt's sleazy blues riffs, and that extraordinary voice. Now, Hill can be found: "Wherever the asses are shaking, the room is sweating, and the vibe is heavy!"

Listen: *I've Got A Man, Oh My*

Visit: nikkihillmusic.com

**"Any sense of
freedom, joy,
relief... music is
the only thing
that gives that
to me"**

Omar Romero

Wizard barber and Wild Records' studio maestro steps out front

Red Kennedy's Wild Records label has long been a torchbearer for the US rockabilly scene as the home to bands like The Rhythm Shakers, Delta Bombers, and Omar Romero & The Stringpoppers.

Not content to be just one of the artists on the roster, Romero is a regular session musician for other Wild Records acts – he can be heard playing lead guitar on The Rhythm Shakers' debut release *Flipsville* – and he's also their head studio engineer.

When he's not cutting tracks, Romero cuts hair in Vinny's Barber Shop in Los Angeles. Romero has also released his own albums *Take-Off Rhythm*, *Getting Wilder*, *Hog Wild*, and his 2017 eponymous LP.

His high-energy style channels the drive of the early days of rockabilly. *Step Back Baby* explodes out of the speakers like a classic Johnny Burnette recording, and his hiccuping vocal style channels the great Charlie Feathers.

Listen: *Step Back Baby*, *Wasting My Time*

Visit: [facebook.com/officialomarromero](https://www.facebook.com/officialomarromero)

When he's not cutting tracks, Romero cuts hair at Vinny's Barber Shop in Los Angeles

"I play music from my id and nightly hope to channel something timeless"

JD Wilkes / Legendary Shack Shakers

"Hillbilly meets Southern Gothic" from a true cult hero

A man of many talents, JD Wilkes is the explosive leader of the Legendary Shack Shakers, not to mention a solo performer, author, visual artist, and filmmaker.

"I have always inherently wanted to play music and have done so accordingly. It's just a by-product of being me," says Wilkes. "But I guess I wanted to pursue it professionally once I heard 'blues harp' being played in the music of Muddy Waters. I inherited my dad's old folk and

blues records and began overdosing on them. Once I learned how to bend notes on a harmonica, the notion of 'pursuing music' started pursuing me."

Wilkes describes his style as: "Hillbilly blues meets Southern gothic lyrics. Though recently I've delved back more into carnival and Phrygian styles, Spanish music and even Exotica." Whatever ingredients go into the recipe, the potent outcome is always intoxicating. "I play

music from my id and nightly hope to channel something timeless," he says. "Most of my tunes are written out of a dream state, and I perform them in a lucid, disassociated way as well. This is as close to transcendentalism as I, a white guy from Kentucky, could ever hope to get."

Listen: *Curse Of The Cajun Queen, Hellwater*

Visit: jdwilkes.com/
legendaryshackshakers.com

Black Kat Boppers Old influences and timeless rockin' mean these black kats shouldn't be avoided

"My only influences are old skool rockin'," says Roy Phillips, frontman of Southampton's Black Kat Boppers. With their hard-drivin' boogie and jump blues sound, the quartet has played plenty of big gigs, including Glastonbury, the Rockabilly Rave, as well as Bob Geldof's 60th birthday party. Their fans include Blur's Damon Albarn and The Clash's Paul Simonon who appeared on their cover of *Guns Of Brixton* and has been known to sit in live. "I know nothing about neo-rockabilly and the like," says Phillips who learned his trade busking around the South Coast in the 80s. "I only listen to mid-40s and 50s stuff, but I'm a 70s lad so I'm infused with punk, pop, ska, and I think all those influences can be found in our sound. But I just hear rock'n'roll. Some people say we're authentic, I beg to differ, but I know our vibe is definitely authentic." The Boppers are in the final stages of pressing their new album, the follow-up to 2013's *Boppin' Atcha*, hot on the heels of an appearance at Viva Las Vegas, where they shared the bill with Jerry Lee Lewis and The Stray Cats. "That's a biggie for me!" says Phillips.

Listen: *You're No Girl Of Mine, Hi-Flyin' Baby*

Visit: blackkatboppers.com

"I only listen to mid-40s and 50s stuff, but I'm a 70s lad so I'm infused with punk, pop, ska"

"I was always the bad bunny at the club and doing what I wasn't supposed to do"



Miss Celine Lee

Ex-Playboy Bunny turned retro rockabilly star and entrepreneur

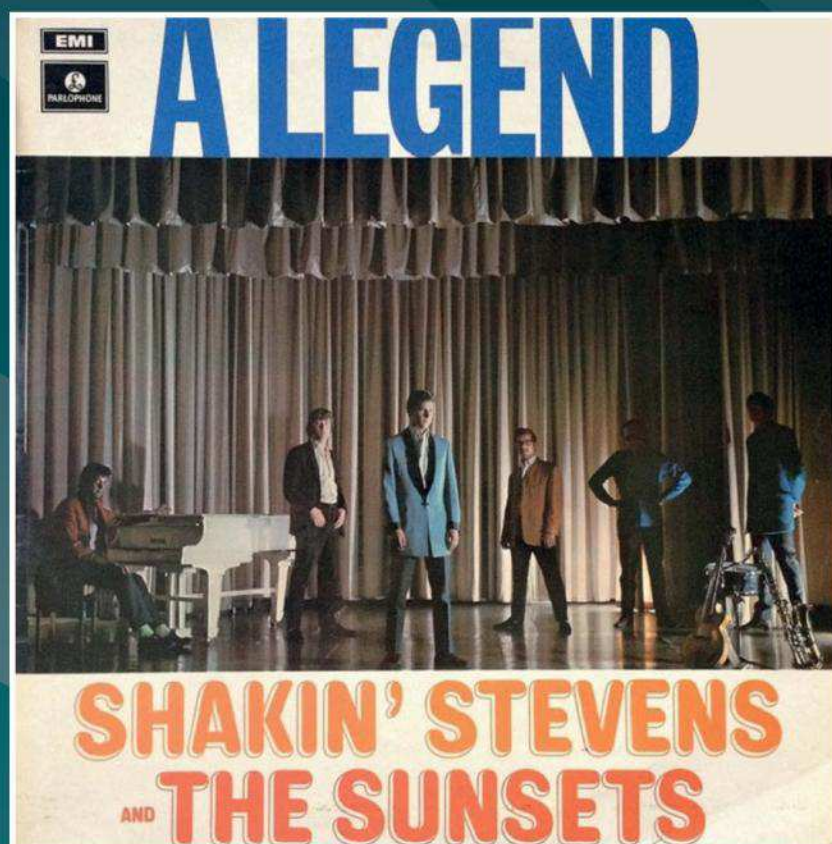
Celine Lee was singing rockabilly in New York when she met country star Dale Watson, who asked to use a photo of Lee working as a Playboy Bunny on a record cover: "I was always the bad bunny at the club and doing what I wasn't supposed to do," she says of her past. The pair started writing music together, culminating in Lee's 2017 debut album. "It's mostly a traditional rockabilly sound with a mix of honkytonk, and rock'n'roll," says Lee. "I started singing and playing a mandolin

with my grandpa and his Croatian polka band and would play every Sunday at The Yugoslav Club when I was about seven. They always incorporated traditional country music like Hank Williams, Kitty Wells, Patsy Cline and Bob Wills. I always loved being on the stage." She names Wanda Jackson, Loretta Lynn and Rosie Flores as musical heroines, and her grandmother who inspired her song *Miss Atomic Bombshell 1949*. She's still collaborating with Watson: "Dale's latest

album will be out soon and I'm singing a duet that we wrote together called *Johnny And June*," she says. "We're really proud of that song. We actually might do a duet album next." And if all that wasn't enough, she also runs the Ameripolitan Awards, celebrating rockabilly and country music – nominate for 2019 now at ameripolitan.com.

Listen: *Sayonara Sucka, Miss Atomic Bombshell 1949*

Visit: celinelee.rocks



Classic album

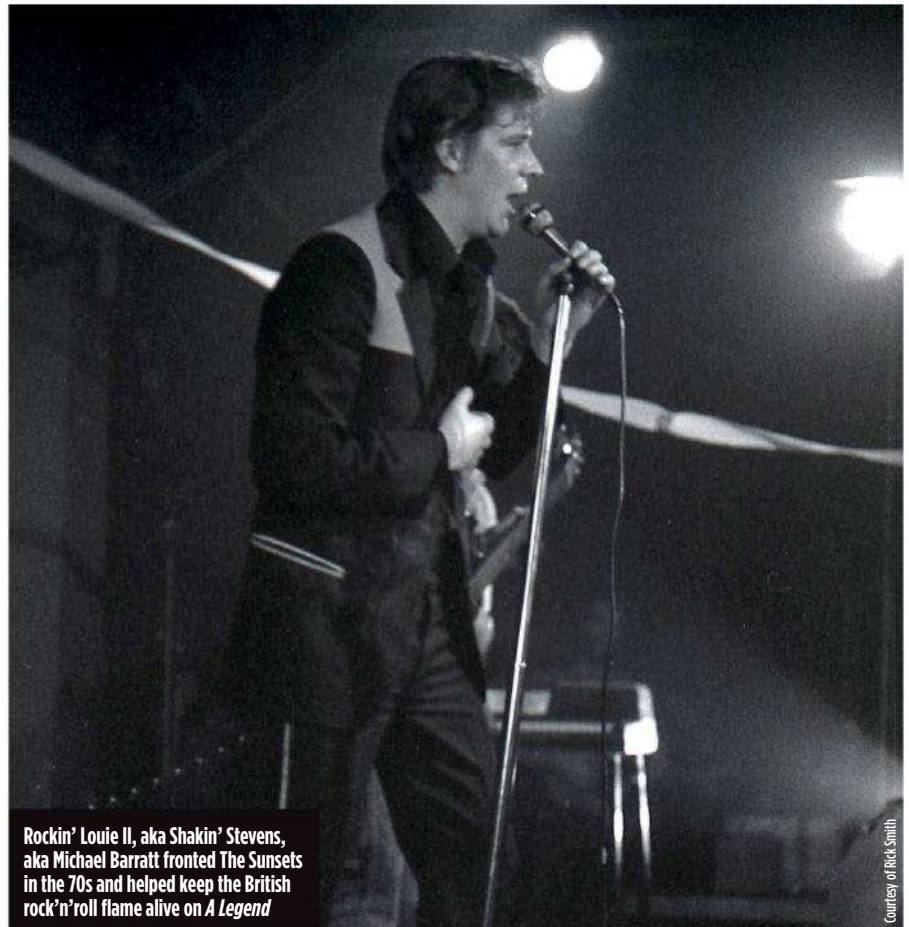
WORDS BY JACK WATKINS

SHAKIN' STEVENS AND THE SUNSETS
A LEGEND

Shakin' Stevens took rockabilly-lite to the top of the pop charts in the early 80s, but his first album with The Sunsets is one of the most explosive UK rock'n'roll albums ever. *Vintage Rock* revisits a lost and rare classic with the help of those who were there...

Shakin' Stevens' 80s hit-making juggernaut left no space for reflection on the earliest part of his career when he was cutting earthier, rootsier rock'n'roll. It meant the memory of his work with The Sunsets and their almost heroic part in keeping the British rock'n'roll flame alive fell off the radar.

Yet, given a fairer wind, their debut album *A Legend* could have sparked a full-scale rock'n'roll revival several years ahead of the event. When the album came out in 1970, some might have tagged it a retro blast from the past. But as far as these tough rockers from South Wales were concerned, "proper" rock'n'roll had never died. To them, this was no nostalgia trip, which is probably why the album holds up well today. Many current artists tackling classic rock'n'roll are too reverential, the strain to reproduce the correct sound leading to a tepid pastiche. The Sunsets were authentic enough, though they often used an electric bass, but the key to *A Legend* is the way they just attacked



Rockin' Louie II, aka Shakin' Stevens, aka Michael Barratt fronted The Sunsets in the 70s and helped keep the British rock'n'roll flame alive on *A Legend*

Courtesy of Rick Smith

the music, confident in their familiarity with songs which had been part of their live sets for years.

The other thing about *A Legend* is that, though The Sunsets were Shaky's band, they're not like faded wallpaper in the background. When Shaky went solo, the spotlight was always on him: at this earlier stage, the older guys playing behind him were just as crucial to the sound, none more so than drummer and occasional vocalist Rockin' Louie. In fact, for all the later comparisons with Elvis, Shaky's first

idol was Louie himself who, from the early 60s, had been frontman of The Backbeats, a rock'n'roll outfit from Penarth with a big following in the Cardiff area.

Rockin' Louie and his band, along with manager Paul "Legs" Barrett, were first generation rockers, genuine lifestylers of the scene since the first time US rock'n'roll broke on British shores, whereas Michael Barratt, to give Shaky his real name, gained access to the music via his elder siblings' record collection. While his contemporaries were switching on to the mid-60s beat music, he was hooked by 50s rock. According to Legs (no relation of Michael) he was "a young kid in awe of Rockin' Louie and The Backbeats," a local boy who often got up to sing with them, and they even dubbed him Rockin' Louie II. But not for long...

A LEGEND IN THE MAKING

As the 60s rolled on, even The Backbeats couldn't get enough gigs playing rock'n'roll and folded. Yet Michael Barratt persisted, forming a series of bands and a stage style promising enough to bring him to the attention of Legs, ➔

SHAKIN' STEVENS AND THE SUNSETS

A LEGEND • 1970 • PARLOPHONE

Side 1

- CAST IRON ARM** Scott, Petty, Orbison
- LEROY** Scott
- FLYING SAUCERS** Reilly
- PLEASE MR MAYOR** Stevenson
- LIGHTS OUT** Redernnach, David
- I'LL TRY** Twitty, Nance
- DOWN YONDER WE GO BALLING** Bartolomew, King
- HAWKINS MOOD** Hawkins

Side 2

- DOWN ON THE FARM** Big Al Downing, Edmunds
- LONESOME TRAIN** Moore, Subotsky
- I BELIEVE WHAT YOU SAY** Burnette
- THE TRAIN KEPT A ROLLIN'** Kay, Mann, Bradshaw
- SPIRIT OF WOODSTOCK** Maresca, Barrett
- I HEAR YOU KNOCKING** Bartolomew, King
- THIRTY DAYS** Chuck Berry
- SCHOOL DAYS** Chuck Berry

SHAKY GETS FRANTIC!

The most unhinged performance The Sunsets ever recorded

If there was weakness of early revival bands, it was a reliance on covers. Sometimes, however, Legs Barrett penned songs for Shaky and The Sunsets, and the incredible *Frantic* was a case in point, another of the tracks the band recorded with Dutch rock'n'roll enthusiast Pieter Meulenbrocks, released on a Skydog EP in 1975. "Piet said most of his sales were in France and he needed a wild, crazy, frantic record for French fans," says Legs. "So I wrote these incredibly simple 50s-style clichéd lyrics. Took me three-to-four minutes, and then I handed them to the band and urged them to create mayhem. They just went in and did it in two takes". With Ace Skudder and Rockin' Louie pounding away on piano and drums respectively, Shaky proceeded to lay down maybe the most unhinged performance he ever committed to tape – a delirious 2mins 45s of rockin' heaven. Thanks boys!



Louie would sing three songs, and duet with Shaky on another, the album benefiting greatly in terms of texture and variety, galling as that may have been for the young Shaky.

The album starts fast and stays that way almost all the way through. It's a textbook of how to play classic rock'n'roll, the songs being short with no filler, and no overplaying by self-indulgent instrumentalists. Some of the tracks chosen have subsequently become 50s-era crown jewels. But, in 1970, these songs were just fading from view. As Rockin' Louie says: "We thought we were keeping them alive, really."

So the band just plunged in, laying down compelling new versions, floating on a tidal wave of energy, enthusiasm and love.

The LP kicked off with *Cast Iron Arm* which Roy Orbison And The Teen Kings guitarist Peanuts Wilson had recorded in 1957. The Sunsets kept close to the original, but the production effect was muffled, sax, guitars and drums merging to form a captivatingly rhythmic wall of sound. A similarly fuzzy effect was achieved on Jack Scott's classic *Leroy*. Scott and his backing vocal group The Chantonnes were in a league of their own, but Shaky And The Sunsets just motored through to make their own stonewall classic rendition, Edmunds unstinting in his use of echo. On *Flying Saucers*, once again they were up against it. There may never have been a more thrilling intro to a 50s rocker than the siren-like guitar of Roland Janes and crashing symbol of JM Van Eaton which announces Billy Riley's Sun original. The Welsh boys didn't let that bother them and just picked up from where they'd left off with *Leroy*, like a band building up audience frenzy at a gig.

Please Mr Mayor, an old Roy Clark song, had a cascading, rumba-style rhythm which suited The Sunsets well. Carl Petersen stuck pretty well note for note to Clark's stinging guitar solo, but Paul Dolan's sax set an infectious rhythmic counter pulse. If Shaky sometimes sounded a bit underpowered on these tracks, sharing alternate verses with Rockin' Louie on *Lights Out* induced him to step up a gear. This track also had Trevor Hawkins tearing into a barrelhouse piano solo. *I'll Try*, a Conway Twitty ballad, finally gave everyone a moment to catch their

by now running a Penarth record shop. Paul "Legs" Barrett became his manager while gradually bringing in ex-Backbeats personnel like Rockin' Louie, on drums, and Carl Petersen on lead guitar. By the time of *A Legend*, Steve Percy had come in on bass, and Paul Dolan played tenor sax. Londoner Trevor Hawkins was on piano. The inspired name Shakin' Stevens And The Sunsets? It was picked up from an eccentric roadsweeper working the streets near Shaky's home, holding his broom like a guitar while proclaiming that his rock'n'roll band was called Shakin' Stevens And The Sunsets.

The band's profile quickly grew. Supporting The Rolling Stones, at the Saville Theatre in London in 1969, there were gasps when the curtains went up to reveal, as one hack put it: "a rock group looking as if they had stepped straight out of the local Palais circa 1958."

In drapes and crepes, they were curiosities. Radio 1 DJ John Peel came to a show and offered them a deal on his own Dandelion label. But although they cut an album worth of demos for Peel, they suspected his enthusiasm for roots

rock was skin deep. "We didn't like the idea of being a novelty thing," recalls Rockin' Louie. "It made us look quaint, which was not how we saw ourselves."

In the event, they were rescued by the arrival of Dave Edmunds. Another product of Cardiff, Edmunds invited them to record an album at his Rockfield studio in South Wales. A true disciple of early rock, even if his own excursions into it were highly individualistic, he had known The Backbeats. He was a better fit for The Sunsets than Peel, and the added inducement of going with him was that he could get them signed to the prestigious EMI label, Parlophone.

According to Rockin' Louie the songs they'd put down for Peel formed the basis of the *A Legend* album, though Edmunds initially seemed to believe he was going to be recording Rockin' Louie and The Backbeats. "Dave Edmunds didn't really want Shaky then, he wanted Louie," remembers Legs. "I said: 'No, Louie's my pal, but it's Shaky's band'. So he had to take him as part of the package deal... and Shaky was crying about it in the studio." In the event,

"We didn't like the idea of being a novelty thing. It made us look quaint"

ROCKIN' LOUIE



The vocal on *A Legend* was a foretaste of the future Shaky, the pop idol of millions of schoolgirl posters, with that memorable tenor voice, supple and frail at the same time

Fraas Verpoorten/www.popsidigital.nl

SHAKIN' STEVENS AND THE SUNSETS



Shakin' Stevens And The Sunsets spent a large part of 1973 touring Europe – here they at the Netherlands' Midsummer Festival Meerlo



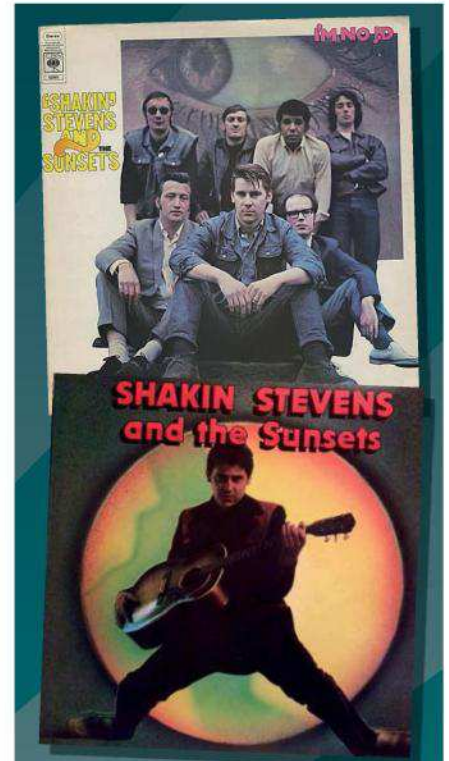
Shakin' Stevens And The Sunsets at the Essex University Christmas Party in December 1976

breath. The vocal was a foretaste of the future Shaky, the pop idol of millions of schoolgirl posters, with that memorable voice, supple and frail at the same time.

Rockin' Louie took over singing duties on Smiley Lewis' *Down Yonder We Go Balling*, showcasing his love for New Orleans rock'n'roll stylings. Louie's warm tones, more laid back than Shaky's, were perfect for the material, and this is one of the standout tracks on the album, the sound of sheer happiness. Hawkins was again memorable on piano, delightfully teaming with Dolan's sax, for a loose, off the cuff feel. Dave Edmunds strummed the banjo in homage to Smiley Lewis.

Then Hawkins who, with his long sideburns, bootlace ties and drapes, looked every inch the teddy boy, closed off the first side with his own composition, the pounding piano boogie *Hawkins Mood*, summoning the ghosts of keyboard maestros of old. It brought to an end what may have been just about

Courtesy of Rick Smith



LIFE AFTER A LEGEND

The Sunsets' sophomore

The story of Shakin' Stevens And The Sunsets didn't end with the commercial failure of *A Legend*. As well as remaining a hot band to catch live, they cut more good records. Their second album *I'm No JD* wasn't up to the standard of their debut, but still offered firm evidence of Shaky's growing assurance as a distinctive vocalist. *Sea Of Heartbreak*, in particular, was a superb version of the Don Gibson country hit. And if you need more evidence of what a superb band The Sunsets were, the LP *C'mon Memphis*, recorded in Amsterdam and released on Dynamite, is worth seeking out. If Shaky had stayed with The Sunsets, they would surely have found a place at the headfront of the growing rockabilly revival.

a shimmering, hoppin' and a boppin' rock'n'roll wall of sound that stood proudly on its own terms.

Rockin Louie was on vocals for *I Hear You Knocking*, another song by his beloved Smiley Lewis (see page 71). The good time feel was signed off by closing with a couple of Chuck Berry songs, *Thirty Days*, and a shortened

the most thrilling top side of a rock'n'roll album ever cut in Britain.

Down On The Farm kicked off the second side, keeping up the standard, once again Rockin' Louie on vocals for this Big Al Downing song. Legs had picked on the number after the legendary Ted, "Breathless" Dan Coffey, following one of his famous forays to the US in search of collectibles, had played him the demo Downing had done for Sam Phillips. The Sunsets' recording is notable for the snare drum sound, achieved by Edmunds placing a microphone under the snare instead of, or in addition to, the one normally

"We thought we were keeping these rock'n'roll songs alive, really"

ROCKIN' LOUIE

placed above the drum set. With a gated reverb, it created a rattling percussive effect that would be a signature sound of The Stray Cats and The Polecats albums Edmunds produced 10 years later. Additionally, the track pioneered the powerful string bass sound heard on those albums. Legs reveals Edmunds achieved it on this track by playing the bass with a drumstick.

Not all of Side 2 of *A Legend* matched the wall-to-wall brilliance of the first side, but versions of two train songs rendered immortal by Johnny Burnette And The Rock 'n Roll Trio succeeded by turning them into churning, boogified monsters, Shaky singing authoritatively without trying to replicate Johnny Burnette's maniacal screeches.

Lonesome Train pushed Hawkins piano to the front, but the real killer was *The Train Kept A Rollin'*. How could anything compare to Johnny Burnette And The Rock 'n Roll Trio's version? Yet Shaky and The Sunsets somehow laid down



Shaky at Essex University with Rockin' Louie (drums), Johnny Chop (guitar), Danny Wild (bass) and Ace Skudder (keys, hidden)

Courtesy of Rick Smith

School Days, for a whooping end-of-term-party effect.

THE SUNSETS FADE

Unfortunately, neither the album, nor a single, *Spirit Of Woodstock*, along with *I Believe What You Say*, one of the album's weaker tracks, sold well. Both Edmunds and the band had wanted *Down On The Farm* on the top side. And with Edmunds falling out with EMI after he released his own version of *I Hear You Knocking* on a different label after they'd rejected it, the band were caught in the fallout and got dropped. The band cut more quality material in the seven following years until Shaky's abrupt departure in 1977 – they even did a fine version of *Jungle Rock* before Hank Mizell's original was re-released with massive success in 1976 – but they never

scored a hit. A rancorous court case over unpaid royalties after the re-release of *A Legend* on the back of Shaky's success, pitted Stevens and Edmunds against The Sunsets in the 90s. It's one of the saddest things to relate that the rift has never been healed.

So Shakin' Stevens And The Sunsets were an unlucky band, but often a great one, admired by many beyond the rock'n'roll confraternity, including Sex Pistol Johnny Rotten and Dr Feelgood's

**“I've always loved
the black R&B
element of
rock'n'roll”**
ROCKIN' LOUIE

Wilko Johnson. The seemingly presumptuous title of *A Legend* was actually taken from a favourite 50s sci-fi book belonging to Legs, *I Am Legend* by Richard Matheson, the idea being to tribute rock's legendary pioneers. But there is something legendary itself about the exploits of this band, from a time when most musos thought the sort of music they played was beneath their consideration. There's a timelessness about The Sunsets' sound that has outlasted that of many trendier, more long-winded bands of the same period. They deserve a much bigger place in any history of British rock'n'roll than they have so far been accredited.

Live 1973 colour photography by Frans Verpoorten. Prints of these, and other rare live shots, are available to buy at www.popstockphoto.com.

“SHAKY WAS SO SHY HE WOULDN'T GET OUT THE CAR!”

Sunsets drummer and Backbeats founder Rockin' Louie remembers the making of a classic

Along with Shaky, and manager and occasional songwriter for the band Paul Barrett, Rockin' Louie (real name Robert Llewellyn) was one of the mainstays of The Sunsets. The lifetime rock'n'roller reflects on his influence on Shaky and getting fleeced by the record companies...

Louie, while the Sunsets were classified as revival band, you'd actually been playing the music since the late 50s?

Correct. The Backbeats first got together in 1959, and our first shows were in 1960. The line-up varied between a three-piece, sometimes going up as many as six of us. I'd play drums, or get up and sing, moving around all over the place, for which we had a replacement drummer.

Where did you play?

Mainly Cardiff and the Rhonda Valleys, occasionally in London. Our first show there was a club in Kingston on Thames, with Little Eva. She was just coming off the back of *The Loco-Motion* so it would have been 1962. We shared a dressing room with her and I remember how small she was. She really was little!

Who did you model your style on?

To begin with it was early Elvis, Carl Perkins, Charlie Gracie, Larry Williams and, especially, Little Richard and Fats Domino. I've always loved the black R&B element of rock'n'roll.

Shaky, in his Michael Barratt days, studied your performances very closely didn't he?

Yeah, he got his movements from me. When I was singing I had to move all the time, there was no way I could have stood still. It was just as Presley said when there was that backlash against him in 1956, I can't help moving. I felt the same. There's no way you can just stand up there with a microphone singing exciting music when you're a young buck who loves rock'n'roll. It's just not possible in my mind.

Shaky was known as a very shy young man. What are your recollections?

He was. He was a few years younger than the rest of us and he'd come and watch The Backbeats from the age of 14 when we'd



Rockin' Louie with manager Paul "Legs" Barrett today

play the Resurrection Hall in Ely, Cardiff, every Sunday evening. He'd ask me for my autograph. Years later, after Paul Barrett formed a new band, The Sunsets, around Shaky, he called me to see if I'd join. He brought Shaky up to the where I was living with my girlfriend at the time. But Shaky was so shy he wouldn't get out the car. Paul had to knock at the door and say: "Shaky's in the car, he's too shy to come in your house." So I had to go out to him and say "Hello, Yeah, I'd like to join the band!"

Who chose the tracks on *A Legend*?

We did. They were numbers that were part of our live shows. We felt we were keeping the songs alive. I think we were among the first of the revival bands, along with The Wild Angels, of course, who were playing around London.

You sing solo on three tracks and they are among the most satisfying numbers on an album that hardly has a weak song on it. *I Hear You Knocking* should have been a single in its own right, but in the end Dave Edmunds, having heard The Sunsets' take, had more success with it?

Yes, and I was probably the first to hear his version. He'd called in my house because he wanted to write down the song's lyrics. Then when we got to his Rockfield studio, Dave sat me down and said: "Listen to this." Of course, his version is guitar led, whereas the original is piano and sax. Well,

he played it having purposely kept his voice off it, just playing the backing track which Mickey Gee had arranged. So I thought: what the hell is this? I said to Dave: "That sounds like the chords of *I Hear You Knocking*?" He laughed and pressed this other button and his voice came on, and I said: "Christ! That sounds amazing Dave!" And to be honest it is a really good version, also borrowing Wilbert Harrison's *Let's Work Together*. But of course, my first love is Smiley Lewis. I prefer the black treatment, which I stayed with on my version.

Your solo album – *It Will Stand, by Rockin' Louie And The Mamma Jammers* – allowed you to give full vent to your love of the jump blues, boogie, sax and piano-driven rock'n'roll...

Well, it was something I'd always wanted to do. I was backed by people like Tich Gwilym (guitar), Geraint Watkins (piano) Don Weller (sax), Lincoln Carr (bass). When I got a copy of the record I was in ecstasy. I didn't expect large sales, just something I could be proud of, almost like a swansong, really. But, the people running Charly... I never did find out how many records it sold, or get any money. But it was a sleeper because 15 years later the track *Club Savoy* was a hit in the States, released on Ripete Records. But when we inquired about royalties, they said they'd leased it from Charly... so, as with The Sunsets albums, I got stuffed again. ★

VINTAGE*ROCK ORDER FORM

SSDPS18

YES! I WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO VINTAGE ROCK

UK Direct Debit – Just £3 for 3 issues then £13.45 every 3 issues thereafter (6 monthly)*

MY DETAILS

Title

Forename

Surname

Email**

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

Country

Phone number

Mobile**

**Please enter this information so that Anthem Publishing Ltd, can keep you informed about your subscription via email or free text messages. You may unsubscribe from these at any time.

Please tick the relevant boxes to indicate how you would like to be contacted. You can choose more than one.

Email Telephone SMS No thanks

If at any time you wish to stop receiving communications from Anthem Publishing, you can unsubscribe using the link in any email you receive or opt out via our Privacy Policy.

INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

ORIGINATOR'S IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

8 3 7 1 8 1



Name of your Bank or Building Society

Address of your Bank or Building Society

Name of account holder(s)

Branch sort code

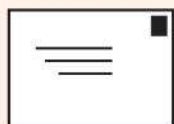
Account number

Instruction to your Bank/Building Society

Please pay Anthem Publishing Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Anthem Publishing and if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date



SEND YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO
FREEPOST ANTHEM PUBLISHING

This is all you need - please do not include the full address!

OFFER ENDS 30 SEPTEMBER 2018
OFFER CODE SSDPS18

*Savings are available to UK Direct Debit and overseas Continuous Credit Card orders only. After your first 3 trial issues, your subscription will continue at the listed price every 3 issues thereafter, saving 25% off the shop price (15% for Australia). Payments will be every 6 months. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. If you wish to cancel your subscription, you may do so at any time. We publish 6 issues of Vintage Rock magazine per year.

**SUBSCRIBE
TODAY AND ENJOY
3 ISSUES FOR £3
IN OUR FANTASTIC
SUMMER SALE**

YOUR SUMMER SALE OFFER

- **TRY 3 ISSUES FOR £3***
- **PAY JUST £13.45 EVERY 3 ISSUES
THEREAFTER, SAVING 25%**
- **NEVER MISS AN ISSUE**
- **FREE UK DELIVERY DIRECT
TO YOUR DOOR**

SUBSCRIBING FROM OVERSEAS?

- **EUROPE TRY 3 ISSUES FOR €8**
- **USA TRY 3 ISSUES FOR \$10**
- **AUSTRALIA TRY 3 ISSUES FOR \$15**
- **REST OF WORLD TRY 3 ISSUES FOR £8**

VINTAGE*ROCK SUMMER SALE

TRY 3 ISSUES FOR £3

WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE TODAY*



3 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE



ONLINE AT

anthem-publishing.com/vintage

ENTER CODE **SSDPS18**



CALL US ON

+44 1371 853609

QUOTE CODE **SSDPS18**



BY FREEPOST

COMPLETE THE FORM
OPPOSITE (UK ONLY)

THE FIFTY STORY MEN



The Bluejays, featuring Ollie Seymour-Marsh, Dan Graham and Chris Reid, are a youthful band whose new show, *Rock And Roll Revolution*, doubles as a history lesson in 50s music

With friends in high places and numerous awards to their name, VR discovers how the hot-rockin' Bluejays are the real rock'n'roll deal

WORDS BY
MICHAEL LEONARD

“Youngsters”, huh? What do they know about *proper* rock'n'roll? In the case of Ollie Seymour-Marsh, Dan Graham and Chris Reid – aka The Bluejays – quite a lot, actually. The eldest may only be 35 years of age – they weren't even a twinkle in their parents' eyes when Elvis departed for the celestial 7-11 in the sky – but The Bluejays are rock'n'roll scholars to a man and have been playing this music for years. And they're a brilliant band to boot.

The trio – plus an extended band for live shows – are currently taking a new show, *Rock And Roll Revolution*, across the UK in a mix of vintage rocker rave-ups and multimedia 'edutainment' that aims to equally excite and inform. More than “just” a gig, a lot less starchy than a history lesson, *Rock And Roll Revolution* is a show that's grown from the trio's shared background in some of musical theatre's toughest shows. By way of introduction, frontman Ollie Seymour-Marsh, 30, explains; “Dan, Chris and I met doing *Buddy* (the musical) about eight years ago. We did it in the West End, a UK tour and then Europe as well. I was playing Buddy Holly, Chris was playing (bassist) Joe B Mauldin, and Dan was playing (drummer) Jerry Allison, who is one of his absolute heroes: he's been studying those paradiddles on *Peggy Sue* since he was about three. Later, I did the *Million Dollar Quartet* show – I was Carl Perkins – and then I went on to do the skiffle show, *One Man Two Guvnors*. Through all that, I'd just learned more and more about rock'n'roll, all the pieces came together. We then formed The Bluejays, just to do corporate events and festivals really, but we always had it in the back of our minds to do our own unique theatre show.”

“The authenticity of the sound is paramount to what we try and do”

OLLIE SEYMOUR-MARSH

As a retro covers group, The Bluejays have already earned plenty of attention. They’ve won the National Vintage Award for Best Entertainment, the London Vintage Award for Best Band and the likes of Duane Eddy and Queen’s Brian May are fullsome in their praise and Ollie notes, “Musical theatre drills eight shows a week into you, and that’s not something a lot of gigging bands understand.” But for their *Rock And Roll Revolution* show, The Bluejays aim to move beyond just a well-oiled revival band.

“It’s not a tribute to a particular artist, it’s a bigger show about how all the pieces came together: folk music, country music, gospel, R&B this huge melting pot... even down to the early days of TV, the importance of radio, all coming together for this thing that had just never been heard before.

“We try and present the story in a new, fresh way. For example, the country ballad, *Blue Moon Of Kentucky* by Bill Monroe & His Bluegrass Boys, we play the waltzing 3/4 version like the original, and merge it into the Elvis version which just leaps out at the audience. There’s lots of little moments in the show that help join the dots for people, that show how the sound was created. The songs we do go from 1952 up to 1961, and we hone in on certain moments – like when Chuck Berry first played *Maybellene* at Chess Records; when

The Bluejays performed at Buddy’s birthday party at the Buddy Holly Center in 2017, where they were joined by Duane Eddy (below) and Buddy’s wife, Marie Elena (opposite)



Elvis first did Arthur Crudup’s *That’s All Right*. All these different artists have their own stamp and their own special circumstances. One of the things we look at in the show is Bo Diddley and his African inspired beats. They’d never been here in popular music, and suddenly he was adding that to guitars, amplification, maracas, it was really unique. Some of the outtakes you hear of Bo Diddley, he’s wailing away, it’s almost tribal, he’s got this incredible yell that he lets out. It really doesn’t sound like anything else.

“So the shows tries to explore the DNA of the songs, show how the sound was

BLUEJAYS AT BUDDY’S BIRTHDAY

“We have quite a close affiliation with the Buddy Holly Foundation in the UK and the Buddy Holly Center out in Lubbock in Texas,” explains Ollie Seymour-Marsh. “I’m very good friends with Eddy Weir, Buddy’s nephew. Last year, 2017, was amazing. We went out to Texas and performed at Buddy’s birthday party at the Buddy Holly Center, but we weren’t expecting to see Larry Holley, Marie Elena Buddy’s wife, and Duane Eddy there. We were only booked to play 10 minutes but everyone was having such a good time we ended up playing for half an hour, and Marie Elena got up on stage dancing and started doing the backing vocals on *Not Fade Away*. It was quite surreal. By the end, I was talking vintage Fenders and Gretsch guitars and flatwound strings with Duane Eddy. Larry Holley pulled me aside and said: You do the best Buddy I’ve ever seen! Whether or not he says that to every guy who’s played Buddy, I don’t know... but I’ll take it anyway! It was an amazing day.”

The Bluejays’ *Rock And Roll Revolution* show tries “to explore the DNA of the songs, show how the sound was created, and how it changed the world”





THE BLUEJAYS' BEST TIMES

PLAYING *BO DIDDLEY*
BY BO DIDDLEY

"We have a guy on maracas and two girls on shakers and then just hammering away at that iconic beat for 10 minutes. I just sit in the middle. Not literally!"

PLAYING *WIPEOUT*
BY THE VENTURES

"Our drummer Dan Graham is exceptional, we're really lucky to have him. He trained at Berklee College in Boston so he can play jazz, he can play anything. He's happy to play Bo Diddley, but we also love playing *Wipeout* and that's a great one for Dan. Every time we finish that one there's this huge eruption, the audience goes nuts."

PLAYING *WHEN THE SAINTS GO MARCHING IN* BY THE MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

"This song doesn't even feature in the *Million Dollar Quartet* show. I went back to the original recordings, from 4 December 1956. They didn't play rock'n'roll at all that day, they were just busking through old gospel songs, stuff from their childhood, and they were getting lyrics wrong along the way. But on this one track Carl Perkins does this little Travis picking thing which I just love. I annotated it, we evolved it and we now do this a capella version, with just me on acoustic guitar and the other guys on backing vocals. It's the most intimate part of the show, and I'm quite proud of that arrangement."

created, and how it changed the world." It sounds like *Vintage Rock*, but in audio and visual form? "There you go!" he laughs. "Easy sell!"

Past Masters

The Bluejays may be relatively youthful, but they're genuine in their love of all things vintage. Ollie Seymour-Marsh says his first love remains blues and rhythm and blues: "Growing up, it was Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters for breakfast, Fats Domino and BB King for lunch, while my parents were into Pink Floyd and disco. So I guess there was a huge chunk of my musical education missing." But getting the *Buddy* gig quickly filled that in and he adds: "The more I really listened to early rock'n'roll I realised: this is really where it all came together. You can trace *back* from 50s rock'n'roll, and you can travel *forward*. You soon realise this was the point where everything exploded."

The band remain reverential to that era, as well. Their albums, *At Home With...*, the live *On The Road With...* don't flirt with psychobilly, or putting "a new twist" on old classics.

"Recapturing that original sound is where everything begins for us," insists Ollie. "The authenticity of the sound is absolutely paramount to what we try

and do, and that manifests itself in the gear that we use, the choice of musicians that we use, the way we record the records – which is analogue, all tape, and all live. The only thing we do separately is my vocals, to deal with bleed. It costs more for us to record, at Ford Lane Studios (Sussex) which has an old Amek analogue desk, and it's harder work. But it's worth it.

"It's this rawness, the simplicity of sound... and when I say simplicity, I don't mean it's easy to recreate. It takes a huge amount of effort and work. You have to understand why a [Fender] Telecaster with flatwound strings sounds so different to another guitar with .009 gauge strings on it. But all those little touches are so important to the sound."

Away from the *Rock And Roll Revolution* shows, The Bluejays still plan to be out on the road as a straight-up rockin' band. Weirdest booking they've yet had was last year, for a private party hosted by one President Donald J Trump – "30 or 40 emails and plans exchanged, but it was probably the best outcome that it didn't actually happen in the end" – and they love playing the Classic TT bike show on the Isle Of Man: "There's always fabulous 50s and 60s bikes, of course, and even the Isle of Man has this sort mystical feel. Just looking across this sea of bikers when

we play is... I wouldn't say it's intimidating as such, but we just make sure we wear as much leather as they do."

So far, so good. Only question is: when they're five years on from now, will they have morphed into a Beat-era group trying to play-out the influence of Eastern mysticism on rock history?

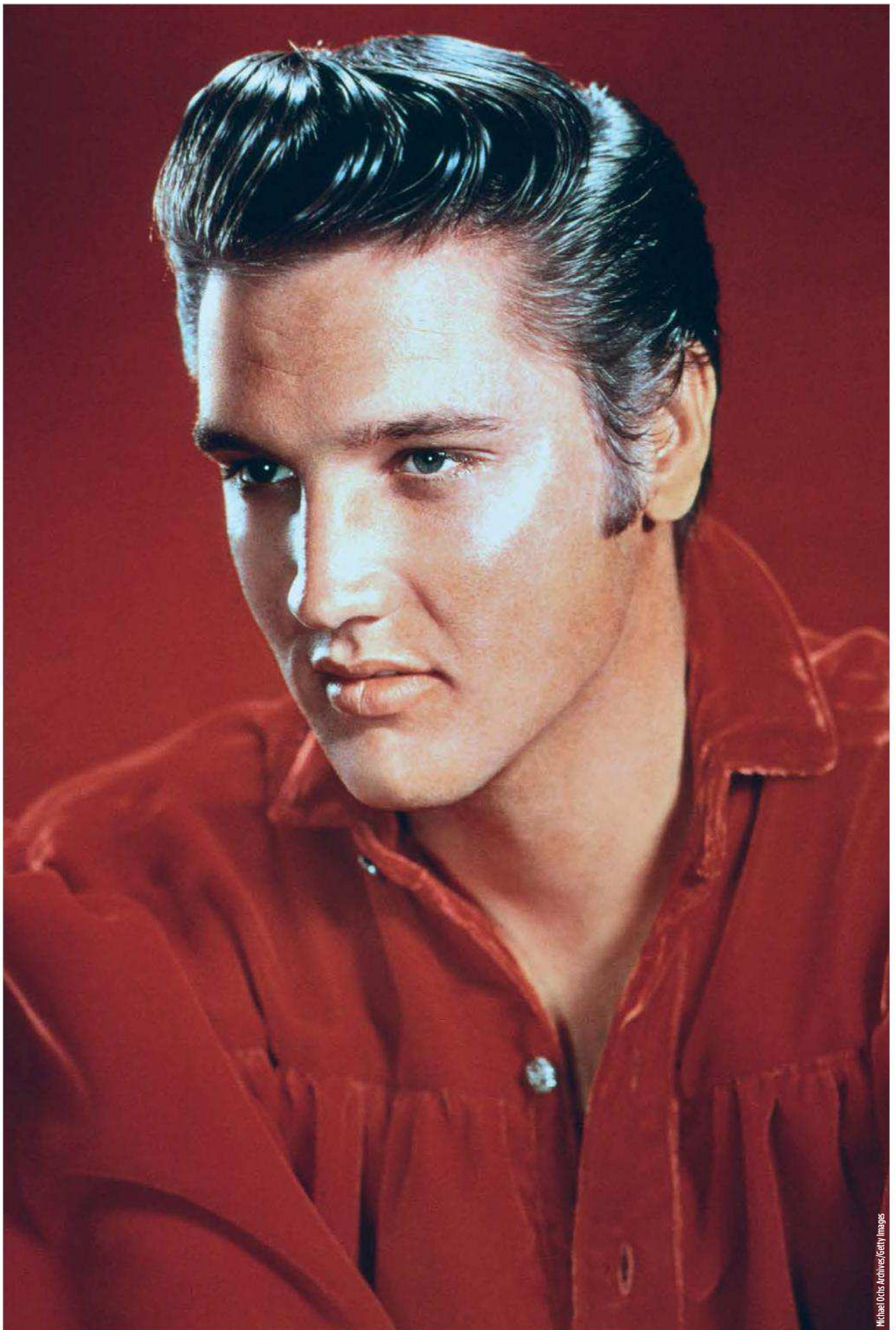
"Maybe, *maybe*," he laughs. "But, if anything, I would actually go backwards, I would love to go back and look more at the roots and the R&B music that I just love." Unfortunately, notes the fresh-faced 30-year-old from Surrey, "we maybe not the right artists to do that!" For now, The Bluejays are stuck in the 50s. And quite happy being there. ★



COUNTING DOWN THE KING

We know that Elvis Presley was much more than just good songs, a pair of swivelling hips and a curled lip. But how does an *academic* go about ranking his recordings? *Vintage Rock* finds out. ➤

WORDS BY JULIE BURNS



Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images



Elvis performs on the set of *Jailhouse Rock* with songwriter Mike Stoller (on piano), Scotty Moore (guitar), Judy Tyler, Bill Black, Mickey Shaughnessy and DJ Fontana in 1957 in Hollywood

Mark Duffett, a reader in Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Chester, has a new book out called *Counting Down Elvis: His 100 Finest Songs* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018). In this compilation, the music academic documents and evaluates key Elvis songs and places them in his personal order of merit, based on his views of the singer's creative contribution to popular music.

Author Dylan Jones has already praised it as: "Elvis catnip, a comprehensive collection of reappraisals of one of the most seriously misunderstood singers of them all. Publishers Weekly

"I hope the book offers insight into particular recordings, and sheds light on their social, cultural and political context."

said: "Presley fans will find this a fascinating and useful look at the King's work." But how does an academic even handle Elvis Presley's multifaceted career? We asked Dr Duffett.

How did the book come about?

I'd been researching Elvis culture, as an academic, for two decades. Rowman & Littlefield published a series where each volume recommended 100 books on each artist, such as *100 Book Every Blues Fan Should Own*. Because I had a big Elvis library, I thought it might be good to write one on Elvis but my commissioning editor said he would rather me do something for another Rowman series that counted down 100 songs for each artist. I jumped at the chance.

So are you an Elvis fan?

I am tempted to say, how could anyone not be? When I started researching Elvis back in 1995, I was definitely a music fan. In all honesty, though, I knew hardly anything about Elvis. As I researched him, I became a fan – not necessarily one of the most dedicated, just someone who really appreciated



Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

his music. So I made sure my research for the book was really detailed and that I understood those songs inside and out. The book has a 30 page footnotes section, a four-page bibliography, and comprehensive index. It's based on 500 references.

Who is *Counting Down Elvis* aimed at?

It's deliberately written to engage readers across the board. It's certainly not a photo journal, as there's not a single picture of Elvis inside. However, I hope it will appeal to both dedicated fans, people just getting into Elvis' music, and anyone curious to know more about why he was so great. For life-long devotees, it should work as a kind of refresher course or song resource. Many of us are already familiar with Elvis' music, of course, but we all have things to learn about why he selected, interpreted and performed songs in particular ways. I hope the book offers insight into particular recordings, and sheds light on their social, cultural and political context.

How did you choose and order the Top 100?

In a way, the 100 was really an excuse to do more investigation

and generate discussion about the brilliance of Elvis' music. I went with my instincts rather than any scientific measures. As I say in my intro, I had to skip a lot of gems and make some hard choices. Some songs grew on me while I was researching them, so their ranking changed a bit as the book was being written. I ended up with more appreciation of Elvis' ballads than before, later songs like *And I Love You So* or *I'll Remember You*. Then there was *American Trilogy*, which seemed to shoot up the ranks a lot just because it was such an epic. It just didn't seem right to put it next to, say, *Little Sister*.

Isn't it impossible to compare the best of Elvis' rockabilly, rock'n'roll, country, and gospel output?

What's been interesting to me is that some reviewers seem to think that I'm comparing different genres, depending on how high I've placed different examples of them. To quote *Publishers Weekly*: "He clearly prefers the rocking Presley of *Heartbreak Hotel* (at No.4) to the country Presley of *Gentle On My Mind* (No.91)... And though fans may differ with, for example, Duffett ranking Presley's version of *Bridge Over Troubled Water* at No.5 with its 'colossal feeling of spectacle' over *Good Rockin' Tonight* a rockabilly classic at No.68, most will appreciate the writer's enthusiasm'.

Although I *did* discuss some songs in terms of genre, I wasn't ranking based on *categories* – just looking at particular songs and the best versions of them. Elvis recorded so many great compositions that it might be possible to do his 100 best film soundtrack numbers or ballads, but that wasn't in the publisher's brief.

Without giving away your own No.1, how on earth did you choose it?

Elvis recorded more than 700 songs in his career, and I think most people would choose some over others. While my countdown includes plenty of classics, it's not structured as a popularity poll. I don't include signature numbers such as *Suspicious Minds* and *Moody Blue* for the sake of it.

If I included well-known songs like *Heartbreak Hotel*, *Jailhouse Rock*, *All Shook Up* and *Don't Be Cruel*, I thought it was because they had immense critical value.

What did you learn from all your research?

Plenty! I could have just waxed lyrical about particular performances, but I decided that I needed to know and say a lot more about certain numbers, their writing, history and interpretation. My aim was to dig down into the story of each song with an understanding that, to use (*Last Train To Memphis/Careless Love*) author Peter Guralnick's claim that Elvis was really, "an ethnomusicologist without a degree." I learned a lot trying to decipher which previous versions influenced Elvis the most. One of the things that struck me was the way that Elvis revealed the emotional

"I hope part of the fun for readers will be in deciding how much my personal countdown resembles theirs."



complexity of the material that he worked with. Take *Suspicious Minds*, it becomes apparent that it was actually a tragic lament within a show tune.

Elvis was peculiarly gifted at bringing the touching resonances of such multi-layered material to the surface. It was also a challenge to write about what Elvis was doing with his voice. I was constantly surprised at histories and details that I didn't know before. Sometimes it was a case of discovering that Elvis had covered songs, mostly as home tapings: things like *Ghost Riders In The Sky*. Other times it was about connecting what Elvis was recording with clues from his own record collection, or thinking harder about his personal interpretations. I knew that Elvis was somewhat constrained by his publishers the Aberbachs, for instance, in his choice of recording material, but I hadn't twigged how important live shows were in allowing him to shape his own recorded output. I also didn't realise the extent to which certain songs, like *Memories*, became signature numbers despite never being hits. Some facts were enlightening. I never knew, for example, that Elvis was set to have a Billboard country music No.1 with *Way Down* at the time he died; I thought that his death was what re-ignited his chart success.

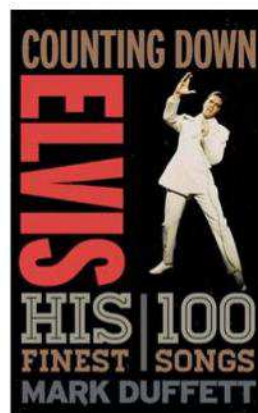
Despite its title, your book is in fact a countdown of 200 of Elvis' finest?

Yes. At the end comes an epilogue, if you like, '...And 100

More.' Elvis had so many great recordings we added a list of an additional 100, though these are not discussed in detail.

With all the Elvis books already out there, what do you hope this book achieves?

I'm not going to pretend to claim some kind of superior status as a devotee or critic. I hope part of the fun for readers will be in deciding how much my personal countdown resembles theirs. Since music is so personal, readers will probably disagree with the ranking of my 100. Nevertheless, I hope I have joined some previously unconnected dots, and offered a clearer picture of Elvis' role in perfecting his music.



Any plans to write further books on Presley?

Counting Down Elvis took so much effort I don't think we'll be seeing a sequel in the same series... However, I wouldn't rule out writing another Elvis-related title. When it comes to The King, there's always more to learn! ★

***Counting Down Elvis: His 100 Finest Songs*, by Mark Duffett, is out now.**

“His voice absolutely shimmers”

IN THIS EXTRACT FROM *COUNTING DOWN ELVIS*, DR MARK DUFETT ASSESSES ELVIS' PERFORMANCES OF *DON'T BE CRUEL*, WHICH HE RANKS AT NO.37 IN THE TOP 100

37. “Don't Be Cruel” (1956)

Pop scholar Richard Middleton once said that in Elvis' music, “rational control is heard as being threatened by hints of ecstasy, physical and spiritual, and therefore by a touch of the irrational.”

Perhaps he was talking about *Don't Be Cruel*. Scratch the surface of this innocent pop song and its vocals hint at other things. The writers, Otis Blackwell and Winfield Scott, had a special arrangement with Elvis' publishers Hill & Range: The company had first refusal on their compositions. If songs were not taken up, the writers could shop them elsewhere. Blackwell's R&B compositions and business acumen were not the only things working in his favor: His voice was surprisingly similar to Elvis' and he sang on his own demos. Elvis was so keen to perfect his performance of *Don't Be Cruel* that he recorded more than two dozen takes in the studio.

When RCA released the single in the summer of 1956, Blackwell's gem was backed with Leiber and Stoller's *Hound Dog* – a dynamite pairing. The two sides competed with each other, and together they reigned supreme on the charts. *Don't Be Cruel* is still special because Elvis makes a plea for fidelity in a performance that is at once both lighthearted and swelteringly erotic. Two instances are particularly

demonstrative. The first came when, on 6 January 1957, Elvis was shot from the waist up on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. The attempt to constrain the Memphis upstart and pin him like a butterfly failed utterly. In full battle mode, he brings a commanding combination of surliness and sensuality to the performance. Even as they support him, the Jordanaires, in their smart jackets, look more like sports commentators than

musicians. In contrast, Elvis wears a glittering waistcoat. At first, it is as if he is just doing a job.

He is so off-edge he won't even look at the camera.

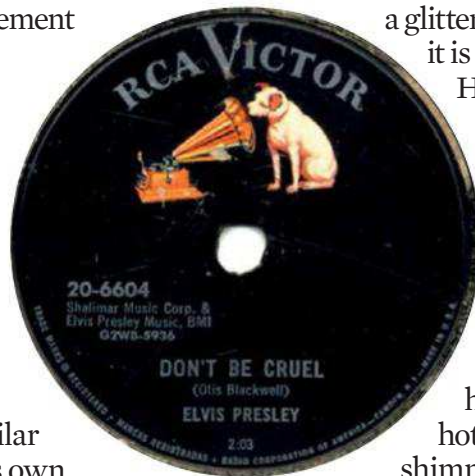
As those who watch in the studio just melt, he gets more committed. His quiff bounces, his lip curls, and an occasional smile of recognition to the audience brings the music

home. He is young. He is hot. And his voice absolutely shimmers. Toward the end

of the song, when he murmurs – even though he is simultaneously expressing a thrill and mocking it – girls in the audience automatically surrender their screams.

Track forward just over a decade, and a leather-clad Elvis revisits the song on the *Comeback*, this time envisioning it as a driving, confident show tune. What's amazing, as with many of Elvis' other performances, is his command of tempo.

It is as if the song is delivered not so much in a hurry but *ahead of time*, so that the ending falls out neatly, like the coda to a moment of controlled mayhem.

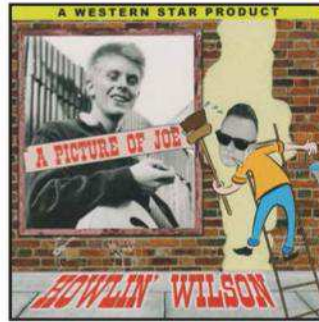


Singles & EP Reviews

★★★★★ SUPERB
 ★★★★☆ RECOMMENDED
 ★★★☆☆ AVERAGE
 ★★☆☆☆ PATCHY
 ★☆☆☆☆ AVOID

New from this edition of *Vintage Rock*, we're rounding up the best of the numerous rockin' 7" vinyl singles and EPs released across Europe. From superbly packaged Little Richard classics to one-sided rarities, all these are highly collectable and smokin' hot.

REVIEWS BY CRAIG BRACKENRIDGE



Howlin' Wilson
A PICTURE OF JOE
 WESTERN STAR RECORDING COMPANY
 ★★★★★

This is a fantastic EP featuring four unique takes on tracks from the back catalogue of Joe Brown. Howlin' (aka Alan) Wilson – frontman of UK combo The Sharks, renowned producer and record label head honcho – offers a well-crafted homage to Mr Brown that features three songs Joe he made famous along with a version of the electrifying instrumental *The Switch* which originally appeared as the B-side on the single *Shine* back in 1961. This 7" is available in red or blue vinyl complete with large hole to fit straight into the jukebox.



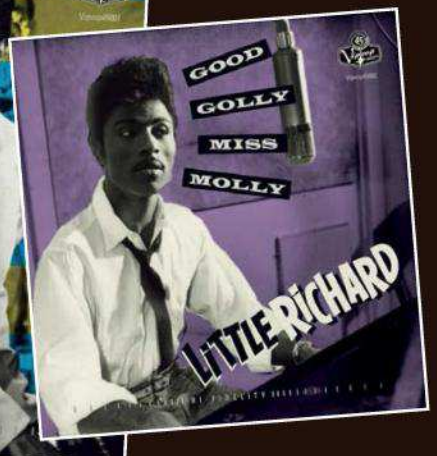
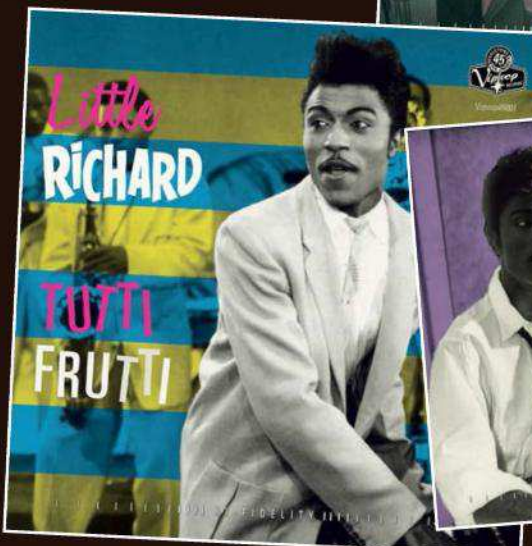
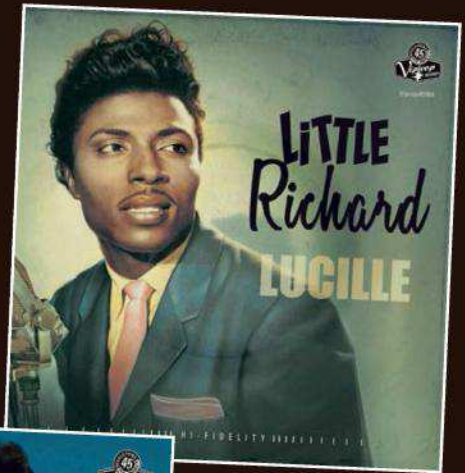
The Sirocco Bros
THE DEVIL'S MUSIC
 ROLLIN RECORDS
 ★★☆☆☆

This wildly creative band don't mess around and boast a hefty discography, but that has not stopped them releasing new material in 2018 including this single for the Kent-based label Rollin Records. The title track is a slide guitar soaked slice of bluesy menace and the flip side, *Tiki Head*, is a surf guitar anthem designed to stimulate nightmares. Overall this platter is the sound of terror in the backwoods and a thrilling experience. Tantalising collectors, the single appears on black or pink vinyl as well as a rare picture disc.

Little Richard

VARIOUS
 VIP VOP RECORDS
 ★★★★★

Vip Vop Records have unleashed a handsome series of limited edition 7" singles from Little Richard that are designed to drive rock'n'roll record collectors to the point of delirium. This quartet of black vinyl beauties feature two remastered tracks on each record, housed in tastily designed 50s style artwork and 3mm spined sleeves. Topping it all off are sleeve notes from musician, writer and hepcat extraordinaire Max Décharné. Only 350 copies of each have been released and the range includes: *The Girl Can't Help It / Rip It Up*, *Good Golly Miss Molly / Keep A Knockin'*, *Tutti Frutti / Ready Teddy* and *Lucille / Long Tall Sally*. This is the way Little Richard was meant to be heard and these reissues ensure that the rocker's legacy has never sounded, and looked, so good in a long time. The desire to possess all four singles will surely prove too strong for most mere mortals but thankfully Easy Action Records are offering all four singles for the price of three. Bama loo!





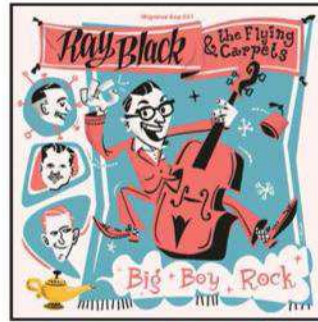
Donna Dunne
THE KING OF ROCK 'N' ROLL
 DIABLO RECORDS
 ★★★

Here is something you don't see around much these days – a 12" single EP in pink or black vinyl. Audiophile buffs claim the wider grooves on these records offer a clearer (and louder) sound than your traditional 7" platter. All the better then to hear this belter from Dublin chanteuse Donna Dunne and her crack team of musicians. It has a cinematic feel that is closer to *Cry Baby* than *Grease*, and while the other three songs take some interesting directions it is the title track that proves to be a real rock'n'roll wall-shaker.



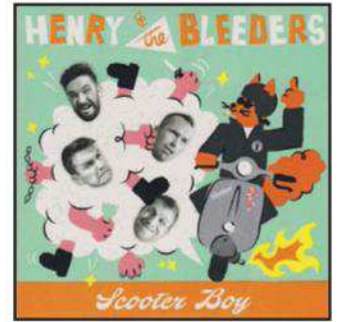
Andy Williams & The Valvetones
WATCHA GONNA DO
 O-HA! RECORDS
 ★★★

Williams played with a stack of rockabilly legends over the years, but his latest release is tinged with sadness. Andy passed away before this single was released and all profits will be donated to the Cancer Research Foundation. This one-sided 7" is limited to 250 copies and showcases Williams' booming, melodic vocals and solid guitar. This cover of Hayden Thompson's haunting ballad, served up with stripped down drums and doghouse bass backing, provides a fitting epitaph to the North East frontman.



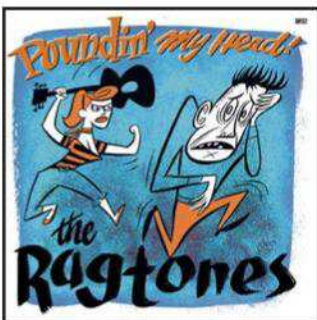
Ray Black & The Flying Carpets
BIG BOY ROCK
 MIGRAINE RECORDS
 ★★★

This 7" features a trio of swinging rockabilly originals that will get the boppers bopping with ease. This is the South German band's first single and follows hot on the heels of their recent debut album. *Big Boy Rock* is a monster rockabilly heavy hitter rubbing shoulders with a steady cruising number, and their album's title track, *Better Way To Move*. On the other side is *Secret Lover*, a song with a seam of rockin' Nashville right through it. This release is on black vinyl only, limited to 500 copies.



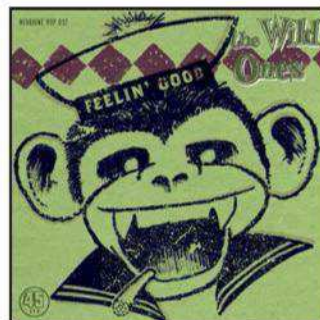
Henry & The Bleeders
SCOOTER BOY
 WESTERN STAR RECORDING COMPANY
 ★★★

Coming straight from the dark heart of Bedford, Henry & The Bleeders offer up four tracks of the rawest rockabilly. Pressed in vinyl the colour of warm Thunderbird wine, this 7" EP features all self-penned material and two newbies alongside two tracks from their latest album *Looking Backwards*. This is their first appearance on vinyl and it does not disappoint. It's always refreshing to hear a new twist on the rockabilly genre and this single features the band's trademark blend of electric and acoustic guitar, slapping bass and honking sax.



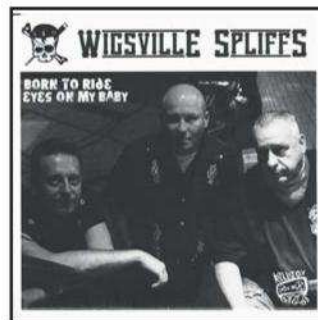
The Ragtones
POUNDIN' MY HEAD!
 SLEAZY RECORDS
 ★★★

Here are four original red-hot belters from this rockabilly outfit from Southern Spain and the Canary Islands. All of the tracks are taken from the band's debut album of the same name and this is a fine showcase for the combo as it jumps from jive to blues bopper then over to some wilder rockabilly territory. This quartet of tracks are all aimed squarely at the dancefloor and there is no let up in pace across the entire EP. Rounding off the package nicely is some tasty cover artwork from the French gentleman of rock Monsieur Marcel Bontempi.



The Wild Ones
FEELIN' GOOD
 MIGRAINE RECORDS
 ★★★

This is a comeback 45 from Belgian rockers The Wild Ones, a band that stomped across Europe in the 80s in creepers and engineer boots. These boys were notorious for their sweat-soaked sound that was alive with echoes of Gene Vincent and they left behind a small, but perfectly formed pile, of vinyl releases. After almost 30 years of silence this single is much-anticipated. These newly recorded tracks feature the band's trademark brand of blues and rowdy rock'n'roll that all you black leather rebels out there have been waiting for.



The Wigsville Spliffs
BORN TO RIDE
 KILLJOY RECORDS
 ★★★

This is probably the most resolutely rockabilly release from the German label Killjoy – a company that are doing their best to keep analogue alive by only releasing records and cassettes. This is a no-nonsense two-track offering of pounding beat that almost touches the psychobilly spectrum. This is probably no surprise as the band regularly took to the stage at Hammersmith's legendary Klub Foot venue in the 80s. The bulk of these singles were pressed in black but if you are quick there are 50 grey vinyl and 50 red vinyl out there for the collector.



Marcel Bontempi
HAVANA MOON
 TWI-LITE RECORDS
 ★★★

If you are looking for a change of pace then you should look no further. Eclectic European rocker Bontempi offers up a chunk of vinyl exotica on this two-track single. His spooky take on Chuck Berry's 1956 single fills the A side and a quick flip over offers a more rockin' tropical treat with a version of Dave 'Diddie' Day's *Blue Moon Baby*. This is exactly the type of record that Robinson Crusoe would be listening to on his desert island Dansette and it manages to sound both sun-drenched and slightly macabre at the same time.

Vinyl LP Reviews

★★★★★ SUPERB
★★★★ RECOMMENDED
★★★ AVERAGE
★★ PATCHY
★ AVOID

When it comes to LPs on vinyl, *Vintage Rock* once again finds early US soul/R&B a fertile starting point. Amid the reissues of Okeh and Stax/Volt, there's also classic country from the days before rockabilly took off...

REVIEWS BY BILL DAHL

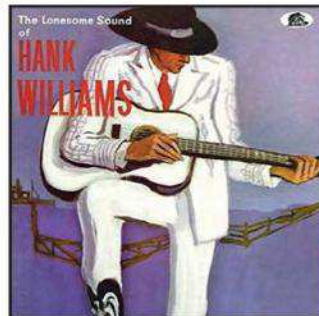
VARIOUS ARTISTS

MIGHTY INSTRUMENTALS
R&B STYLE 1963
RHYTHM & BLUES

★★★★

The Rhythm & Blues logo extends its series of R&B instrumental compilations into 1963 with 16 workouts that go admirably heavy on bluesy

guitar groovers. Wild Jimmy Spruill's *Cut And Dried*, Little Milton's *Meddlin'*, and Long John Hunter's *The Scratch* all spotlight their respective bandleader's fret mastery, while Johnny Otis and Jimmy McCracklin turn in reliable romps, as do organist James Booker and Connecticut-based Sam Kimble.



HANK WILLIAMS

THE LONESOME SOUND OF HANK WILLIAMS

BEAR FAMILY

★★★★★

Even if he didn't live to see rockabilly explode across the mid-50s south, the country of Hank Williams was a cornerstone of the rockabilly songbook. Bear Family celebrates Hank's contribution to music with this 12-song LP, slimmed down 10" size from its original 12" form when it first came out in 1960 to satisfy the thirst of rabid Williams fans. The label took old demos and transcriptions and freshened them with overdubs by some of the Nashville sessioners that backed the Hillbilly Shakespeare.



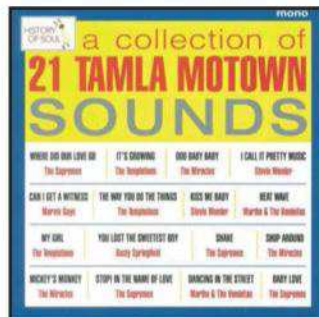
WANDA JACKSON

THERE'S A PARTY GOIN' ON

CORN BREAD

★★★★

There wasn't a woman on the planet rocking harder than Wanda Jackson when Capitol served up this collection in 1959. The sexy little growl embedded in her prodigious pipes matched the blazing edge that her band, anchored by guitarist Roy Clark, gave her to work with. Along with the storming title track and *Man We Had A Party*, Wanda tears through Elvis' *Hard Headed Woman*, Charlie Rich's *Lonely Weekends*, LaVern Baker's *Tweedlee Dee*, Connie Francis' *Fallin'* and Wilbert Harrison's then-recent hit *Kansas City*.



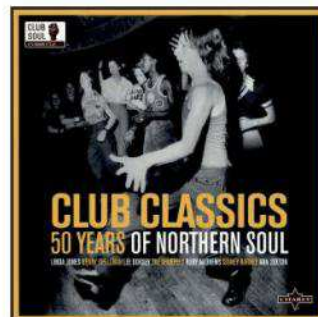
VARIOUS ARTISTS

A COLLECTION OF 21 TAMLA MOTOWN SOUNDS

HISTORY OF SOUL

★★★★

Berry Gordy sent half a dozen of his finest acts to Europe in 1965 on an extended tour to promote his label, then only beginning to gain favour outside the US. With its cover art resembling one of Motown's vintage various artists collections, this 21-song comp from History Of Soul commemorates that tour via performances by The Miracles, Supremes, Temptations, Martha & The Vandellas, Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder — the touring band led by keyboardist Earl Van Dyke appears too.



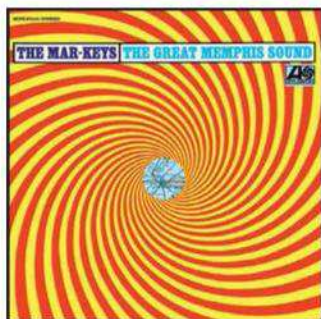
VARIOUS ARTISTS

CLUB CLASSICS: 50 YEARS OF NORTHERN SOUL

CHARLY

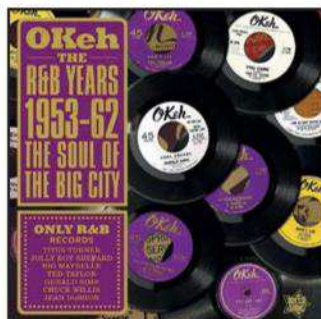
★★★★

For half a century, Northern Soul — danceable American R&B, primarily from the 60s and early 70s — has rumbled and roared through discerning British dance halls. Charly attempts to summarise the movement with this two-LP set, which ranges from well-known floor fillers such as Alvin Cash & The Crawlers' *Twine Time*, *Ride Your Pony* by Lee Dorsey and Benny Spellman's *Fortune Teller*, to obscurities by Little Richie, Sidney Barnes, Johnny Dynamite and the Electrifying Cashmeres.



THE MAR-KEYS
THE GREAT MEMPHIS SOUND
 MUSIC ON VINYL
 ★★★★★

Great as the vocalists were at Stax/Volt Records in Memphis – and with future legends Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, and Carla Thomas roaming the halls, they were great – the label's house band was even more essential. Booker T & The MG's (with guitarist Steve Cropper) comprised the rhythm section, and when horns were added, the outfit was called The Mar-Keys. They were still going strong on this 1966 set, loaded with steamy originals (*Plantation Inn*, *Honey Pot*), and their own hit, *Philly Dog*. Music On Vinyl's 180g repro is loaded with heavy grooves.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
OKEH: THE R&B YEARS 1953-62
THE SOUL OF THE BIG CITY
 OUTTA SIGHT
 ★★★★★

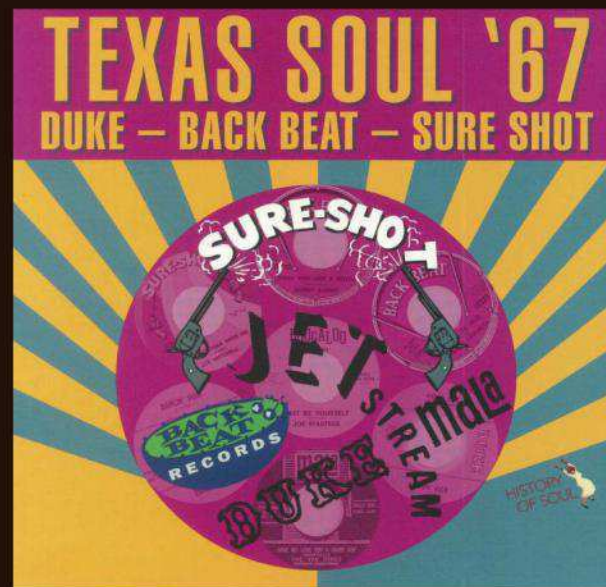
Columbia's Okeh label had a fair amount of retooling over the years, and this Outta Sight 16-song set derives from two eras – its 50s R&B phase and early 60s soul period. Atlanta blues shouters Chuck Willis and Titus Turner and mountainous belter Big Maybelle represent the earlier era, while Rex Garvin And The Mighty Cravers and Roy Lee Johnson, Dr Feelgood & The Interns bridged the gap until the Windy City regenerated Okeh's fortunes. Gerald Sims' *Cool Breeze*, included here, was a sign of things to come.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

TEXAS SOUL '67
HISTORY OF SOUL
 ★★★★★

History Of Soul delivers exactly what the title promises: 16 slices of Texas soul, much of it from the vaults of Don Robey's Duke, Back Beat, and Sure Shot labels. Ernie K-Doe waxed his *Dancin' Man* for

Duke, joined by Robey-released goodies from OV Wright, Clarence Green, and Al "TNT" Braggs. The rich Lone Star soul legacy doesn't stop with Robey – the Van Dykes' *Save My Love For A Rainy Day* (was on Mala), Bobby Patterson's *Till You Give In* (Jetstar) and Les Watson's *Teardrops On Your Letter* (Pompeii).

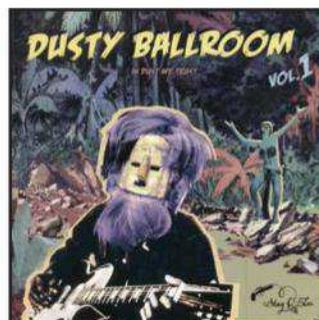
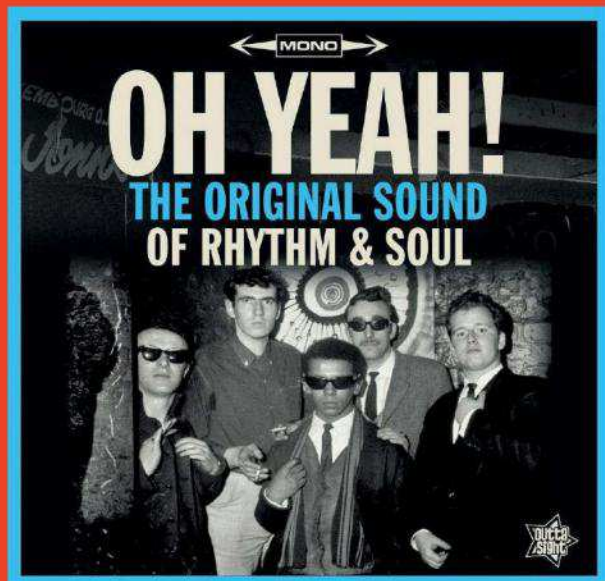


VARIOUS ARTISTS

OH YEAH! THE ORIGINAL
SOUND OF RHYTHM & SOUL
 OUTTA SIGHT
 ★★★★★

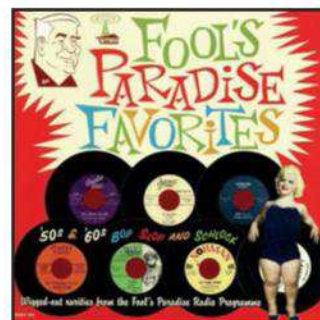
A lot of this compilation from Outta Sight predates the soul era: Jimmy Nolen's *The Way You Do*, Hamp Jones' *Pack Your Clothes*, Chuck Willis' *Whatcha*

Gonna Do When Your Baby Leaves You, and Bobby Mitchell's rousing *Well, I Done Got Over It* all hark back to the 50s. Gino Parks' Motown charmer *For This I Thank You*, Lenny Johnson's *Honey Bee* and Dorothy Berry and Jimmy Norman's duet *I'm With You All The Way*, pack an early 60s soul punch.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
DUSTY BALLROOM VOL.1:
IN DUST WE TRUST
 STAG-O-LEE RECORDS
 ★★★★★

A bit of a hipster vibe distinguishes the German Stag-O-Lee's 17-track compilation, which combines items by comedian Soupy Sales, 50s pop chanteuse Dorothy Collins (a cover of Boyd Bennett's *My Boy-Flat Top*), and two calypso crews with R&B fare by saxmen Robert Parker (*Twistin' Out In Space*) and Sil Austin (*Bailin' Wire*), The Olympics (*Big Boy Pete*), The Isley Brothers (*The Snake*) and Barbara George (her 1961 smash hit *I Know [You Don't Love Me No More]*) without losing any credibility.

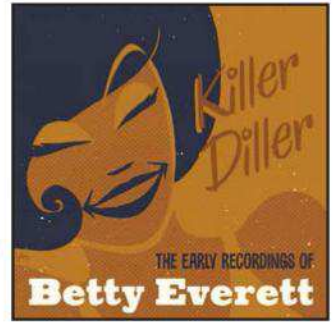


VARIOUS ARTISTS
FOOL'S PARADISE FAVORITES: '50s
& '60s BOP SLOP AND SCHLOCK
 JAZZMAN RECORDS
 ★★★★★

For whacked-out lunacy, nothin' beats Jazzman's new 18-song set. It comes with a 7" 45 featuring The Leopards' *Mah Mah Chicken Pot Pie* b/w Abel & The Starliners Combo's *Chicken Hop Twist*. This LP offers a menu of exotic delicacies: The Flock-Rocker's *The Chinese Rock & Roll* and Jules Blattner's *500 Pound Canary*, to Hurricane Harry's death row feast *The Last Meal*. Side dishes include Glenn Willings' *You Tarzan, Me Jane*, Wee Willie & The Soulettes' *Pulp Wood Charley* and The Orbits' *Knock Her Down*.

CD Album Reviews

★★★★★ SUPERB
 ★★★★☆ RECOMMENDED
 ★★★☆☆ AVERAGE
 ★★☆☆☆ PATCHY
 ★☆☆☆☆ AVOID



Betty Everett
KILLER DILLER – THE EARLY RECORDINGS

EL TORO
 ★★★★★

Betty Everett finally hit the big time with classy and catchy pop songs like *The Shoop Shoop Song (It's In His Kiss)*, *Getting Mighty Crowded* and *You're No Good*, on the Vee Jay label. But fame should have found her 10 years before when she was label-hopping in Chicago, and laying down the superbly performed and excellent material found here. It includes doo-wop, gospel-influenced R&B, and diva-style ballads. Who knew? Apparently, those clever folk at El Toro. Highly recommended.

Vintage Rock has been enjoying a wide range of hot rockin' records recently with plenty of new releases from both Western Star and El Toro entertaining our ears. But the big-hitter we've all been excited about is the 3CD deluxe boxset that accompanies a brand new HBO documentary about The King... Elvis is back in the building!

REVIEWS BY JOHN HOWARD

Elvis Presley

THE SEARCHER

RCA

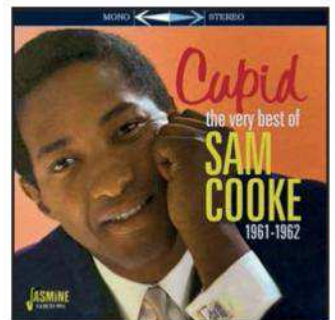
★★★★★

The new HBO two-part three-hour documentary on the life of Elvis Presley may have as big an impact on today's generation as the *Singer Presents Elvis* TV special (aka '68 Comeback Special) had on the previous lot. And tied in with the TV programme is this 3CD deluxe boxset, featuring not only music from the show but also 18 Elvis hits, live recordings, alternate versions, and, wow, a hardcover book.

There have been Elvis compilations galore, but this is particularly worthwhile as it traces the development of The King's progression from blues and

country covers to the pop colossus he became. And the third CD in the set is interesting since it features the original R&B cuts that inspired The King. There's even input from Elvis' mother Gladys, who chose to commit her take on *Home Sweet Home* to vinyl.

Anyone lucky enough to see the documentary will know that the huge amount of otherwise unseen footage is remarkable, and it's great to be reminded of why The King was, and remains, The King.

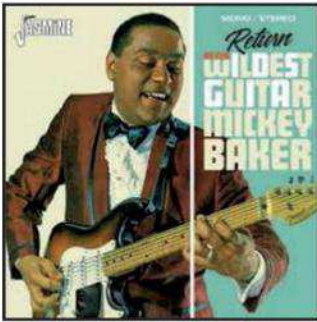


Sam Cooke
CUPID – THE VERY BEST OF 1961-1962

JASMINE
 ★★★★★

Most of Sam Cooke's recorded output is still available in one collection or another, but Jasmine has decided to concentrate on a brief 12 month period at a budget price. It includes hits *Cupid*, *Nothing Can Change This Love*, *Havin' A Party*, *Twistin' The Night Away* and *Bring It On Home To Me*, but album tracks and B sides are equally interesting, featuring one of the best soul and gospel voices of all time. Stand out moments include *Chains Of Love*, *Driftin' Blues* and *Send Me Some Lovin'*.



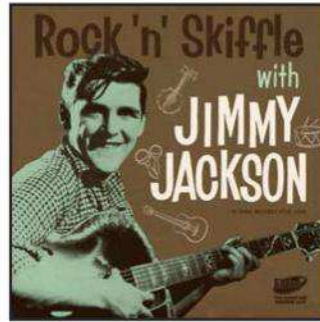


Mickey Baker

THE RETURN OF THE WILDEST GUITAR

JASMINE
★★★★

Mickey Baker was the go-to guitarist for rock'n'roll and R&B recordings in New York from the early 50s onwards. He is one of the founding fathers of rock'n'roll guitar, and on this showing it's easy to understand why. Baker was also a fine singer and composer, as his role as one half of the hitmaking duo Mickey and Sylvia attest. This 29-track set focuses on a selection of Mickey's solo recordings along with a handful of his prominent session work recorded between 1952 and 1959.

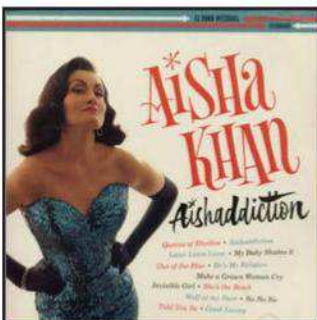


Jimmy Jackson

ROCK'N'SKIFFLE WITH...

EL TORO
★★★★

Jimmy Jackson believed he was making country and blues records at the time, but they were clearly skiffle, that home-made music that rivalled rock'n'roll in popularity in the 50s. Sadly for young Jimmy, it was fellow Glaswegian Lonnie Donegan who took the honours. However, Jimmy had a fine singing voice and skiffle fans will be familiar with his choice of material which includes *I Shall Not Be Moved*, *Swing Down Sweet Chariot* and *White Silver Sands*. A solid 16 tracks to flesh out gaps in any skiffle completist's collection.

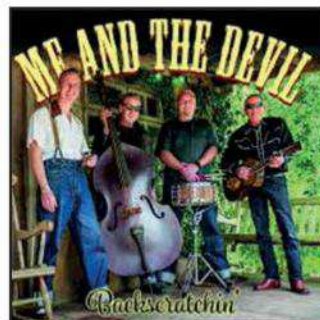


Aisha Khan

AISHADDICTION

EL TORO
★★★★

This big-voiced swing sister lays her cards on the table with the first track, *Queens Of Rhythm*. Equal Parts sultry jazz chanteuse and R&B belter, Aisha easily communicates heartbreak, joy and a range of emotions in between. With a nod to the glamour and sophistication of a bygone era, *Aishaddiction* is packed full of stunning original material and features outstanding musicianship. This 13-tracker covers all bases from jump blues to cocktail jazz, with the odd torch number for late night listening. A great voice, and a great debut.



Me And The Devil

BACKSCRATCHIN'

(OWN LABEL)

★★★★

This Cornwall-based blues group, clearly popular in their own area as a live attraction, sing and play with accuracy and precision on many familiar offerings. Just how many people will want other versions of *Corrina, Corrina*, *Parchman Farm* or *Howling For My Baby* is a moot point, but the recordings are sufficiently well done to make a good souvenir of a live gig by this near-authentic quartet. There are two originals among the 13 tracks on *Backscratchin'*, which is available at www.facebook.com/cornwallblues.

Various Artists

STOMPIN' BY THE SEA

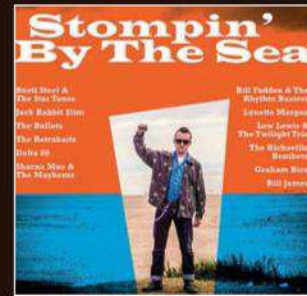
WESTERN STAR

★★★★

This compilation was initially put together as a surprise for the organiser of the Westward Ho! Festival, Bill James, by head of Western Star label Alan Wilson. But then Alan changed his mind, and invited Bill to actually contribute a number as the fest celebrated its 10th anniversary last November. So, the surprise was spoiled for Bill, perhaps, but for everyone who knows him and supports the weekend it will come as a shock to hear his vocals on track 21, Jack Scott's *The Way I Walk*. Not a bad version, either.

The overall concept was to feature all the Western Star acts who had appeared over the years at the Devon bash, hence the title, so we have offerings from Bill Fadden & The Rhythm Busters, The Bullets and Lew Lewis & The Twilight Trio. Alongside

the original numbers on offer, there is also a wide range of covers, which include Charlie Feathers' *Stutterin' Cindy* by Delta 88, Gary US Bonds' *New Orleans* by The Retrobaits and Don And Dewey's *Justine* by Jack Rabbit Slim.



John Leyton & The Western All-Stars

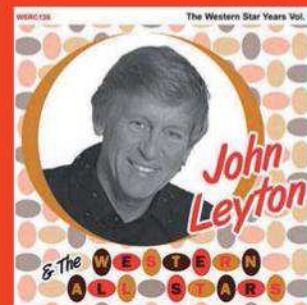
THE WESTERN STAR YEARS VOL.1

WESTERN STAR

★★★★

TV personality Jools Holland divides those in the music industry into poets (the good guys) and pirates (don't trust 'em). Top of his list of poets is John Leyton, and it would appear that film, TV and singing star John Leyton has a similar fine reputation throughout show business. Not the least of his friends and fans is Alan Wilson, boss of Western Star label, who first recorded John more than a dozen years ago. He has now compiled this "best of" compendium that includes remakes of John's biggest hits, rock'n'roll standards and some lesser known material, all handled excellently by the perennial Mr Leyton. The recut hits include *Johnny Remember Me*, *Wild Wind* and *Son This is She*, while among the rock'n'roll standards are *Bye Bye Love*, *Sweet Little Sixteen* and *Sea Cruise*.

Considering that John's main claim to fame was as an actor in films like *The Great Escape* and *Von Ryan's Express* alongside Hollywood's finest Steve McQueen and Frank Sinatra, he is probably a better singer than he needs to be.



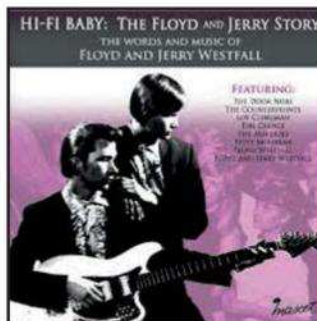
Jackson Sloan & Friends

RADIO INTERNATIONALE
SHELLAC RECORDS
★★★★☆

Jackson Sloan seems to have conquered the roots music scene in the States and builds his international reputation with this latest pan-European project. Recorded in Italy, with input from Italian swing band The Goodfellas and Spanish doo-wop harmonisers The Velvet Candles, it's without doubt his strongest offering to date. The quality of Jackson's songwriting seems to have reached new levels of inventiveness, but still reflects the musical influences of the late 40s and early 50s R&B stars that have always been his inspiration. New originals like *Remote Control*, *The Last To Know* and *Old Records* sound like classics.

Backings are always appropriate, with special mention to his regular Rhythmtones members keyboard player Rick Dawson and Vic Collins, whose steel guitar adds punctuation and authenticity to the sound.

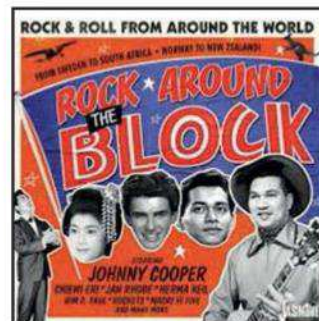
The Velvet Candles added their own arrangements to Jackson's songs, and make a mighty contribution to the whole, which comes highly recommended.



Floyd And Jerry Westfall

HI-FI BABY – THE FLOYD AND JERRY STORY
MASCOT

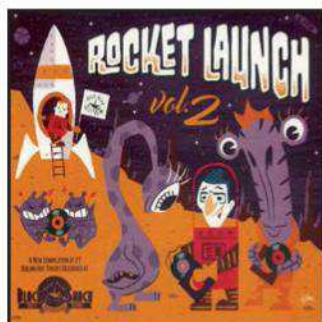
★ The title track of this 27 track compilation has, allegedly, been bootlegged on rockabilly compilations, and now debuts on CD. It seems perverse to open with the demo take below the standard of the issued version, which is track two. All part of a campaign to release all Arizona's acts on CD, famous or otherwise, though The Westfalls were non-famous, and not without reason on this showing. Superb sleeve notes, but the music is distinctly disappointing.



Various Artists

ROCK AROUND THE BLOCK VOL.1 – ROCK & ROLL FROM AROUND THE WORLD
JASMINE

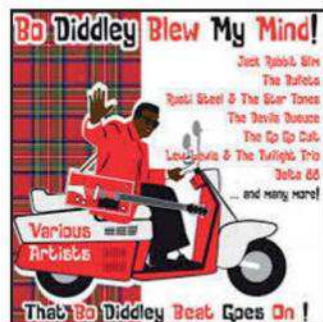
★★★ While UK covers of US originals may be commonplace, few knew that everywhere from Sweden to South Africa, Norway to New Zealand was producing their own versions of hot hits. Examples here include Jan Rhode & His Cool Cats taking on Gene Vincent's *Lotta Lovin'*, Rockin' Sam & Swingin' Swedes covering Danny And The Juniors' *At The Hop*, and Kong Ling & The Fabulous Echoes reviving Chubby Checker's *Let's Twist Again*. A patchy but interesting listen.



Various Artists

ROCKET LAUNCH VOL.2
RHYTHM BOMB
★★★

This generous CD, featuring mainly rockabilly and some blues, houses 27 tracks all recorded at Germany's Black Shack Studio, which looks more like a medieval stately home than a shack. Artists include Ray Black & The Flying Carpets, The B-Shakers, The Royal Flush many others recognisable from the lower-half of festival bills all over the world. Kicking off with *Rocket Girl* by Nico Duportals Rhythm Dudes with Jai Milano, no less than nine of the acts have their product on Rhythm Bomb, and this taster will no doubt lead to further purchases.



Various Artists

BO DIDDLEY BLEW MY MIND
WESTERN STAR
★★★★

A great concept, this. Get a dozen or so modern rockabilly bands who can play Bo Diddley's music well, and get them to write 23 new songs with that distinctive shave-and-a-haircut-two bits backing. Bands concerned include Jack Rabbit Slim (with *Electric Blue* and *Queen Bee*), Norm & The Nightmares (with *Diddley Squat*) and The Cheaterslicks (*Bayou Boogie*), and the numbers are as inventive as the concept with titles like *No Neck Nellie* (by El Camino) and *The Night Bo Diddley Blew My Mind* (The Go Go Cult). The brilliant cover artwork lives up to the music.

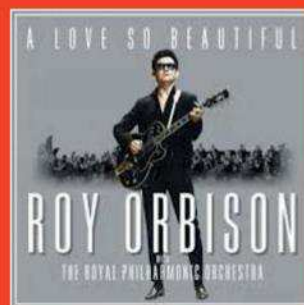
Roy Orbison With The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

A LOVE SO BEAUTIFUL
SONY
★★★★

After years of speculation and rumour, audiences recently witnessed a true music legend come back to life before their eyes. In the first-of-its-kind event, a holographic Roy Orbison performed his biggest hits in top venues across the UK backed by the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra.

The Roy Orbison In Dreams: The Hologram UK Tour was a timely reminder that The Big O was a unique talent with a wonderful voice, and his numbers like *In Dreams*, *Crying* and *Only The Lonely* are timeless.

The accompanying album, *A Love So Beautiful*, released last November, is an interesting listen. The material covered is vast and it must've been a challenge



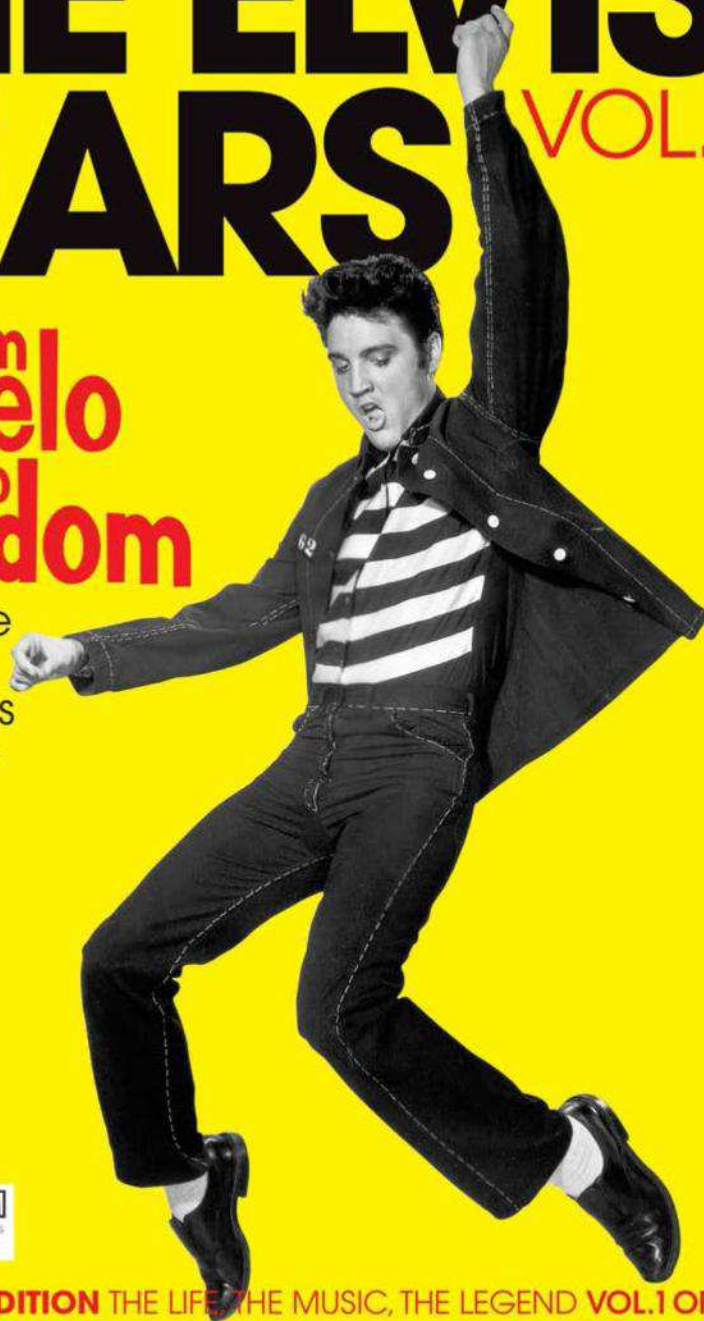
to the orchestra to deal with rockier numbers like *Uptown* and *Mean Woman Blues*. While it would take an expert to detect the RPO's involvement in either, there's no denying the mastering and sound quality are impeccable.

ON SALE NOW

THE ELVIS[★] YEARS VOL.1

From
Tupelo
to
Stardom

The ultimate
guide to
Elvis Presley's
early years



COLLECTOR'S EDITION THE LIFE, THE MUSIC, THE LEGEND VOL.1 OF 3

AVAILABLE FROM HMV, WHSMITH, SAINSBURY'S, EASON
ORDER ONLINE AT shop.anthem-publishing.com/specials

FROM THE MAKERS OF CLASSIC POP *The Guitar Magazine* MusicTech COUNTRY



Freddy "Boom Boom" Cannon was given a hero's welcome in the Harlequin Ballroom at Hemsby's 60th rock'n'roll weekender

HEMSBY #60, 18-21 MAY

SIX-0 SPECIAL

The theme of Hemsby's 60th rock'n'roll weekender was **The Big One...** and so it proved. The names were big, the crowds were big, and by Monday, so were the hangovers.

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY JOHN HOWARD

This year's four-day Hemsby Rock'n'Roll Weekend marked 30 years of twice yearly festivals at the Norfolk resort, always attracting more than a thousand worldwide rockabilly and rock'n'roll fans every time.

May's shindig proved no exception with more than 1,500 people on the steadily improving site, where more than £10 million has been invested

in the past year alone to bring facilities into the 21st century.

But the big draw was the acts, with Freddy "Boom Boom" Cannon topping a bill that included Swedish sweetheart Eva Eastwood, doo-wop maestros The Metrotones and Welsh guitar wizard John Lewis.

There is far more than music over this intense weekend. There was a boat cruise on the nearby Norfolk Broads, a classic car

and bike show, jive lessons and contests, clothes and record merchandisers, and a Sunday car boot sale obviously aimed at insomniacs with its 5am start.

Among the hardest working was a team of DJs, among them Wildcat Pete, Bill Guntrip and Steve Stack O'Wax, who were busy spinning vinyl nearly 24 hours a day.

Cannon Fire!

Hemsby 60 saw a welcomed return for **Freddy Cannon**. Promoter Willie Jeffery had to persuade the hitmaker to appear five years ago, but Freddy enjoyed both the reception and the experience so much he agreed readily to return.

Freddy was given a hero's welcome in the Harlequin Ballroom as he took to the stage wearing a blue spotted shirt

“Freddy said he has always been a rock'n'roller and had no time for ballads, proving it with a fine version of Joe Turner's *Shake Rattle And Roll*”



Hemsby favourite, Swedish sweetheart Eva Eastwood, went down a storm with a new line-up of her Major Keys

and backed admirably by Big Boy Bloater's Band. Freddy started his musical career in 1956 and, as a teenager, made his recording debut playing guitar on the G-Clefs' US hit *Ka-Ding Dong*. However, his international breakthrough was with *Tallahassee Lassie* in 1959, and this was both his opening number and his encore. He seemed near to tears as he recalled the stomping stroller was based on a poem written by his mother.

This hit led to his first UK visit, touring with Conway Twitty and Gene Vincent, and an appearance on the TV show *Boy Meets Girls*. Many of his contemporaries

are gone, but Freddy keeps on doing it, and doing it well, at the age of 82.

He is possibly best remembered for his sax-blasting update on *Way Down Yonder In New Orleans*, and that, along with other hits such as *California Here I Come* and *The Urge* were present and most correct. *Palisades Park*, with its fairground organ backing, was replicated exactly by Bloater's band, and sounded even better than the record thanks to the addition of saxes. Freddy told the crowd that he has always been a rock'n'roller and had no time for ballads, proving it with a fine version of Joe Turner's *Shake Rattle And Roll*.

He also paid tribute to a couple of heritage acts lost of late, with Fats Domino's *Blue Monday*, and two for Chuck Berry with *Little Queenie* and *Roll Over Beethoven*. *Buzz Buzz A-Diddle-It*, with its characteristic Bo Diddley beat, was revived in 1980 by the UK group Matchbox fronted by singer Graham Fenton, with Freddy and Graham becoming friends – fitting at Hemsby that Fenton was in the audience to cheer him on.

Afterwards the showman spent inordinate amounts of time chatting to fans and signing autographs. It was an evening to treasure, considering Freddy was one of the first rock'n'roll acts to hit No.1 on the UK album charts the best part of 60 years ago.

Eva The Attraction

Always a Hemsby favourite, Sweden's **Eva Eastwood**, plus a fresh line-up of her band The Major Keys, did not disappoint. Strumming an acoustic guitar, the atomic blonde offered an uptempo set comprising mainly originals, sung in English, with

“Eva Eastwood is happy performing everything from swing to country, but kept it rockabilly...”



Wildcat Pete was one of the DJs that kept the party rockin' all weekend



Furious, fronted by Mark Halligan, brought a bit of edge to The Yacht Club with an aggressive and entertaining set

titles like *You Should Have Asked Me*, *Buddy I Got You*, *The Good Life I Have* and *Love My Baby*. For most of her set she kept her shades on, but was cheered when she removed her black and white satin jacket to reveal a sparkling dress. The versatile songstress is happy performing everything from swing to country, but kept it rockabilly for this audience.

To add depth to the show, UK doorkeepers The Chord Royales provided backing vocals. A pity they weren't offered their own slot since they were already there. Still, they were used to great effect on what is probably Eva's best known original, *Wendy's Wedding*, which was consistently requested by audience members throughout her set.



Meet Morgan, a seven-year-old teddy boy, having a rockin' time at Hemsby

A storming take on Sonny Burgess' immortal *Ain't Got A Thing* really caught fire with the crowd gleefully joining in the distinctive chorus.

Stormy At The Yacht

There is a second venue a five minute wander from the ballroom, formerly The Copacabana, now renamed The Yacht Club. It is here that some of the edgier acts perform, and they don't come much edgier than **Furious**.

Rock'n'roll, red in tooth and claw, is supposed to scare the horses, and with Mark Halligan on vocals and bass and brother Andy on guitar they turned in an aggressive and entertaining set that marks them out as future headliners.

Furious started out as a Teddy Boy act, but they have widened their reach without compromising their music to the point where they have toured with the Sex Pistols and satisfied their crowd.

Their opener, *Hang Your Head*, set the marker for what was to follow, and I must admit their version of *Hello Josephine* beats every other, bar one. Mark has a grittier, harsher voice than in the days of Asbo Shuffle, and it suits the style of the band, whose anthem *We Are The Teds* always gets strong audience participation.

Sunday night at Hemsby traditionally features a doo-wop harmony group, and this spring it was the return of **The Metrotones** to top the bill.

They certainly looked great in blue suits with black revers, black shirts, and red ties, and their choreography had received as much thought as their outfits.

Crowd pleasers included The Hollywood Flames' *Buzz Buzz Buzz*, The Carnations' *Long Tall Girl* and Nappy Brown's *Don't Be Angry*.

Comedy is never far from The Metrotones' repertoire, and although Dave Tonner is lead singer, much of the humour inevitably focuses on famed bass singer Den Hegarty, the one-time member of Darts who could lay claim to the title of rock'n'roll's Marty Feldman. The band's covers of The Videos' *Trickle Trickle*, The Chords' *Sh-Boom* and The Del Vikings' *Come Go With Me* led up to an entirely appropriate, and entirely accurate take on The Spaniels' *Goodnight Sweetheart*, at the very venue where Spaniels' lead singer Pookie Hudson made his final UK performance. The Metrotones have been harmonising since 1991 and carry a full band with them, making a total of 10 folks onstage, and they turned in, once more, a totally professional show.

“Furious turned in an aggressive and entertaining set that marks them out as future headliners”



Doo-wop harmony group, The Metrotones, topped the bill on the Sunday night

Best Of The Rest

Opening the weekend on Thursday were the **Red Hot Rockets**, a young three-piece band serving up some neobilly from Essex, Croydon and Alton. Formed in 2017, they're influenced by early Rick Nelson and Gene Vincent and are signed to Wild Records.

Mike Byrne & The Sunrockers are one of Liverpool's best kept secrets who play in Jerry Lee Lewis style, and got to compare themselves when they supported the man himself at the Liverpool Empire.

John Lewis & His Rock'n'Roll Trio have worldwide appeal, touring everywhere including Russia. Their 2014 album *Sanity* got great reviews, and guitarist John has since released an acoustic album which features guest vocals from Imelda May.

The Roustabouts were a less well-known name, making their Hemsby debut, and playing a mixture of traditional rockabilly and classic rock'n'roll in style.

Mischief, from Holland, you may know – they mix Everlys-style vocals with a strong rockabilly bass, and have an impressively powerful sound for a trio. Also impressing were **Ric & The Dukes**, who flew in from Malaga and are one of Spain's foremost rockabilly exponents

“The Metrotones looked great in blue suits with black revers, black shirts, and red ties”

with a new EP on the Sleazy label entitled *Don't Fight*.

The Buzzcuts, from south Wales, have a good pedigree, featuring Billy and Danny Williams, sons of Gene Gambler frontman David Williams, and are stars in the making with their fine harmonies and boogie woogie feeling.

The Eastwood Brothers, Eva's family band, also had time for their own slot. This weekend saw their first appearance in the UK, and teenage sons Adam on drums and Isak on lead guitar showed the baton has been passed to the next generation.

The Skip Rats, from the North East, are popular nationwide and always entertain with their brand of rockabilly.

Gene Gambler & The Shufflers had an excellent slot on Saturday night immediately after Freddy Cannon, and offered authentic versions of Sonny Burgess and Narvel Felts songs, while **Jack And The Real Deals** were a big hit at Hemsby 55, so got and deserved an early invitation to return. **Lewis Chamberlain**,

a young piano pounder from near London, has already played the Ace Cafe many times, and offered the full Jerry Lee for a change of flavour.

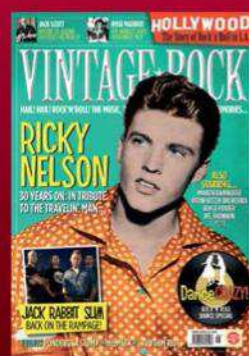
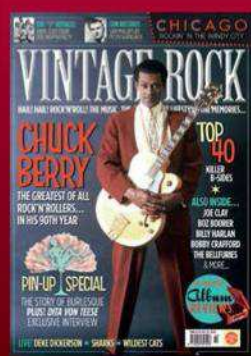
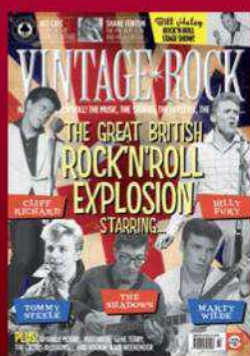
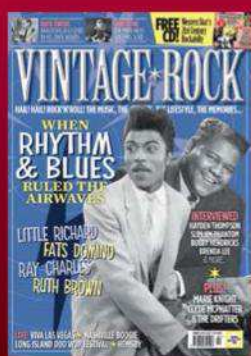
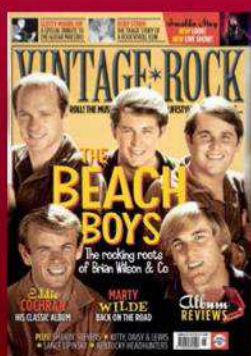
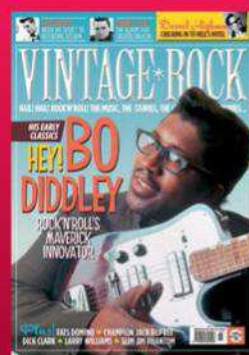
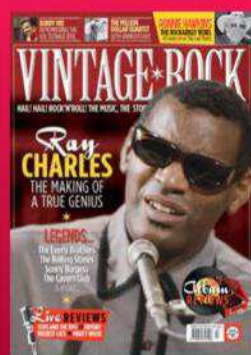
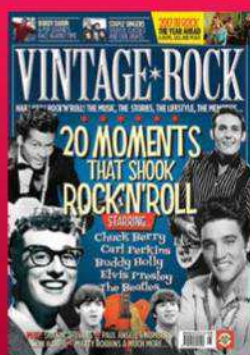
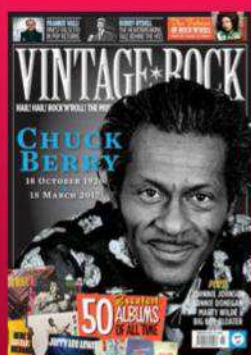
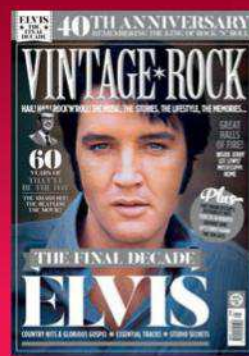
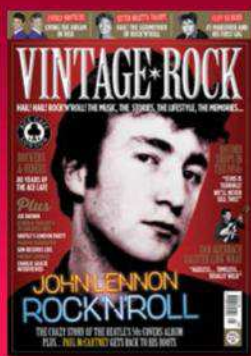
Of the full-on tribute acts, there is no doubt Ben Welburn's **Cash** is one of the better Johnny Cash soundalikes, and his faithful renditions of Cash classics made for a packed hall.

Two more bands worthy of mention are **Relentless** – great name, great rockabilly – and **The Neutronz**, who cater to the psychobilly fringe.

It all added up to a fevered four days. Sunday night at Hemsby is *supposed* to be the quietest of all, as folk drift off to ready for work on the Monday, but by the time **The Killer Dillers**, from Cardiff, took the stage, the room was still packed with fans who just didn't want to let go of what had been an amazing weekender.

Allen Mayers is a fine vocalist, and provided a suitable ending to The Big One. ★

COMPLETE YOUR VINTAGE*ROCK COLLECTION



ORDER ONLINE AT
shop.anthem-publishing.com

OR CALL

UK 0844 856 0642 OVERSEAS +44 (0) 1371 853 609



VINTAGE*ROCK

USA SUMMER SALE



TRY **3** ISSUES FOR JUST **\$10**
WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE TODAY



SAVE 25%
OFF THE
STORE PRICE

EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE



CALL US ON
+44 1371 853609
QUOTE CODE SSDPS18



ORDER ONLINE AT
anthem-publishing.com/vintage
QUOTE CODE SSDPS18

OFFER ENDS 30TH SEPTEMBER 2018. After the 3 issue trial, the price will increase to \$33.70 (saving 25% off the store price) every 3 issues, unless you cancel.



VIVA LAS VEGAS ROCKABILLY WEEKEND

19-22 APRIL 2018

Viva Las Vegas 2018 was bigger than ever and *Vintage Rock* was, of course, there. The only problem was actually taking it *all in*...

WORDS BY JOHN HOWARD PHOTOS BY NICK COBBAN

The biggest rock'n'roll festival in the world just got bigger.

Viva Las Vegas celebrated its 21st anniversary just as spring arrived in Nevada, and there were more people, more acts, and at least 20,000 more seats as the biggest names in rockabilly and jump blues converged on the Orleans Hotel complex in the sunshine. Add to that a massive display of classic cars, pin-up and dance contests, burlesque performances, and crowds dressed in authentic 50s outfits from all over the world, and you have the largest concentration of vintage rock fans ever seen, anywhere.

Headliners included Jerry Lee Lewis, Duane Eddy, The Stray Cats, Robert Gordon, and as many 50s trailblazers as were prepared to make the journey: plus, of course, the next generation of musicians and singers standing on the shoulders of these giants. It's a credit to the vision of organiser Tom Ingram, a veteran of UK 50s festivals, who started the weekender with a handful of acts in Los Angeles before expanding to the vast open spaces of the US's resort and gaming capital. In order to squeeze in the vast number of acts, live music tended to start at noon, running well into the early hours

for those fit enough to keep up. To review only half the acts would require a team of six, so this overview must of necessity concentrate on highlights, so apologies to those acts we missed.

Reigning Cats & Legends

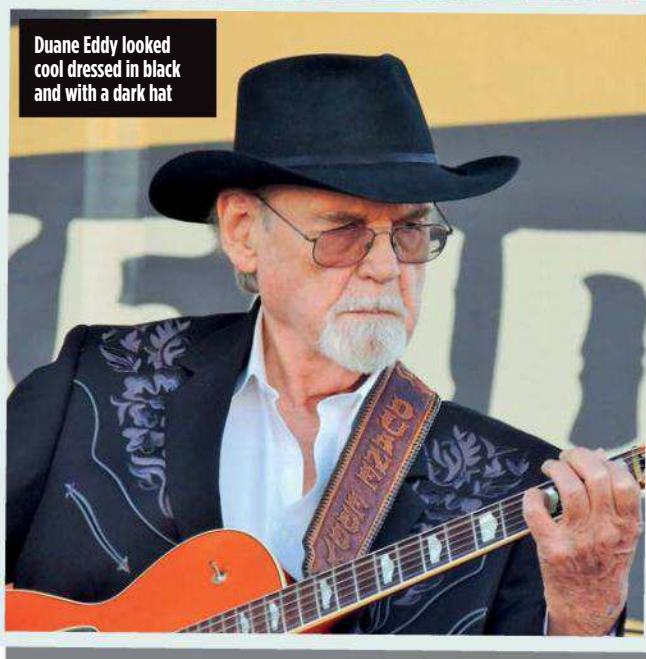
And highlights there were, notably Saturday's daytime events in the open air car show area, where three now veteran acts proved in quick succession that they can still pull huge crowds and entertain them as well as they did 30 or 50 years ago. The main man for many, although he was previewed the previous day by almost



Jerry Lee Lewis, in a bright red sparkling jacket, proved his keyboard skills remain as fast and accurate as they were 70 years ago



Linda Gail Lewis entertained with *Shake Rattle And Roll*, and *Hot Rod Girl*



Duane Eddy looked cool dressed in black and with a dark hat

every other Sun studio recording artist, was **Jerry Lee Lewis**. Resplendent in the type of bright red sparkling jacket seldom seen outside a circus, the Ferriday Fireball proved his keyboard skills remain as fast and accurate as they were 70 years ago.

Now 82, he was full of JLL bravado even if his voice was a little croaky. “How does it sound?” he asked the audience, who responded with a positive roar. Then, to undermine any possible criticism, he joked: “Well, it sounds terrible to me!” Jerry Lee’s sister, **Linda Gail Lewis**, opened for him and was joined by her daughter, Annie Marie Lewis, for *Shake Rattle And Roll*, and *Hot Rod Girl* to set the scene.

Then The Master took total control of both stage, piano and fans with an extended workout on Roy Orbison’s *Down The Line* to prove that the spark that was lit in New Orleans in the 50s had dimmed not one lumen.

Balls Of Fire, and *Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin’ On* to complete a 45-minute set.

Preceding him was the King of the Twangy Guitar, **Duane Eddy**, looking cool in black with a dark Stetson.

His initial late start, and early mixing problems that had the bass way too loud were soon overcome and balance restored. *Movin’ ‘N’ Groovin’*, his initial US hit, was followed by the B-side of perhaps his biggest hit, an atmospheric instrumental titled *Stalkin’* that was flipped by influential DJ Dick Clark in favour of *Rebel Rouser*. This followed shortly after *The Lonely One*, based, Duane claimed, on James Dean clones who failed to score with the young ladies back in the day. It was comic book character Captain Marvel who inspired the title *Shazam!*, the iconic exclamation that newsboy Billy Batson used to turn himself into the superhero.

Lewis’ set included live favourites from his lengthy career including *You Win Again*, *Drinking Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee*, *Trouble In Mind*, a particularly apt *Rockin’ My Life Away*, *CC Rider*, *Sweet Little Sixteen* and *Mexicali Rose* before the crowd-pleasing and much anticipated initial big sellers *Great*

Duane devoted two numbers to his late friend Fats Domino, *My Blue Heaven* and *Blueberry Hill*. Then it was *Forty Miles Of Bad Road*, *Yep!*, and fan favourite *Peter Gunn*, sounding exactly like the record.

Considering Duane turned 80 in April, he is still on top of both his guitar and crowd rapport.

Both Duane and Jerry Lee, initially joint-headliners on early publicity for VLV, had to make way on the bill for a reunion of **The Stray Cats**, with Brian Setzer, Slim Jim Phantom and Lee Rocker playing together for the first time in North America in 10 years.

The already crowded front of stage area became immovable when the trio, who introduced US audiences to the 70s rockabilly revival, arrived. “It’s the most crowded car park I’ve ever seen!” exclaimed Setzer as they opened up with *Runaway Boys*. The Cats could have played it by the numbers, but to their credit showed the same enthusiasm and attack as they did 30 years ago. All the favourites were there, from *Stray Cat Strut* to (*She’s*) *Sexy And 17*, with *Rock This Town* evoking the biggest audience response. The a capella introduction to *Be-Bop-A-Lula* impressed, as did the tribute to Messrs

“Jerry Lee Lewis’ 45-minute set included live favourites from his lengthy career”



The Stray Cats, featuring Slim Jim Phantom, Brian Setzer and Lee Rocker, played together for the first time in North America in 10 years

Cochran and Vincent, *Gene & Eddie*. The wry *Something's Wrong With My Radio* is as relevant today as it was back when, and the audience were reluctant to let the Cats go.

All three have had successful solo careers and scores of individual releases, but the sum of the parts is certainly greater than each individual contribution, and they stand at the rockabilly pinnacle when they perform together.

Sun Shines At Showcases

Plenty of other acts that would have been headliners at any lesser festival, among them **Robert Gordon**, **Hayden Thompson**, **Paul Ansell**, **Darrel Higham**, **Big Sandy** and **Deke Dickerson**. There were also many up-and-coming acts who

“The Stray Cats showed the same enthusiasm and attack as they did 30 years ago”

acted and sounded like the stars of the future, notably **Jackson Sloan**, Spain's **The Kabooms**, and **Li'l Mo And The Dynafloos**. The fact that Jackson represents jump jive, The Kabooms are frantic rockabilly, and Li'l Mo has been fronting his totally authentic doo-wop group for 15 years underscores the huge variety of music on offer.

Three separate musical packages boosted both the number of acts performing, and the quality of the offering. These were the **Stars Of Sun Rockabilly** on Friday, **The Wild Records Showcase** on Saturday, and **The Stars of Rock'n'Roll** on Sunday. Choices choices!

However, for fans of original rockabilly there was only one must-see on Friday, the Sun rockabilly show which showcased original 50s act who first recorded on the Memphis Sun label, where many would agree rockabilly as a musical genre was born. It was here that Elvis, Orbison, Cash and Perkins cut their musical teeth, but since all four are gone, it was left to the survivors to carry the torch.

Nine separate acts with more than 500 years of experience between them might

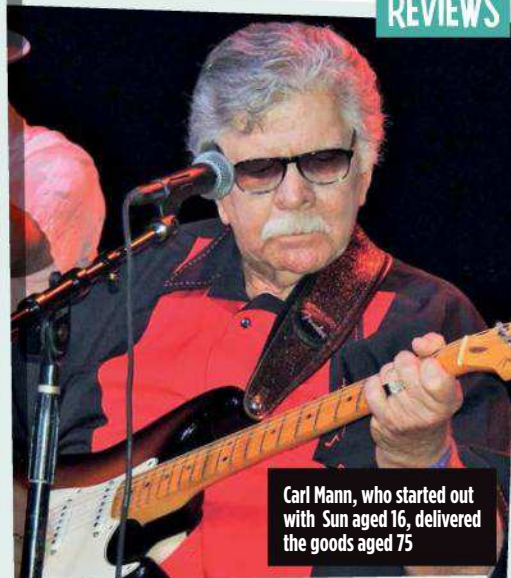
suggest a final hurrah of old men croaking their last but the dynamism of most, and, crucially, the strength of their voices must have come as a pleasant shock to first-time viewers. **Hayden Thompson**, particularly, still has the ability to go from high tenor to Johnny Cash bass in the space of a single number, coming across with total authority on *Blues, Blues, Blues*, *Fairlane Rock* and *Love My Baby*, before he was backed by drummer **WS “Fluke” Holland**, who played on the original cut of *Ring Of Fire*, to which the red-jacketed Hayden did total justice. A year ago, **Carl Mann**, who started at Sun aged 16, was wheelchair-bound but both his voice and his walking abilities have recovered to full strength, as he delivered *Ubangi Stomp*, Johnny Horton's *I'm Coming Home* and his own take on *Mona Lisa*. He was joined by the vision in a sparkling green gown that was **Miss Ruby Ann** for *Baby, I Don't Care*.

Johnny Powers proved the equal of the other two, and as the only act to record for both Sun, Fortune and Motown imprints lived up to the potential those labels recognised back in the 60s. Stand-outs included *Mean Mistreater*, *With Your Love*,

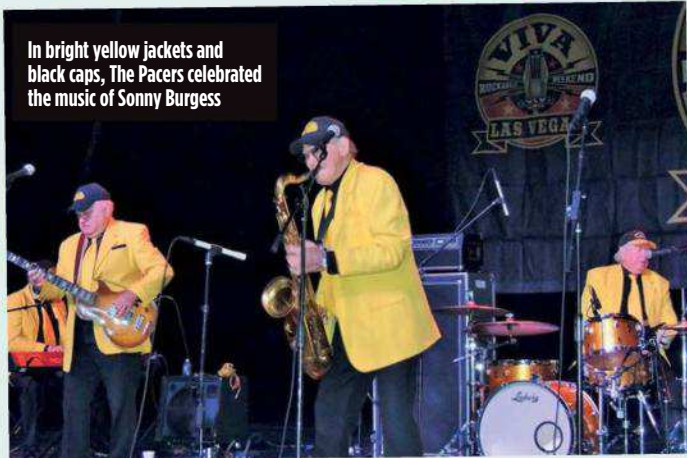
Li'l Mo And The Dynaflos delivered a set of obscure doo-wop, standards and original tunes



Carl Mann, who started out with Sun aged 16, delivered the goods aged 75



In bright yellow jackets and black caps, The Pacers celebrated the music of Sonny Burgess



Britain's Paul Ansell appeared during Friday's the Stars Of Sun Rockabilly



be forgiven for somewhat indistinct vocals on *Judy* and

it was a breath-taking achievement for a man with real vision.

With Your Kisses and his own classic *Long Blond Hair*.

Lofty **Narvel Felts** never disappoints, and was on form as he delved far into his back catalogue for *Kiss-A-Me Baby*, displaying his high tenor-into-falsetto on such numbers as his recording debut in 1957 *Foolish Thoughts*, and his celebration of the 50s, *Pink And Black Days*.

Duos were rare on Sun, and among the best were **Alton & Jimmy**, who harmonised to great effect on *No More Crying The Blues*, *Still Shakin'* and *I Just Don't Know*. Superbly-turned out in bright yellow jackets and black caps were **The Pacers**, the late Sonny Burgess' band, who did full justice to Sonny's classics *Ain't Got A Thing*, *We Wanna Boogie* and *Red Headed Woman*, rockabilly standards one and all.

The only let down on the segment was **Rudy Grayzell**, who had suffered a collision earlier in the day so might

Jig-Ga-Lee-Ga, and his biggie *Duck Tail*.

Special mention, of course, to Britain's **Paul Ansell** in a white Stetson, who had every right to be present on this segment as a result of his Sun recordings with Scotty Moore, not to mention the Elvis intonation in his remarkable voice. His set included *I Forgot To Remember To Forget*, the seldom-performed *Tomorrow Night* and Carl Perkins' *Glad All Over*.

The Saturday's portmanteau showcase ran from midday until 3am, and featured no less than 47 bands associated with Reb Kennedy's Wild label in Los Angeles. Irishman Reb regards rockabilly as the future rather than a re-creation of the past, and among his acts are **The Vargas Brothers**, **Omar Romero**, **Eddie Clendening** and **Gizelle**.

No other label in history has been able to assemble so many acts from the same imprint performing under one roof, and

The third showcase rejoiced in the title Stars Of Rock'n'Roll, and showed the broad church that rock'n'roll has become. Vocal doo-wop groups The Eldorado and Norman Fox And The Rob Roys shared a stage with veteran Mike Waggoner, and screaming sax man Roddy Jackson.

Norman Fox, from New York's Bronx area, was up first with a fresh set of **Rob Roys** – dressed not, as you might expect with kilts and claymores, but as bank clerks [They are actually named after the cocktail, not the Scots hero]. Their

“Stars Of Rock'n'Roll showed the broad church that rock'n'roll has become..”



Norman Fox with the Rob Roys delighted a crowded Mardi Gras ballroom

biggie, *Tell Me Why* got an instant response from a crowded Mardi Gras ballroom, and despite occasional vocal lapses from the lead singer, pulled a few memory strings with timeless material including their own *Dream Girl*, *Pizza Pie* and *Lover Doll*.

Their second release, now regarded as a classic, was *Dance Girl Dance*, an uptempo dancer. The near-unknown **Mike Waggoner** has apparently undertaken half a dozen European tours but his biggest record *Baby Baby* is as elusive as the man himself, so he satisfied himself with some covers including *Good Rocking Tonight* and *Say Mama*.

The Eldorados, from Chicago, featured one original member in Jewel Jones (second tenor and baritone), alongside father and son harmonisers Norman Palm Sr and Jr, and looked snappy in their red jackets. Considering their biggest hit, *At My Front Door*, and its follow-up were both uptempo rockers, the group was perhaps unwise to concentrate on slow ballads for much of their set, with conversation levels in the ballroom nearly drowning them out. Still, they soldiered on, and regained audience attention with

“There were any number of British acts present, which is apt since the rockabilly revival started in the UK”

that catchy song about a “crazy little mama”, perhaps the first stalker of the 50s.

Californian **Roddy Jackson** always puts on an exciting show, and this was no exception.

His Specialty label double-sider *Moose On The Loose*, coupled with *Hiccups*, is maybe the best novelty pairing ever, and they were duly present and just like the record.

As he has said: “It’s not the singers who invented rock’n’roll, but the musicians,” and he duly played his own sax and keyboard solos. Jackson has had a late career flowering thanks to rock’n’roll clubland, playing tracks such as *I’ve Got My Sights Set On Someone New*, and *Got*

A New Girl Now, proving his gravel voice has lost none of its grit.

Once future-popstar Sonny Bono produced all three of his Specialty singles, but label boss Art Rupe, in his wisdom, decided against releasing Roddy’s own composition *She Said Yeah*, giving it instead to Larry Williams. On tonight’s evidence of that track, Roddy would have scored big with it himself, and he was given a hero’s reception.

International Appeal

There were any number of British acts and musicians present, which is apt since the rockabilly revival started in the UK.

Keyboardist **Carl “Sonny” Leyland**, and guitarist **Ashley Kingman** were omnipresent and impressed every time they appeared backing a huge variety of acts.

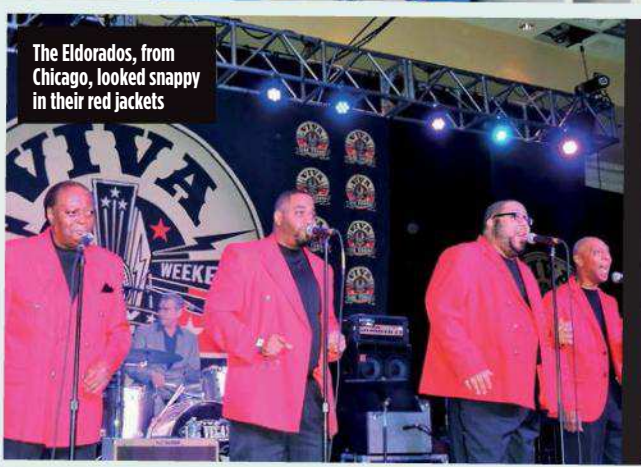
Paul Ansell’s No. 9, **Carlos & The Bandidos**, **Darrel Higham**, **Sonny West**, **Phil Haley & The Comments**, **Jackson Sloan & The Rhythmtones**, **The Black Kat Boppers**, **A Jay Wade & The Tennessee No.9**, **The Sureshots**, **Craig Shaw**, **The Danny McVey Trio**, **The**



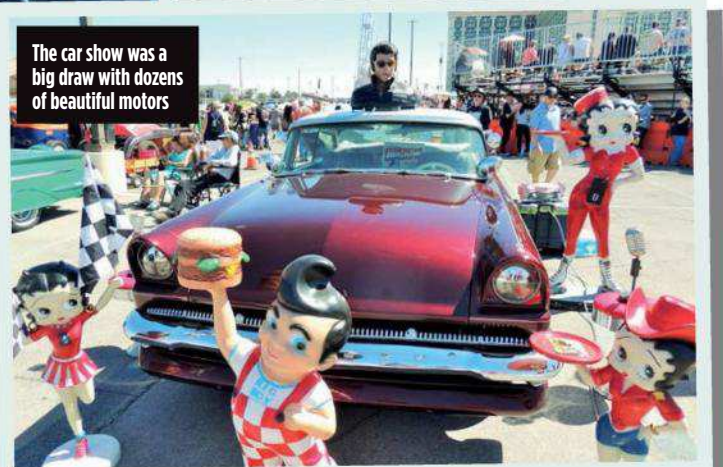
Annie Marie Lewis joined her mother, Linda Gail, as warm-up act for the Ferriday Fireball



A variety of pin-ups, dance contests and burlesque performances added glitz and glamour to the 21st VLV



The Eldorados, from Chicago, looked snappy in their red jackets



The car show was a big draw with dozens of beautiful motors

Neutronz, Lady Luck Lexy & The Riverside Boys and **Miss Mary & The Mr Rights** were among the Brits, and there were also acts from nations as diverse as Russia, Chile and Australia.

Jackson Sloan, a returnee from two years ago, was particularly impressive, even if breaking one of the supposed cardinal rules most acts seem to obey: Do not play your latest CD in its near entirety! Yet jump blues pioneer Jackson, in a spectacular burgundy zoot suit, got away with it, since all his new material is upbeat, danceable, and catchy while retaining the 40s-50s roots that have kept him in the business for 35 years.

His reputation seems to have grown in his absence from Vegas, with *Kickin' Up The Dust* a dancefloor hit on both sides of the Atlantic. His latest material, like *Got Me On Remote Control*, *Old Records* and *Don't Let Me Be The Last To Know* sound like they came from Roy Brown or Wynonie Harris catalogues. But they are original... and catchy.

Phil Haley & The Comments also aim for the feet, and are far from the straight

Bill Haley tribute act you might expect with additional original material in the Haley style.

Darrel Higham is always reliable, both as singer and guitarist, and it's a mystery why, with his good looks and stage presence: a) he is not the 21st century's Shakin' Stevens with regular TV appearances and playlisted singles and b) why VLV organisers give him an early hours slot rather than mid-evening headliner position.

So, who else impressed? **The Starjays**, from Seattle, proved jump blues is alive and well in the Pacific north west; **Hot Boogie Chillun**, from Germany, should not have put their band career on hold for the best part of 25 years; and **Nicotyna**, from Mexico, proved rock'n'roll standards translated into Spanish work beautifully.

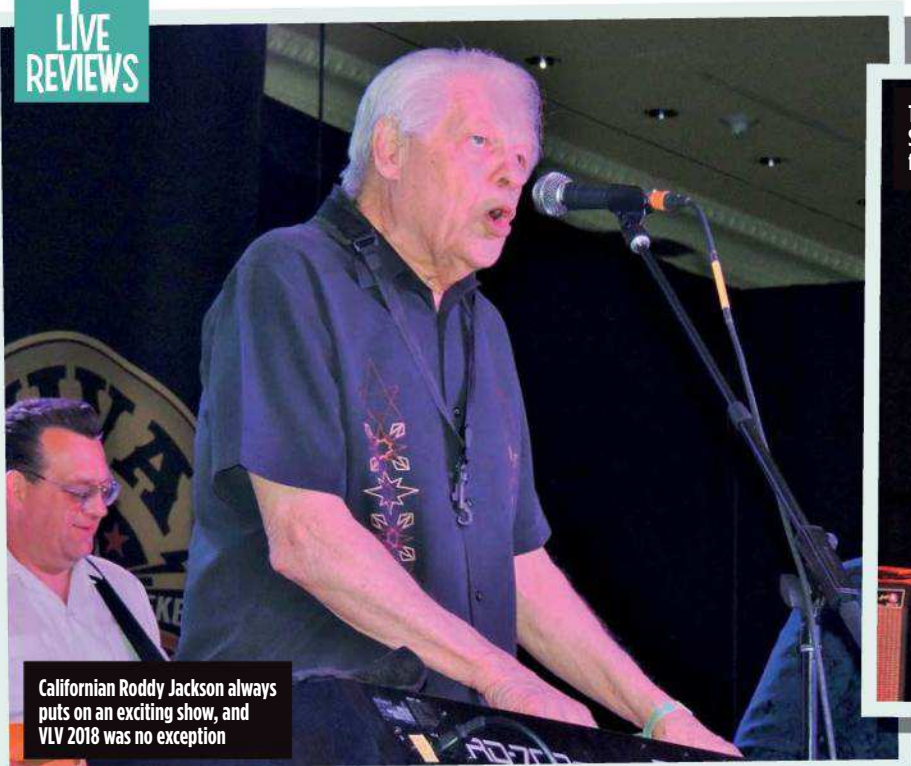
Talking of which, the Spanish band **The Kabooms** put on an exciting, well-rehearsed and seamless rockabilly set mainly in English, and then surprised with a Spanish language version of Cliff Richard's *Move It*. Another surprise was the unannounced appearance of white

bass riding original rockabilly **Ray Campi**, who appeared at the first Tom Ingram weekender in California which ultimately gave birth to VLV. Smartly turned out in black western gear with neckerchief, Ray guested on just one number in support of Rollin' Rock Records colleague **Rip Masters**, the bare-knuckle piano man – *Rockabilly Man* was the apt choice, because Rip wrote it.

Rip's own set was equally impressive, displaying the keyboard skills that made him the go-to guy for Ronnie Weisers' label sessions with a fine voice to match.

His keyboard sounded precisely like the upright piano it replaced, and he proved himself equally competent on guitar. Tracks like Fats Domino's *Swanne River Hop* showcased the 88s, while *Big Red 57*, *Sitting On Top Of The World* and *Gone Gone Gone* were fine vocals.

Chris Casello, the Detroit-born guitarist, came to VR's attention backing Jack Scott and Johnny Powers on a regular basis, and has been honoured in his own right, but that did not give any idea of the strength of his own stage act. Spot-on



Californian Roddy Jackson always puts on an exciting show, and VLV 2018 was no exception

musically and vocally, he has a great sense of humour, and was generous with his time, giving a spot to the beautiful **Tammi Savoy** who offered great takes on Ruth Brown's *This Little Girl's Gone Rockin'* and LaVern Baker's *Voodoo Voodoo*, proving she had taste to match her looks.

From cool, calm and collected sideman, Powers then turned into head-shaking wild man on *Ain't Gonna Be Your Monkey Man No More*.

Robert Gordon's baritone is always impeccable, but his choice of numbers may require a little more thought. Case in point: *Dreamin'*. If you are at a rockabilly festival and decide to do a Johnny Burnette song,

“Who would have thought that VLV would grow and grow into such a monster event?”

then perhaps choose one from Johnny's rockabilly catalogue rather than his 60s pop offerings? Gordon has had songs composed with him specifically in mind and recorded them, but he relied on covers for this set, including Gene Vincent's *Race*

The beautiful Tammi Savoy joined Chris Casello for a couple of numbers



With *The Devil*, Johnny Horton's *I'm Coming Home* and Dion's *The Wanderer*.

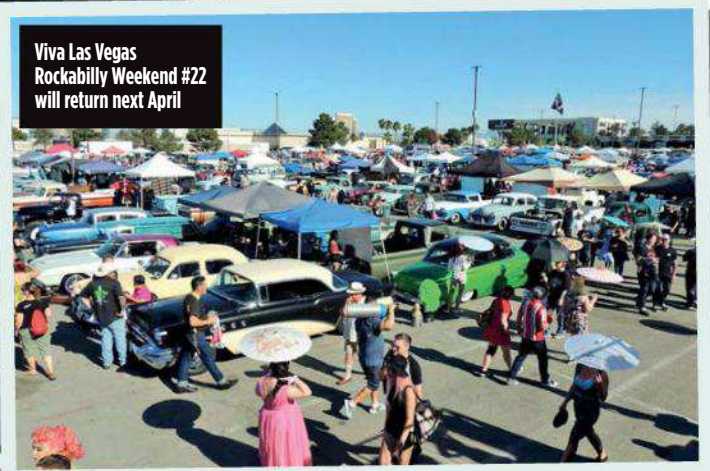
Meanwhile, **Li'l Mo And The Dynaflos** have been working their craft in doo-wop for 15 years now, and that heritage shows in their professional presentation.

Special mention must go to **Big Sandy**, versatile lead vocalist, and genial master of ceremonies on numerous occasions. Not only is he well-informed when it comes to introducing acts, he becomes quite emotional about artists he obviously admires, totally involving the audience in what they are about to hear and see.

Who would have thought that the half-a-dozen acts of the first VLV weekender would grow and grow into such a monster event? Here's to the next 21 years, and congratulations to all those acts, promoters, musicians, writers, roadies, stagehands, singers, comperes, disc jockeys, sound engineers and many more who make it happen. ★



Chris Casello was spot on both musically and vocally during his Bienville set



Viva Las Vegas Rockabilly Weekend #22 will return next April

ON SALE NOW

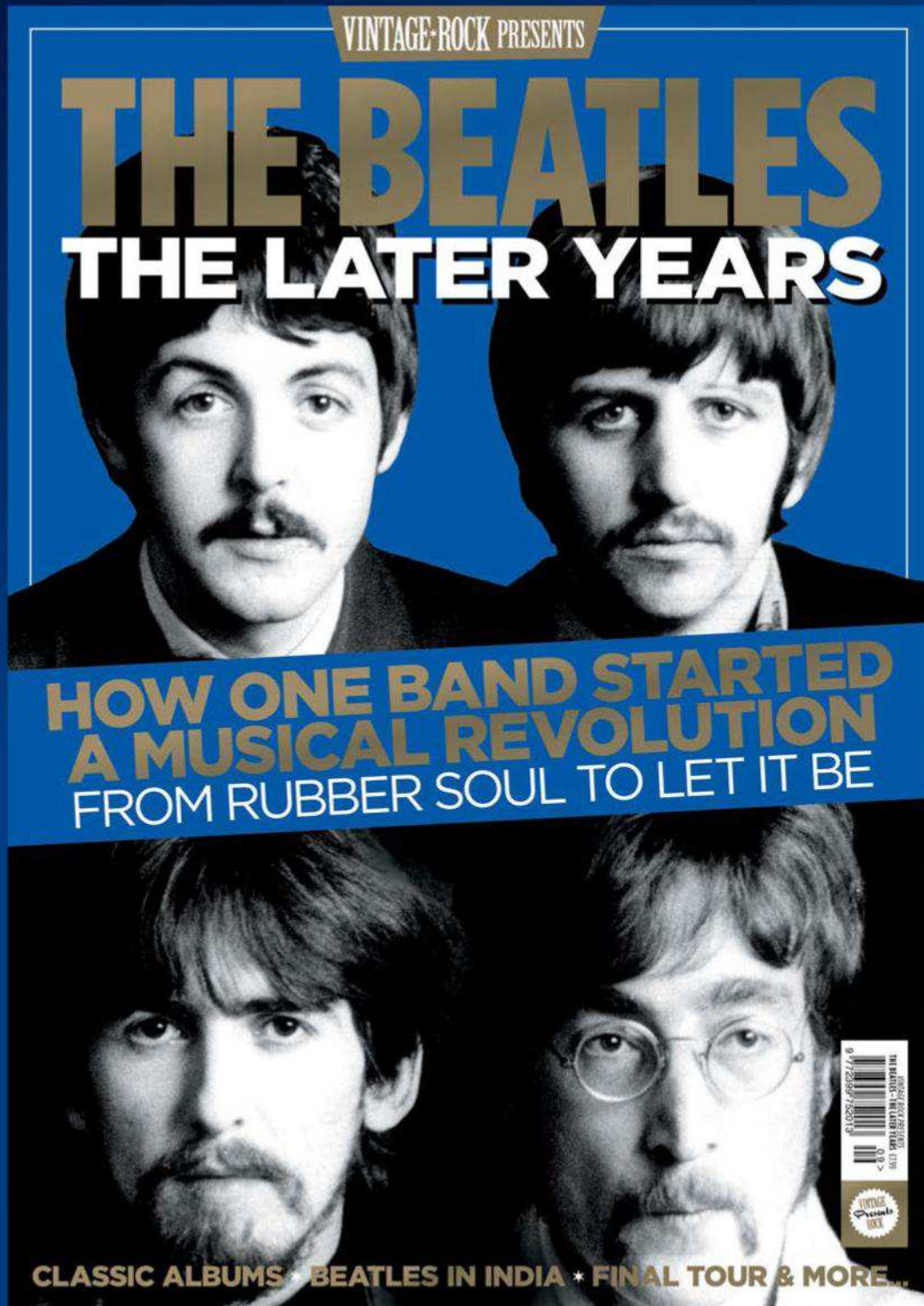
VINTAGE-ROCK PRESENTS

THE BEATLES

THE LATER YEARS

HOW ONE BAND STARTED
A MUSICAL REVOLUTION
FROM RUBBER SOUL TO LET IT BE

CLASSIC ALBUMS • BEATLES IN INDIA • FINAL TOUR & MORE...



AVAILABLE FROM HMV, WHSMITH, SAINSBURY'S, EASON
ORDER ONLINE AT shop.anthem-publishing.com/specials

FROM THE MAKERS OF **CLASSIC POP** **The Guitar** MusicTech **COUNTRY**



The hit-making harmonies of The Del Vikings was greeted by a standing ovation from the audience

ZEITERION THEATRE, NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS, 14 APRIL 2018

THE DEL VIKINGS

PLUS THE ORLONS, THE MYSTICS AND DOLORES “LA LA” BROOKS

Vintage Rock travels 3,000 miles to catch Todd Baptista’s sensational **Doo Wop & The Sounds Of The City** revival show

WORDS BY JOHN HOWARD PHOTOS BY NICK COBBAN

Promoter Todd Baptista is a very particular man.

He had previously staged 15 annual doo-wop revival shows in the former whaling town of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and for this 16th was determined to book 50s hit-making harmonisers The Del Vikings.

When Baptista investigated, he found the only working group with that name comprised no original members of the group that had turned *Come Go With Me* into a million seller.

So he set about tracing every surviving member of the long-lived group who had cut records under that name and came up with a list of seven names. One was ill, and one lived abroad, which left him with five. So he put it to the quintet, who now lived

all over the States, would they be prepared to do a one-off show for him if the price was right?

Thankfully, they agreed, which led to me sitting in the fabulous and historic Zeiterion Theatre, to watch an historic event, which also featured three other major acts, The Orlons, The Mystics

“The Del Vikings had obviously taken some trouble with their appearance, clad in sparkling suits”

and lead singer of The Crystals, Dolores “La La” Brooks.

The Del Vikings had a convoluted history, even 60 years ago. They were initially airmen stationed in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and always ran the risk of group members being re-assigned elsewhere. Which happened.

They recorded initially for the tiny Fee Bee local label but it was a licensing deal with the larger Dot imprint that put *Come Go With Me* on the Billboard charts, and led to a UK release on London American. The Del Vikings’ newly found fame led to a new contract with Mercury Records, but Fee Bee/Dot responded with a new group and a new spelling... *The Dell Vikings*. Be that as it may, the Del Vikings I saw had all recorded and performed

Philly's finest: The Orlons, featuring Stephen Caldwell and Jean Brickley, performed favourites such as *Not Me*, *Crossfire*, *Don't Hang Up* and *South Street*



New York's The Mystics closed their set with *Hushabye* and *Zing Went The Strings Of My Heart*

as members of the group, and it was worth travelling 3,000 miles to see them.

They opened the second half with the first appearance in 22 years by originals Ritzy Lee (joined 1960), Doug White (1961-64) Terry Young (1973) and local Joe Lopes, who was there in 1957, playing guitar. Joe, now wheelchair bound, got the best welcome from the hometown crowd.

The group had obviously taken some trouble with their appearance, clad in sparkling suits. Their set included hits such as *Whispering Bells*, *I'm Spinning*, *Cool Shake*, *Sunday Kind Of Love* and, of course, *Come Go With Me*.

They chose a more uptempo arrangement of The Harptones' *Sunday Kind Of Love*, and we were greeted on stage by two of the 80-year-old performers doing an amusing and energetic dance. But only briefly...

Baptista is keen that all his shows feature performers using their own

material rather than covers, and so it was tonight.

Less well-known tracks included the *Come Go*-rewrite *Come Along With Me*, *Bring Back Your Heart*, *The Sun* and *Kiss Me*, from their ABC Paramount era. There had been no drop-off in quality despite the passing years, and they got, and deserved, a standing ovation.

Back to the start of the show, and a packed auditorium. First up were Philadelphia's finest The Orlons, who surprised with their clear roots in doo-wop, even if that style did not produce any hits for them.

Original members of the group, who signed to Cameo Parkway label in 1960, were Stephen Caldwell, appearing as an Orlon for the first time in 30 years, and Jean Brickley. They were perfect on favourites such as *Not Me*, a solid rocker, *Crossfire*, *The Wah-Watusi*, the

jaunty *Don't Hang Up* and *South Street* and also included a couple of more obscure numbers – their 1961 debut number (*Soldier Boy*) *I'll Be There* and (*Happy Birthday*) *Mr 21*.

Following them were The Mystics, from Bensonhurst, New York, with original lead singer Phil Cracolici and second tenor George Galfo. They harmonised sweetly on the Velvets' *Tonight*, *Don't Take The Stars*, *Chapel Of Dreams*, *All Through The Night* and a dramatic *Cara Mia*. They did a snatch of *Teenager In Love*, a song written for them by Doc Pomus and Mort Shuman but given to labelmates Dion And The Belmonts, they said, before ending with their own smash Pomus and Shuman song *Hushabye* and *Zing Went The Strings Of My Heart*.

Closing this first part of the show was the still youthful-looking La La Brooks, who joined The Crystals at only 13 years old. Wearing a silver trouser suit, she reprised the hits on which she sang lead *Then He Kissed Me*, *Da Doo Ron Ron*, *Little Boy* and *I Wonder*, performed faultlessly. Other songs included *There's No Other Like My Baby*, *Uptown* and *Be My Baby* before ending with a Tina Turner take on *Proud Mary*, during which she mingled with the enthusiastic crowd.

After, all the veteran acts gathered in the theatre foyer to sign autographs and chat with fans, the icing on the cake for a very fine show indeed. ★

Dolores "La La" Brooks reprised The Crystals' hits such as *Then He Kissed Me* and *Da Doo Ron Ron*





Big Jay McNeely joins the Rob Stone Band and musicians to celebrate his 91st birthday

JOE'S AMERICAN BAR AND GRILL, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA, 22 APRIL 2018

BIG JAY McNEELY

The last of the bar-walking saxophone players Big Jay McNeely may not be able to walk much, but there's nothing wrong with his playing.

WORDS BY JOHN HOWARD PHOTOS BY NICK COBBAN

At a concert arranged to celebrate his 91st birthday, the legendary saxophonist Big Jay McNeely made a rare performance.

A healthy crowd turned up at Joe's American Bar and Grill in Burbank, California to pay tribute to the man, who topped the sepia charts as early as 1949 with the iconic *The Deacon's Hop*.

Dressed in a natty red jacket and matching hat, the big man was happy to sign autographs and chat to fans ahead of the show.

Performances are rare these days and, considering he used to lead a march along Central Avenue in Los Angeles back in the day – still blowing his sax with dancers following him down the street – it was

a little sad to see him carried from his mobility scooter on to the stage.

But he is still with us when all his brothers-in-brass have gone to the great gig in the sky.

With a grin as big as all outdoors, Jay proved he had come to party. He was ably backed by the Rob Stone Band with Rob singing lead and playing harmonica, with Steve Mugalian on drums, Australian rockabilly Brad Hayman on stand up bass, Bill Bates on guitar, Steve F'Dor on keyboards and Jay's friends Jim Holt and Al Rappaport on additional saxes. Jay opened with some jump blues with *All*

“After the show, a tired but exhilarated, Jay recalled how fans in Europe led him to resign his job as a postman”

“With a grin as big as all outdoors, Jay proved he had come to party”

That Wine Has Gone, insisting on, and getting, the enthusiastic audience to join in with him.

He punctuated his singing and playing with anecdotes and stories, like that cold night in Austria which led to his *Big Fat Mama* keeping him warm.

Joe Turner’s *Flip Flop And Fly* was followed by his late 50s hit *There Is Something On Your Mind* on which he was credited, but did not actually sing.

Eugene Church’s *Pretty Girls Everywhere* was followed by *Get Up We’re Gonna Boogie*, with a little bit of *I Can’t Stop Loving You*, thrown in, before morphing into *You Don’t Miss Your Water Until The Well Runs Dry*.

It was difficult to remember this was a solid link to the past. Jay took up the saxophone when he was 16, inspired by both Lester Young and Illinois Jacquet’s solo on Lionel Hampton’s *Flying Home*.

That meant he has been playing professionally for 75 years, ever since bandleader Johnny Otis took him under his wing. He first recorded as a sideman on Otis’ *Barrel House Stomp*, which brought him to the attention of Ralph Bass, A&R man for Savoy Records who signed him to a solo deal.

Next it was solid blues with *Sad Sad World* before Jay concluded his first session with a funky *Party*. He consistently proved he was an entertainer first and foremost with great audience rapport.

His second set featured more of the same with *Let The Good Times Roll*, *Times Getting Tougher Than Tough*, sung by Rob Stone, the instrumental *After Hours*, *Everybody Needs Somebody, I’m Just A Country Boy* and the New Orleans-flavoured *Zydeco Soul*, before climaxing with a *Party* reprise.

After the show, a tired but exhilarated, Jay recalled how fans in Europe back in the 80s led him to resign his job as a postman and return to music full time.

“I played all over Europe,” he recalled, specifically name-checking the 100 Club in London’s Oxford Street.

Back in music, and recognised as a pioneer, he was inducted into the Rhythm And Blues Music Hall Of Fame his original sax, coated so it reacted to ultraviolet light, is in a Seattle museum. ★

At 91, Big Jay McNeely is one of the last great US honkers – made famous for their raucous stage antics



Rob Stone provided lead vocals and harmonica during the tribute to McNeely



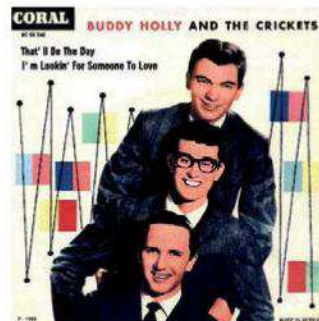
WORDS BY VINCE EAGER

SOUNDTRACK *of my life* HANK MARVIN

As pioneering lead guitarist in The Shadows, Hank Marvin's place in the pantheon of UK rock legends is unassailable. He's influenced scores of other British guitar stars, but who was Hank himself inspired by? He reveals all here, with perhaps a few surprises. A new 180g sky blue vinyl version of his 2014 solo album, simply called *Hank*, is out now on Demon Records. ★

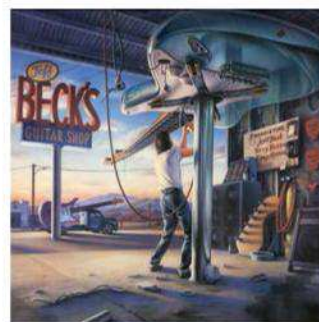


Simone Dwyer/Getty Images



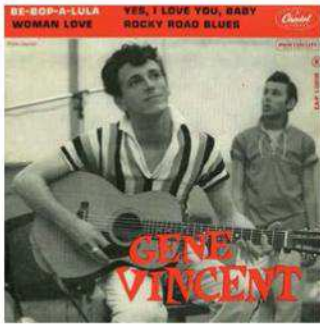
That'll Be The Day **BUDDY HOLLY AND THE CRICKETS** **(1957) CORAL RECORDS**

This was the first rock record I'd heard. It was on a jukebox in a Newcastle milk bar, and when this came on the guitar intro blew me away. I loved the song coupled with the powerful big bottom-end sound on the jukebox, plus the amazing damped rhythmic guitar shuffle sound. Buddy's voice was so different and the guitar content was amazing and made me want to play just like that. I had an old guitar and within weeks I had joined Bruce [Welch]'s skiffle group and we were on our way.



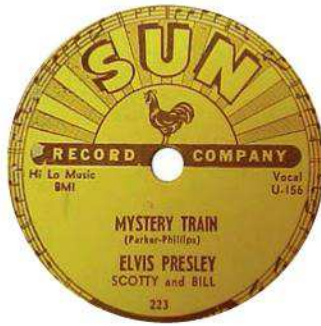
Where Were You **JEFF BECK (1989) EPIC RECORDS**

This track, taken from his *Jeff Beck's Guitar Shop* album, shows Beck's supreme guitar playing. When he went back to his Fender Stratocaster instead of his [Gibson] Les Paul, he threw away his pick and started using his fingers. He told me that this song was created using fingerstyle playing coupled with palming his guitar's volume control. The tune and arrangement are based on a Bulgarian choral work, and it's something only a few guitarists could attempt. Beck had to rehearse for months in order to play it live.



Be-Bop-A-Lula
GENE VINCENT (1956)
CAPITOL RECORDS

This, to me, was a really understated cool rock'n'roll thing, with the brushes on the snare and the tape echo on Gene's voice, which was all so new to us. I really didn't know what it was and I just thought it was a ridiculous sound, but the whole thing was so laid back. Then of course we had these great guitar solos by Cliff Gallup on his Gretsch Duo-Jet. Wow! What a player he was. His playing excited me no end and, once again, it made me want to play like that.



Mystery Train
ELVIS PRESLEY (1955)
SUN RECORDS

The riff, borrowed from Junior Parker's *Love My Baby*, which Scotty Moore plays is outstanding and blew me away, but once again he had the slap tape echo on, but we still didn't know what was creating this amazing sound, all we knew was that it was some kind of echo. It took me an awful long time work out the riff using my pick and fingers, but it was worth it. This track is the very roots of white rock'n'roll, and was Elvis as his very best. How can you not love it?



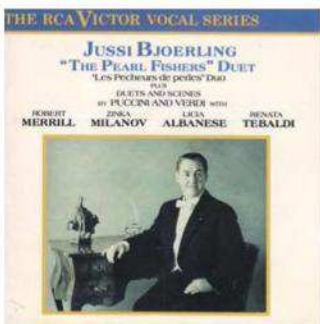
Killer Queen
QUEEN (1974) EMI RECORDS

When I first heard this track on my car radio, I couldn't believe how different it was to anything I'd heard before. The elaborate nature of their sound jumped out at me, with the harmonies standing out. They sat beautifully with the sophisticated lyrics but I just couldn't figure out how they'd achieved them. Add to this the beautifully structured melodic, bluesy, jazzy-style guitar playing of Brian May and, in my humble opinion, you have one of the cleverest pop recordings that you're ever likely to hear.



God Only Knows
THE BEACH BOYS (1966)
CAPITOL RECORDS

This is another one of those records that hits you between the eyes when you hear it. Produced and mostly written by Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys, it features on their *Pet Sounds* album which took recording, musical arrangements and song writing to another level. The beautifully angelic lead vocal by Carl Wilson, along with the sounds which were very different to anything being done at the time, puts it head and shoulders above most other recordings.



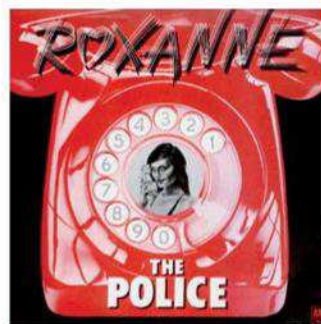
Au Fond Du Temple Saint (aka The Pearl Fishers' Duet)
JUSSI BJÖRLING AND ROBERT MERRILL (1950) RCA

This is from the Bizet opera *The Pearl Fishers* [*Les Pêcheurs De Perles*] and is performed by Jussi Björling and Robert Merrill. Jerry Lordan was a 60s songwriter and singer who wrote *Apache*, *Wonderful Land* and *Atlantis* for The Shadows. One day Jerry and I were songwriting when he said: "There's a track I want to play you, Hank", and he played me this by Jussi and Robert. It's considered to be the definitive version and I can't argue, it blew me away.



Bye Bye Love
EVERLY BROTHERS (1957)
CADENCE RECORDS

Like most of my favourite records, I first heard *Bye Bye Love* in a milk bar. I think to achieve the quality and precision of the harmonies of Phil and Don, you have to be related as they were so precise. As their voices developed they became so tight and melodic, we – Bruce Welch and I – found it hard to believe that they weren't using some new-fangled technology. Not only did their vocal sounds so pure, they incorporated the sound of an acoustic Gibson. Magical!



Roxanne
THE POLICE (1978)
A&M RECORDS

The Police were a sensational band and *Roxanne* was the first piece I heard from them. Although it had a hint of reggae, there is more to it than that and proved to be different in so many ways. I find it a haunting record and the manner in which Stewart Copeland uses his kit, by hitting it in various ways that you wouldn't expect, is brilliant. It was the track that not only tuned me on to the band, but also made me a big fan – I've seen them play live many times since.

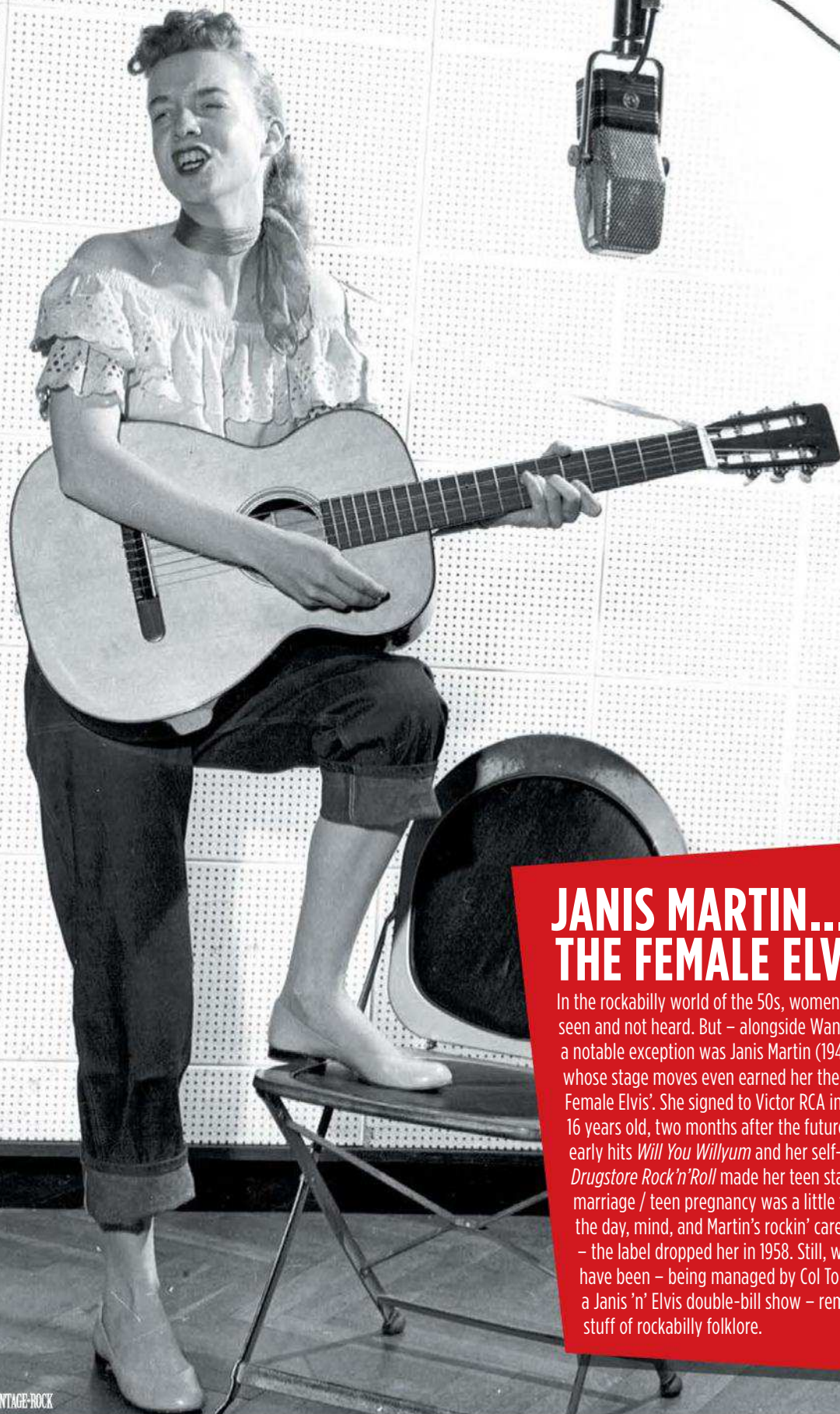


Choo Choo Ch'Boogie
LOUIS JORDAN & HIS TYMPANY FIVE (1946) BRUNSWICK

This was a Top 10 hit in the States during the 40s and was something of a launchpad for Louis Jordan's career. It's a fantastic feel-good song, and you immediately get the sense of the fun Jordan put into his performances. It has a mixture of swing, boogie and was a precursor to rock'n'roll. Many of the sax riffs were reborn by artists such as Little Richard and Fats Domino who built many of their songs around such riffs. You just can't help but feel joy after listening to this track. ★

Coda

Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images



JANIS MARTIN... THE FEMALE ELVIS

In the rockabilly world of the 50s, women were mostly seen and not heard. But – alongside Wanda Jackson – a notable exception was Janis Martin (1940-2007) whose stage moves even earned her the epithet ‘The Female Elvis’. She signed to Victor RCA in 1956 at just 16 years old, two months after the future King, and early hits *Will You Willyum* and her self-penned *Drugstore Rock’n’Roll* made her teen star. A ‘secret’ marriage / teen pregnancy was a little too racy for the day, mind, and Martin’s rockin’ career was brief – the label dropped her in 1958. Still, what *could* have been – being managed by Col Tom Parker and a Janis ’n’ Elvis double-bill show – remains the stuff of rockabilly folklore.

ROCK 'N' ROLL WEEKENDERS PRESENT

AT THE MULTI-MILLION POUND
REFURBISHED HEMSBY BEACH HOLIDAY PARK

HEMSBY 61

NO. 61

ROCK 'N' ROLL

LIVE! IN PERSON

TAIL RECORDING STAR
& HIS BAND RETURNS

JACK BAYMOORE
AND THE
BANDITS
'AV-8 Boogie'
(SWE.)



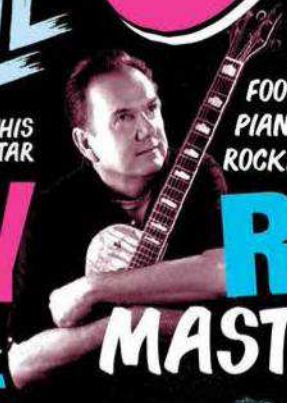
A RARE U.K. APPEARANCE FOR THIS
U.S. MULTI-MILLION SELLING STAR

GARY U.S. BONDS (USA)



FOOT-STOMPIN'
PIANO-PUMPIN'
ROCKABILLY...

RIP MASTERS (USA)



Quarter to Three
New Orleans & School is Out

MFC CHICKEN
(ENG./CAN.)



LEVI DEXTER
AND HIS
BAND (ENG.)



JOHNNY TROUBLE
& HIS
BAND (USA)

THE DEL PRINCE
SPANISH
DOO-WOP STARS...
(ESP.)

DANNY MCVEY
AND THE
TRIO (ENG.)



BARNY
AND THE
RHYTHM ALL-STARS
(FRA.)



Celebrating
40 years in
show business

THURS. SHOW

DJ's

- LITTLE CARL
- BE-BOP KAZ
- DAVE CROZIER
- BILL GUNTRIP
- SIMON MOON
- GEORGE GUNTRIP
- GARY DENTON
- SKINNY JIM
- WILD CAT PETE
- SWANNY

THE TEX SPEED COMBO
(ENG.)



DYLAN KIRK
AND THE
KILLER COMBO
(ENG.)

THE ROOMMATES
(ENG.)

RACE WITH THE DEVIL
(ENG.)

THURS. SHOW

GLENN DORAN
AND THE
PRAIRIE ECHOES
(ENG.)

THE DIME STORE DUKES (ENG.)

THE BUSBOYS
THE
DEVILLE REBELS
(WAL.)

LAST CALL
ROMANCE
ROCKABILLY BAND
(From Colorado, USA)

THE PLAYBOYS
(ENG.)

HARRY VIOLET
& THE
SHARKS
(ENG.)



JOIN US FOR... THE PRE-PARTY Thurs. 4th Oct. (THIS MUST BE PRE-BOOKED)

5/6/7/8 OCT. 2018

HEMSBY BEACH HOLIDAY PARK
BEACH ROAD, HEMSBY, NORFOLK NR29 4HT

+44(0) 1772761522 www.rocknrollweekenders.com

SECURE YOUR ACCOMMODATION

WITH A **£20.00** PER PERSON

DEPOSIT (T&C's apply)

www.facebook.com

Design & Artwork © 2018 Andy Brittain ABCreative. All Rights Reserved.

HOSTED BY:
THE UK'S NO. 1 JIVE & SWING BAND!!

SUN 5TH AUG, 2PM

SAINT HILL MANOR, E. GRINSTEAD,
WEST SUSSEX, RH19 4JY



The Jive Aces

SUMMERTIME *Swing*

- VINTAGE STALLS
- BBQ, FOOD & BAR
- CLASSIC VEHICLES
- RAFFLE & MORE
- ALL PROCEEDS TO CHARITIES INC. THE NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION

ROCK N ROLL ROYALTY

Gina Haley

CANADA'S SWEETHEART OF SWING

Alex Pangman

THE UK'S NEWEST VINTAGE DUO

The Duettes

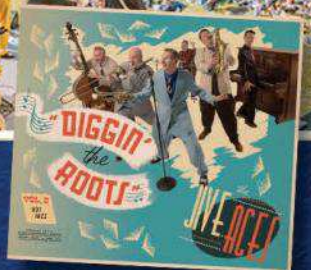
LONDON'S PINUP DARLINGS

The Satin Dolls

ROCK N ROLL GUITAR

Lucky Will

TICKETS £19/£17 CONC. & GROUPS ADV. +44 7947 156 318 OR JIVEACES.COM/SUMMERTIMESWING OR £21/£19 CONC. ON THE DOOR



TWO NEW ALBUMS - DIGGIN' THE ROOTS
AVAILABLE FROM JIVEACES.COM

VOL.1: *Rockin' Rhythm & Blues* • VOL.2: *Hot Jazz*