

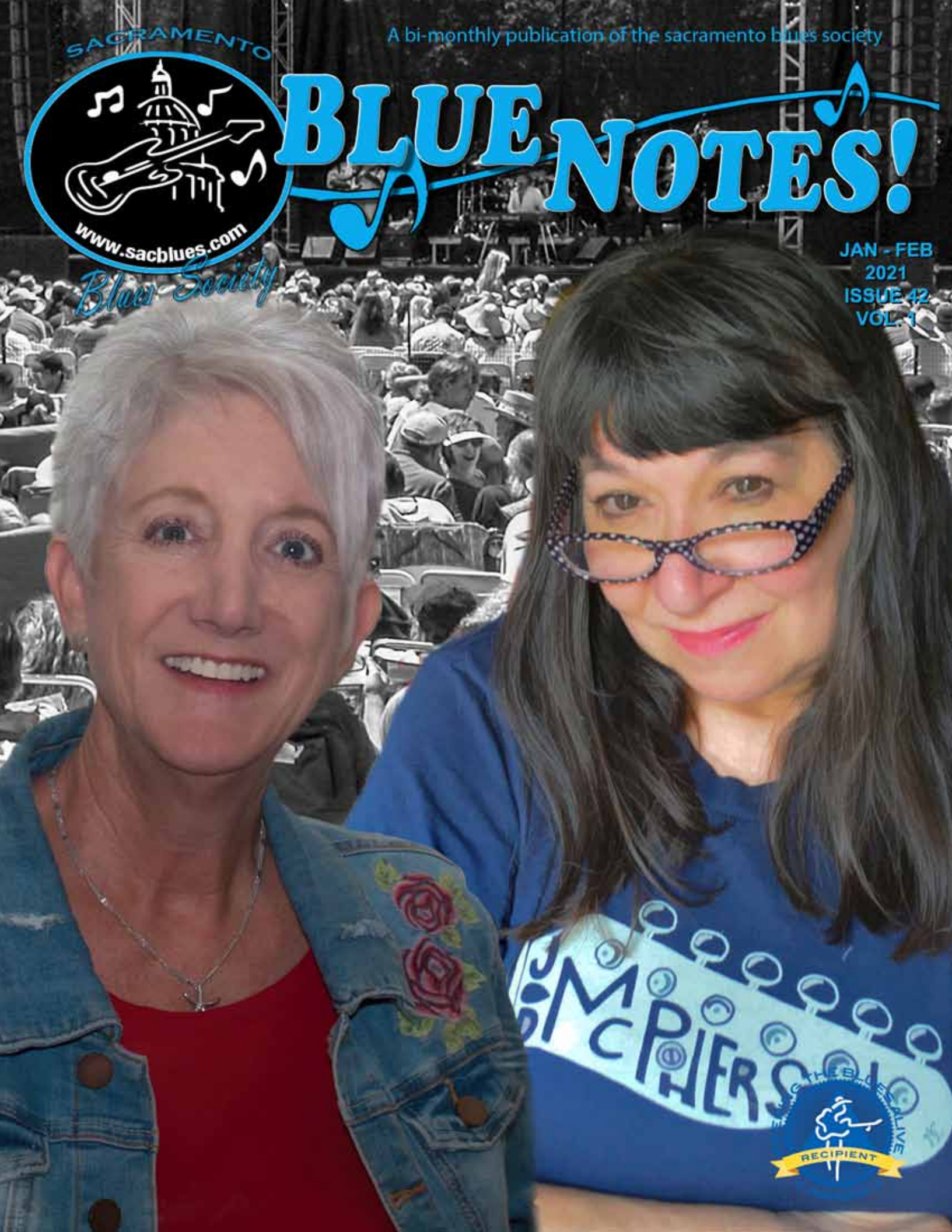
SACRAMENTO

A bi-monthly publication of the sacramento blues society



# BLUE NOTES!

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2021  
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VOL. 1



## President's Column

By Sally Katen



Welcome to the New Year 2021! Wow, what a year 2020 was; it changed a lot of lives and it changed how we live and how we listen to music. Notably, there have been some incredible livestreamed shows, and I've enjoyed several of these events. Please check out Rico's Blues News (on our website) for a comprehensive list of offerings that you too can enjoy!

The Sacramento Blues Society held its yearly election for the Board of Directors in December 2020, and I'm happy to say we now have a full Board. Of the maximum of eleven board positions mandated in the by-laws, there were eight openings. The three current and continuing board members are: Reneé Erickson Sullivan, Rich Gormley and Rick Snyder. Having served before, and running again, were Barbara Katen, Doug Pringle, Cari Chenkin, Chris Clark and myself, Sally Katen. Three new directors have joined us: Dana Moret, Jeff Herzog, and Rex Smith. Congratulations to all newly elected Board members, welcome aboard!

There are now two funds that support SBS musicians and students: The Gene Chambers Musicians' Crisis Fund, and new this year, the Mick Martin Student Fund, which will help qualified student musicians in obtaining instruments, electronics for at home learning, and other music-related activities. Willie's Blues News is now Rico's Blues News. If you want to be on the event email list, go to: [www.sacblues.com](http://www.sacblues.com) and add your email address to [calendar@sacblues.com](mailto:calendar@sacblues.com).

I am happy to serve with this Board, as we're expecting to do some exciting things this year. The SBS will be doing what it can to bring you some of the best blues music around! Whether it will be online or when we get back to the venues, we will be sharing all the news with you. I'm looking forward to what the New Year will bring us!

## Ready to Shop Post-Holiday Sales? Support SBS through Amazon Smile!

You can support the Sacramento Blues Society every time you shop online at Amazon, at no cost to you! When you shop online at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same prices, selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to SBS when we are selected as your charity of choice. Go to Smile. Amazon.com. Sign into your Amazon account (or create one). Then, go to the Nonprofit Organizations List. Select "The Sacramento Blues Society". That's it! From then on, each purchase helps. Thank you!

### 2020 Committee Chairs

*Blues in the Schools* - Rick Snyder

*Hall of Fame* - Sally Katen

*Events* - Mindy Giles

*Membership* - Linda McShane

*Sponsorships/Fundraising* - Doug Pringle

*Public Relations & Social Media* - Mindy Giles

*Volunteer Coordinator* - TBD

*Big Day of Giving* - Rick Snyder

*Donor Gifts* - Sally Katen

*Blue Notes Newsletter* - Cari Chenkin & Jan Kelley

*IBC Competition* - MariLu Onweller

*Webmaster* - Dave Baldwin

*Board of Directors Development* - Doug Pringle

*Help keep the Blues alive - Contact a Chair or Board Member to volunteer for the Board or a Committee!*

**The Sacramento Blues Society (SBS)** is one of the oldest blues societies in California, founded in 1979. SBS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization formed to preserve and promote blues music as an art form. SBS has kept the blues tradition alive in the Sacramento area by promoting the local blues music scene, bringing internationally renowned artists to the region, acknowledging our local blues artists, providing a Musicians' Crisis Fund and publishing the "Blue Notes" six times a year. SBS is an affiliate member of The Blues Foundation (which honored us with a 2015 Keeping the Blues Alive Award) which provides educational opportunities for young people with The Blues Foundation's "Blues in The Schools" Program.

### Board of Directors Meetings - 2nd Tuesday of each Month, 7:00 p.m.

All SBS Members in  
good standing are invited  
to attend.

For more details,  
including meeting  
location, check:  
[www.sacblues.com/  
who-we-are/](http://www.sacblues.com/who-we-are/)

### 2021 Board of Directors

Sally Katen

Reneé Erickson Sullivan

Rich Gormley

Doug Pringle

Barbara Katen

Cari Chenkin

Rick Snyder

Chris Clark

Jeff Herzog

Rex Smith

Dana Moret

### Sacramento Blues Society Publications

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**Twitter: @SacBluesSociety**



## Blues In The Schools (BITS) Update *The New Frontier*

by Rick Snyder, BITS Chairman



You talk about a year in which we have been trying to push water uphill with our collective noses, and that's 2020! Thank goodness for the local and extended blues communities because we could not have made the progress we have without all of you. Our generous donors, sponsors, volunteers, and committee members have made possible an online Blues in the Schools program for the upcoming school year that is incredible! The upcoming school year remains in limbo mode. However, we have contacted many musicians and teachers who were volunteers last year and beyond, and have brainstormed some exciting ideas for the possibilities ahead. It is looking like our after-school program will survive the pandemic, although in a new paradigm, the New Reality of Online.

BITS Co-Chair Lisa Phenix has stepped down. We offer our heartfelt thanks for all her hard work and accomplishments. She leaves BITS in good hands with a robust committee of committed volunteers. BITS has successfully created three four-part Blues Assembly videos for elementary school students with in-depth lesson plans for teachers to integrate blues music education into the existing curriculum. Also, BITS is looking to have some small COVID-safe outdoor events. Check out BITS Facebook page for updates at <https://www.facebook.com/sacbits/>.

BITS is stepping up its social media with BITS social Media Chair Ryder Green. Follow BITS on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook (so far). Check out the Blues in the Schools section in our soon to be rolled out new Sacramento Blues Society website as well. We will continue to promote all of those who participated, volunteered, supported, and sponsored BITS and its associated programs on all of our social media platforms, so look for your name!

Blues lovers; we need you...to volunteer & TO HELP US EXPAND BLUES MUSIC EDUCATION! Do you have tech skills, word processing, publicity, social media, musicianship, teaching, fundraising marketing skills, education contacts, know how to reach students, musicians, the youth, and leadership tomorrow, or want to help out? BITS is your program. We need your involvement. Be part of the next frontier, as BITS brings blues education to the internet universe.

Join us, have some fun, celebrate our love for the blues by sharing your many gifts. We meet on the first Thursday of each month by Zoom. Please contact BITS Chair Rick Snyder at [rick@3sunzconsulting.com](mailto:rick@3sunzconsulting.com) if you would like to share your time and skills with us.

We look forward to hearing from you, hearing some blues (live!), and 2021!

## 2020 SBS Hall of Fame Update

by Sally Katen, HOF Committee Chairwoman

As we start the new year, I am filled with hope for a musical future in the upcoming months. Due to the pandemic, almost everyone has been in quarantine and all events were canceled or postponed last year, including the SBS' Hall of Fame. It brings me sadness when I think about the event we missed last year, but that just makes me ready to plan and prepare for this year's SBS Hall of Fame Event on September 26, 2021! Mark your calendar, this date has been reserved!

Since we are not able to celebrate the late Johnny "Guitar" Knox's January birthday this year, we're thinking of possibly celebrating in another month. This event is also a fundraiser for the Hall of Fame. We will see!

I am looking forward to the upcoming year and the Hall of Fame 2021! Please submit nominee names to [www.sacblues.com](http://www.sacblues.com), where you can also check out the "Gone But Not Forgotten" Video.

## A Casual Conversation with Terry Hanck

By Barbara Katen

This is first in a series of interviews of blues musicians conducted in a casual format. Many thanks to Terry Hanck for agreeing to this interview that allows us insight into his career.

**Blue Notes (BN):** How did you get your start in music?

**Terry:** I didn't pick up the horn till just before my 21st birthday at the end of '65. I was back in Chicago then, completely untrained in music. Tried taking lessons but couldn't apply myself, so I'm basically self-taught. I have a hard head, which I've been paying for all my



life! Moved back out to Southern California, where I had lived on and off since '63. Then up to the Bay Area (East Bay) at the end of '69. Didn't really start gigging regularly till about '71 when my first band, *The Grayson Street Houserockers*, got together. Now a month away from 76 years old, I'm still trying to get my foot in the door.

**BN:** What are your musical influences?

**Terry:** I was just starting Jr. High (the perfect age) when Rock and Roll hit the white audience in 1956. Black R&B, DooWop, Rockabilly with that white hoodlum hillbilly twang and New Orleans R&R, all got to me. At the time I had no idea where this music was coming from, other than out of the radio. The 50's New Orleans sound combined Dixieland with Caribbean rhythms, often driven by the late great drummer Earl Palmer, which I still find mesmerizing. When I first heard Jimmy Reed coming out of the radio, I didn't know that was blues because it was on a commercial pop station in Chicago, WIND-AM, but I knew that was what I liked.

I got into Ray Charles about '62. (He was) one of my biggest influences. He brought all the elements together: blues, jazz, soul, gospel and even country, and did it with sophistication. When I listened to him, he really spoke to my soul. Later, when I first started playing, I was into the avant-garde, for which I was completely unqualified.

Soul, Funk, Salsa and Reggae were all part of my life in the seventies. Now I listen to EVERYTHING, from all over the world. I love singers, the Great American Songbook with great melodies and incredible arrangements. I'm also influenced by all the musicians I've come up with and know, plus the newer ones that blow my mind. I play my horn every day and I always come back to the blues, but I



Terry Hanck interview, con't. from p. 3  
like anything with a groove and soul!

**BN:** When were you the happiest?

**Terry:** If you are concerned with being happy, you've got too much time on your hands. Accomplish or create something or help someone and you'll experience happiness. Okay, maybe I've savored a nice crustacean or cooked something for my wife Vera that she delighted in. That could cause happiness also.

**BN:** What trait do you deplore in yourself?

**Terry:** Ignorance, sloth, and cowardice.

**BN:** What trait do you deplore in others?

**Terry:** Ignorance.

**BN:** What is your life motto?

**Terry:** I've never had a motto, but at my age it would be: WHAT FALLS ON THE GROUND, STAYS ON THE GROUND.

**BN:** Who are the heroes in your life?

**Terry:** We all need someone to look up to and for me, it's easy... People that are smarter, braver, more talented, and more generous. These people inspire us and give us something to strive for.

**BN:** What is your greatest fear?

**Terry:** Betraying myself and the ones I love...also being fed slowly, feet first into a wood-chipper.

Go to [www.terryhanck.net](http://www.terryhanck.net) for more information.

## Who Let the Dogs Out? The Big DOG That Is!

By Rick Snyder

Giving Edge let the BigDOG out, the Big Day of Giving. We know it won't officially be here until May, but we wanted to send out a subliminal message. Support the blues, support the blues, support the blues (if you can).



As the time draws nearer, we will let you know how you, as SBS members, can help us have a successful fundraiser on the Big DOG. We'll encourage you and share how you can post our messages on Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok, Twitter or whatever platform you like. You can send out emails too.

One of the cool things about the Big Day of Giving is that whatever area of the Sacramento Blues Society tugs at your heartstrings the most is where you can specify the funds to be allocated. You can select the SBS "general" fund (which funds ALL our activities), the Blues in the Schools fund, the Gene Chambers Musicians' Crisis fund, the Hall of Fame fund or the Mick Martin Student fund.

In these strange and unusual times in which we live, it is essential to remember: The blues is a condition, blues music is the cure! Stay safe, have fun, listen to the blues, and please remember the Sacramento Blues Society on 2021's Big Day of Giving, May 6, 2021.

## SBS Board Update

### Welcome, New Board Members

The Sacramento Blues Society held our annual election of our Board of Directors in early December. In consideration of the current pandemic, all votes were to be submitted by mail, since there was no member Annual Meeting/Holiday Party this year.

Thank you to all the members who took the time and trouble to vote and mail in their ballots; we really appreciate your support.

We are pleased to welcome the five returning and three new Directors to the 2021 Board

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SBS Board of Directors met via Zoom in November and December. We will do the same for the January and February meetings, and will see how the opening up of the state is going, before deciding upon future meetings. Please stay tuned for any further developments! And STAY HOME when you can, wear your (SBS!) masks and stay safe when you do go out!

## New Column Debuts in this Issue!

It occurred to us that it might be fun to create a new column in which we explore the "why" of what the SBS does! Board member Doug Pringle has volunteered to write this new column. We welcome Doug and his exploration of why we do what we do.

### Preserving and Promoting the Blues

By Doug Pringle

Music is a basic human function. Anthropologists have discovered that nearly every single human society had or has a connection to music. Humankind and music cannot function without one another. The interaction with sound is unavoidable, either to make it or take pleasure in it. People have always found music significant in their lives, whether for the enjoyment in listening, the emotional response, performing, or creating. Blues music has immense worth for our society.



The most common way one becomes involved with music is through listening. Listening at home on a CD player, or in the car, on the computer, or on an iPod can be a very personal and fulfilling experience. Music sets a mood and a vibe as we hear it in lounges, bars, parties, or other social events. Attending a concert is unique, as it offers the excitement of hearing live musicians while providing the sound as it is meant to be heard.

In mainstream American society, music is usually looked upon as an extra discipline that it is not essential to the function of our society and culture. However, that seems to be changing. The role of music in our society fills a void that we all need in order to enrich ourselves and our culture. This is part of the reason, with your support, we do what we do.

### Photos of SBS Masks and Lapel Pins



See Article on Next Page!

## CD Review

### Remember Me - Marshal Wilkerson

(Tamtracks Records) *By Mindy Giles*

For the first record to be released in Sacramento in 2021, this is a grand slam beautiful one. Blues & soul singer Marshal Wilkerson has brought us all a New Year's gift in the shape of *Remember Me*.

Working with his friend/musical collaborator and excellent producer Paris Clayton, they recorded at Clayton's Tamtracks Studio in late 2019, pre-pandemic,

with songs chosen by these two and fellow guitarist Rick Van Geldern. All three were bandmates in the popular Sammie Award-winning group, **The Sacramento Blues Revue (SBR)** beginning in the early 2000s, so these emblematic picks might be familiar to fans and clubgoers, but here the warm and expansive production values, and high caliber playing make this CD Bose headphone-worthy.

Centerstage is Marshal. At 80 years, his lyrical baritone voice is supple, his delivery nuanced and powerful. No wonder he was welcomed into the SBS Hall of Fame in 2014, by way of his successes with his band **Marshal Law** and the SBR.

A Sacramentan for over 30 years now, he was born in Shreveport, Louisiana. He made his public debut at age three, delighting the neighborhood shoppers when he would sing for cookies at the local grocery. In his mid-teens, he started classical voice lessons, but at age 18, he joined the Air Force where he was part of "**Tops in Blue**", an ensemble made up of the most talented in the force, entertaining military and civilian audiences around the globe. He landed in Los Angeles post-service, then made his way north to Sacramento in the late 1980s.

*Remember Me* leads with the 1971 O.V Wright life-gone-wrong soul classic "A Nickel and A Nail" which sets a high bar, and which they assuredly meet. There is fullness and urgency in every stellar player: Paris Clayton (bass, organ, guitar), Jonny "Mojo" Flores (lead guitar), Rick von Geldern (guitar), Raul Sandoval (sax), Michael Haviland (trumpet) Stewart Burr (drums).

The next two tracks are not only head-turning for their genre-hopping but also for the richness of their inventive arrangements and terrific ensemble playing. The Bee Gees' mega hit, "To Love Somebody" will make Barry Gibb happily jealous. That's Paris on drums, bass, George Harrison-sounding guitar, and multi-tracked backing vocals and Jonny "Mojo" Flores on slide guitar and mandolin. Plus the timing is perfect, given the new Bee Gees documentary just out.

Then, the please-pour-me-another, ultra-smokey mash-up of Miles Davis' "All Blues" with "Everyday I Have the Blues" is late night genius. The story goes that the band used to play the iconic 1959 "All Blues" as a warmup song to open sets, and on one gig Marshal started singing "Everyday" over it, and it became a thing. It's better than a thing, it's A THANG. Kudos especially to Paris on upright bass and Michael Haviland on muted trumpet

The Robert Johnson song that Elmore James made a blues standard "Dust My Broom" is alive and feisty, clocking in under three minutes, just like a radio hit should.

"Old Love," is one of my favorite Clapton songs, (perhaps because it was about his ultimate break-up with his "Layla", Patti Boyd, AND also co-written with Robert Cray). Marshal reveals much pain and beauty. His timing is breathtaking, his 'grand pauses' could come out of a confessional booth. That's Paris on drums, bass, piano, strings. He and Rick von Geldern take turns on acoustic guitars.



"Missing You," written by Blue Stew, is a more than worthy follow-up. Jonny Mojo Flores shines again here. (His dazzling fretwork with **Achilles Wheel** has made him a familiar festival name on the West Coast.)

The nod to two of the greatest American songwriters from Indiana was not missed on me. In Marshal's and band hands, Hoagy

Carmichael's "Georgia" and John Hiatt's "Feels Like Rain" are soul deep, languid and wise. On "Georgia", Marty Deradoorian on sax has tone and phrasing like Ben Webster. The brilliant piano playing is Y'dell Miles, and is his last recorded work before he suddenly passed a month later at age 55.

The perfect closer, "Remember Me" was written by Marshal, and it bookends the opening track, reflecting on a love lost, with first a plea to remember, then his own answering, "I know I'll remember you." In this last year of strife and such great loss, this song takes on much larger dimensions. This album is a warm arm around your shoulder, and gives strength, joy and solace—all the best that blues and soul music always provides. Thank you to Marshal, Paris and the whole band for a new masterpiece.

Marshal's new CD is now online and available for download or CD purchase. <https://tamtracks.com/>

### New Year Gifts for Blues Lovers: SBS Masks and Lapel Pins

We have three styles of brand-new colorful enamel lapel pins. They have a textured surface; metal areas are raised; colors are recessed. 1" size. They are available in two colors: SBS logo with a white background and SBS logo with a yellow background. There is also a separate lapel pin featuring the Blues In the Schools (BITS) logo. And we still have the fabulous SBS masks. These are by far the best quality available, made by *Renegade Classics*. Classic 2-ply cotton multilayered and washable, adjustable elastic sizing for ears, front seam which allows for comfortable breathing! They're available in either black or heather grey.

Masks: \$15      Enamel Pins: \$5

Pick-up from Sally: FREE      Shipping: \$1 per each item

Please contact Sally at (916) 201-0877 or email [bluesforthecure@hotmail.com](mailto:bluesforthecure@hotmail.com) to place your order.

# Backstage: A Glimpse into Being a Concert Promoter

By Barbara Katen

Photo Credits Include BG Phillips Photography, Bob Hakins, Harris Center staff, Mindy Giles

I retired from my job at Sacramento City Hall early in the Pandemic, so I've had a lot of time to think about what I could do with my newly freed-up time. To be honest, and those who know me personally know this to be true, I'm a "fan girl". So, I had a crazy thought; I could be a Concert Promoter! What better way for me to get to know my favorite artists (cough; cough... Tab, Boz, etc.). Admittedly and realistically, this was a fleeting idea, but it inspired me to find out a little something about what it's like to be a concert promoter. What are some of the pros and cons? I knew we had some top promoters here that have been behind many of the shows that we attended. So, with this knowledge, I reached out to Mary Carrera of **Carrera Productions** and Mindy Giles of **Swell Productions**. This is how each of them answered the questions of my inquiring mind:

**Blue Notes (BN):** What inspired you to become a Promoter and how did you get started?

**Mary Carrera:** In a prior life, I worked in cable television - for nearly 20 years. I often partnered with *MTV Networks*, *Country Music Television* and *VH-1*, as well as community organizations and participated in community events or promotional tie-ins.

For a good portion of my tenure, I lived in Capitola, Santa Cruz County, working for the cable company there. It was during that period that I became good friends with the owners of **Moe's Alley**, who in turn started the **Santa Cruz Blues Festival**. I worked the festival and helped them with marketing initiatives for quite a few years.

Upon leaving Santa Cruz County, I worked in my company's regional office in San Ramon. It was there that I was asked to become a Board Member for the Concord Associates, which was the non-profit associated with the **Concord Pavilion**.



After leaving cable television in 2000, I worked for a database marketing company out of New York, selling targeted marketing solutions. One of my first sales was to Bill Graham Presents, which at the time was focusing on ticket sales opportunities at the **Mountain Winery** in Los Gatos. Once I moved to the Sacramento region from the Bay Area, I took a job as a part-time marketing manager (as an independent contractor) for the **El Dorado Arts Council**. The first event I did with them was a small concert series in Placerville, which seemed to me to be very small in its reach and appeal, so it was then that I convinced the Council to let me create and manage "Coloma Blues Live!". What a kick!

**Mindy Giles:** As a kid growing up in Columbus, Indiana, I always promoted my friends who had bands, or were singer-songwriters. This started at age six, and I never really stopped, going on to an entire adult life of working at record labels in national marketing, publicity and artist management in Chicago (*Polygram*, *Alligator*), Boston (*Rounder*), and New Orleans (*Black Top*). Becoming a live

music promoter was just one more aspect.

**Swell Productions** came into being in 2004; after Tower Records went into bankruptcy and those of us who worked there all lost our jobs. Steve Nikkel and I had met each other at Tower Records corporate in 1997, and realized we were neighbors in Curtis Park. At the annual *Pulse Magazine* holiday party in 2003, we all found out that *Pulse* was ceasing publication, so it became a sotted wake.

We knew Tower was going down. A few bottles of wine later, Steve and I discovered we both independently had visited the wonderful 24th Street Theatre at the Sierra 2 Center, obtained rates, and wondered to ourselves why there was no live music being presented there. I looked across the table and said, "Perhaps this means we should just do that". Our first show was Roger McGuinn in early November, 2004. The idea was that we kick off **Swell Productions** by celebrating a John Kerry win in the election a few days earlier. Instead, we had a fantastic sold-out show and Roger told us all that "to everything there was a season. A time of love, a time of hate, a time of war, a time of peace, a time you may embrace, a time to refrain from embracing".



**BN:** Who have you loved working with?

**Mary Carrera:** Gosh! That's a tough one because there have been so many wonderful people, but I'd say Mavis Staples was a big fave; also Los Lobos (it always feels like you're just hanging with family!); the shows I've done with Tom Rigney and Michael Doucet, just because the music is so happy and they are so completely genuine; and then, of course, Lukas Nelson and Promise of the Real. I brought them to the Sacramento region (El Dorado Hills, *Live on the Boulevard* concert series), when the band very first formed in 2009 and they were cruisin' in an old beat up Winnebago. It's been great fun watching them TAKE OFF!



**Mindy Giles:** Actually, so very many. I have NEVER managed or booked ANY artist for whose music I didn't have an affinity. Call me an elitist. It is a very risky business, so having a wicked sense

of humor is essential.

**BN:** Without naming names, has there been an artist who was a real pain to work with? What was it like and why?

**Mary Carrera:** YES! And I've never worked with them again.

Mostly it was the “manager” that caused most of the ruckus, but it really reflects negatively if the artist employs such miserable people. I remember them having an absolute cow because the artist playing before their set was running five minutes over their time slot, so they said “we’ll have to cut our set shorter and pull out a song or two”. I



said “that’s fine”, while thinking all along that the sooner I get them the heck out of there the better!! Adios!

**Mindy Giles:** Probably, but as you get older, one tends

to only remember the good stuff. The pain in the asses, sadly, are often-time the agents, because they are in the untenable, sometimes impossible position of pleasing two masters - the promoter AND the artist/artist manager. So really, all three necks are on the line. How do I know? I was the responsible booking agent for a long time too, with *Albert Collins, Son Seals, Koko Taylor, Lonnie Brooks, Lonnie Mack, Blind John Davis, Fenton Robinson, Big Shoulders* and many more. I have a long hat rack with many hats.

**BN:** Can you tell us your favorite story about being a Promoter?

**Mary Carrera:** I have several, but one of my favorite memories was the second year of “Coloma Blues Live!”. We used to park our 5th Wheel backstage the day before and basically live there through the day after the festival when we’d be doing clean up. I remember getting up early on festival day and grabbing my coffee when I heard this strange “whoosh, whoosh” sound outside the trailer. I popped out just in time to see a festival patron landing in a hot air balloon to be first in line! Talk about a grand entrance!

It was that same year that my parents came and were watching from backstage. At that time they were probably in their early 80’s (watching from Heaven now). During one of the band breaks, I took my Dad out on the golf cart for a tour of the festival grounds and a patron came up to us waving his arms all about. The man seemed angry and blurted out “who the heck is in charge of this event, I need to tell them something”. “Oh boy”, I thought, “this is not something I want happening with my elderly father in tow”. My Dad then said, “My daughter (pointing to me) is in charge, you’re talking to the right person”. The man then said, “I just wanted you to know this is the best, most well-managed event I’ve ever been to. Thank you

so much!” Sheesh! My Dad and I laughed hard! I’ll never forget that moment, ever.

**Mindy Giles:** It would be too long of a story to tell here. It is my signature event; the best thing I ever produced and will be to the end of my days. No way could I ever match this experience. I produced “The Black Top Records Blues-A-Rama Train Tour” on Amtrak in 1994. We started in New Orleans with concert stops in Jackson, MS, Memphis, TN, and culminating in co-headlining the Chicago Blues Festival in front of 120,000 + people. Back in 2007, I was asked by the publisher to write a feature for a national blues publication, “Big City Blues Magazine”. You can read my whole adventure here: [www.swell-productions.com](http://www.swell-productions.com)

**BN:** What has been your biggest nightmare experience in being a Promoter?

**Mary Carrera:** That would be March 17, 2020, the day everything shut down. I was never before hit with so much despair, confusion and complete sick feeling in my stomach. I am very blessed to have a husband with a great job so we’re surviving, but boy, these last nine months (which will undoubtedly continue through Fall of 2021), have just been so devastating for music/theater lovers, the artists,

the production folks, and the promoters. Bummer for sure.

**Mindy Giles:** The lack of honor in this business.

**BN:** What are the three biggest tips you could give someone interested in becoming a Concert Promoter?

**Mary Carrera:** 1) Have good financial sense and a decent amount of sponsor or seed money, OR DON’T DO IT.

2) Be extremely organized and thorough.

3) Be quick on your feet.

**Mindy Giles:** 1) Know how to use a spreadsheet and write a budget before you EVER answer an email or make a phone call.



Photo by Bob McLaughlin @ The Harris Center 9/24/2017

2) Be ready to lose money.

3) Learn what marketing and advertising mean.

**BN:** Knowing what you know now, would you do it all over again?

**Mary Carrera:** Yep. It definitely has its ups and downs, but there is nothing like the feeling of putting on a successful show or event and seeing the crowd just thoroughly enjoying themselves. Very satisfying.

**Mindy Giles:** Yes, but avoid pandemics and sociopathic “leaders”. They spoil all the fun.

**BN:** We get asked all the time why the SBS has not put on a Blues Festival. Can you share some of what all would be involved in putting one on so our SBS members have an idea?

**Mary Carrera:** Holy cow! See answers to question about “Three Tips” above, and then multiply the need for money, organization and being quick on your feet, times 100. Also going forward with insurance/liability needs, safe environment, etc. I know that I personally

Backstage article, con't. from p. 7

will not do a festival again anytime soon.

**Mindy Giles:** Well, **Swell Productions** co-produced one cool

Festival with SBS/BITS in 2016 called "The Out of the Box Community Music Festival." We worked with a small budget and a lot of hard work, beginning ten months ahead of time. It was well-planned, with a dedicated volunteer staff. The committee set strong goals (giving back to the community was at the top of the list) and featured terrific local and national talent. I think the BITS Committee learned a lot and we can do it again in a few years when everyone has been successfully vaccinated and are willing to gather again. See: <https://www.sacblues.com/out-of-the-box/>



**BN:** What do you see as the future of live music during and after this pandemic?

**Mary Carrera:** I think the smaller venues will have the ability to come back sooner than the larger (with audience size modifications and protocols), and, of course, socially distanced outdoor events.

Eventually it will all come back stronger than ever, but just the other day I read an article that said for large venues (think arenas), to gain admittance, you may have to prove you were vaccinated or that you had a COVID test with a negative result within 72 hours of arrival. It's going to be interesting, but the fact is, we love live music and therefore we will adapt.

**Mindy Giles:** I hate to be grim, but it is grim right now and will be going forward. This country has suffered a seismic economic and cultural shift. As far as the live music business, all you have to do is go to [www.NIVA.org](http://www.NIVA.org) and read the facts.

For instance, from Pollstar, the live music industry bible: "While \$8.9 billion in lost box office for the year is massive, the impact of that loss on the larger economy is even greater. If one were to add the multiplier effect of each ticket, what revenues are generated off each ticket and who is earning income across the entirety of the live music industry economy, it wouldn't take too much calculus to arrive at a full economic impact as high as an estimated \$20 billion. A single concert ticket represents per capita spending on merch and food, which is commonly estimated at \$10 a head (greater if you're Metallica, AC/DC, Travis Scott, Billie Eilish or other merch mavens), as well as transportation, parking, gas (another \$25-\$50), restaurants and lodging (often for festivals, fairs, residencies, etc.). Additionally, each tour pays or helps pay the salaries of tens, if not hundreds of thousands who work in venues, production, marketing, concessions, security, box offices, sponsorships and more. Consider: each parked bus that would have been carrying crew not only includes other passengers who would be earning a living, but every night in every city on the route, hundreds of people would have been involved in making the magic happen at venues that now sit empty".

Another significant sector incompletely tracked by Pollstar is the massive amount of live music that takes place outside the radar of Pollstar reporting. Tens of millions of dollars per year are gener-

ated from live music in the form of small venues shows, casino and gaming resort entertainment, private shows, and countless fairs, festivals, rodeos, and sporting events that employ, and pay, live entertainers and those that make the shows happen.

**BN:** Anything you would like to add or tell?

**Mary Carrera:** Just hang in there and be as supportive of the venues and artists with streaming shows/donations, CD and other merch sales, and remember your poor promoters when we can begin to do things again. Please come out in droves!

**Mindy Giles:** Please follow the scientists' and epidemiologists' advice. Support leaders with morals and brains. Support [www.NIVA.org](http://www.NIVA.org), and here in Sacramento, support our local organizations <https://www.cacapitolvenuecoalition.org/>. Support your favorite artists by buying their music and their merch from their own websites, they will make more money that way. If they have CDs/vinyl/DVDs, tee shirts, BUY that. Stream their music and pay for it. Donate, and then tell ten friends. Turn those friends onto tantalizing music you like by buying a few more copies. Mail gifts of recorded music; support your post office friends too. Don't rip off the creative class by ripping music.

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## Sacramento Area Blues Radio Shows

Day	Radio Station	Website	Dial	Blues/Roots Show	Host(s)	Times(PDT)	NOTES
Monday	KDRT-FM	kdrf.org	95.7FM	Juke in the Back	Matt the Cat	10-11pm	<a href="http://www.jukeintheback.org/">http://www.jukeintheback.org/</a>
Tuesday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	So Many Roads	Thom Myers, Richard Tewes	2-4pm	
Wednesday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	Soul Poppy Jazz	Klara Voyant	2-4pm	Blues is part of the mix
Wednesday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	Ragpicker's Review	Jeff Wright	10pm-12am	Blues is part of the mix
Thursday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	Blues 2 U	Russ Roy	12am-4am	
Friday	K-ZAP-FM	k-zap.org	93.3FM	Rush Hour Blues	Various	5-5:20pm	Blues is part of the station format
Saturday	KXJZ-FM	capradio.org	90.9FM	Mick Martin's Blues Party	Mick Martin	1-3pm	
Sunday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	Blues Spectrum	Various (Rotation)	1-3pm	1st week – Ralph Henson 2nd week – Russ Roy 3rd week – Derek Washington 4th week – Steve Cagle
Sunday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	Blue Garage	Michael Axelman	3-5pm	1st & 3rd Sundays
Sunday	KDEE-FM	kdeefm.org	97.5FM	Sunday Blues Blend	Tim White	6-8pm	
Sunday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	Juke Joint	Scott Hickman	12am-4am	
Sunday	KVMR-FM	kvmr.org	89.5FM	Hallelujah Hollaback	Meri St. Mary	12pm-1pm	1st Sunday of every month-SOUL/GOSPEL

### Blues Rock Review Website Publishes "Top 20 Albums of 2020"

So maybe you didn't get any new music for the holidays - or you've got an Amazon Music gift card burning a hole in your wallet. You're ready for some fresh, new sounds - but what to choose? Never fear, the good folks at Blues Rock Review (<https://bluesrockreview.com>) have got you covered! They've just published their list of what they consider to be the 20 best albums of 2020. Here they are:

#### 20. Jeremiah Johnson: *Heavens To Betsy*

"A tasty dish of an album. It's not complicated and on paper it might seem too simple, but it's a hard recipe to replicate. A great voice, strong songs, and a talented horn section make for a blues album that's high-energy fun. And it's not something every artist can do as well as Johnson has done on *Heavens to Betsy*." – Steven Ovadia

#### 19. Tinsley Ellis: *Ice Cream In Hell*

"If you're a blues rock fan and aren't familiar with Ellis' work, this is a great place to check in. *Ice Cream in Hell* is blues rock from a master at the height of his power, vocally and instrumentally. Ellis showcases monster tone, vibrato that feels like an earthquake, and all-around tasteful playing. He is always the right answer." – Steven Ovadia

#### 18. Savoy Brown: *Ain't Done Yet*

"The album has the relaxed energy of a band that knows what to do and isn't trying to prove anything. Simmonds is still a strong performer and songwriter. Savoy Brown has been around for so long because Simmonds understands his audience, but also the blues. People return for quality." – Steven Ovadia

#### 17. Alastair Greene: *The New World Blues*

"The *New World Blues* digs deeper into Greene's repertoire, which uncoincidentally digs deeper into the blues aspects of his style. With Tab Benoit's help, the taut trio rely on their music and their artistry to create a set that offers an exceptionally transparent group of tracks, devoid of the usual studio album accoutrements." – Willie Witten

#### 16. Artur Menezes: *Fading Away*

"*Fading Away* is the album that puts Artur's stamp on blues rock music. It's a mature and balanced album, always keeping the guitars in the spotlight, something he did in previous albums, too, but this time he explored new resources and approaches, as well as guitar tones, which are extremely awesome." – Marcel Innocentini

#### 15. Shemekia Copeland: *Uncivil War*

"Shemekia Copeland continues to explore Americana through a strong blues influence on *Uncivil War*, a charmingly rootsy and rocking album of tasty guitar, bold lyrics, and, of course, Copeland's powerhouse voice, which drives the entire album." – Steven Ovadia

#### 14. Tyler Bryant and the Shakedown: *Pressure*

"*Pressure* is the fourth full-length album by Tyler Bryant & The Shakedown, and since its release on October 16th, has been acclaimed on social media as the greatest album of the band. And I think they are quite right. *Pressure* is an album that lifts blues rock in its essence, with melodic vocals, powerful guitar riffs, firm drum beats, and cohesive bass lines." – Marcel Innocentini

#### 13. Dion: *Blues With Friends*

"A collaboration with a ton of blues and blues rock stars. Bruce Springsteen plays guitar behind Dion and Springsteen's wife, Patti

Scialfa, on "Hymn to Him," from Dion's 1987 gospel album. He's joined on other tracks by Van Morrison, Paul Simon, Samantha Fish, and Billy Gibbons. It's an eclectic group but the parade of different guests keeps the album interesting. The underlying album concept is a bit of a gimmick, but Dion makes it a high-quality, enjoyable one." – Steven Ovadia

**12. Marcus King: *El Dorado***

"El Dorado is straight-forward soul, although there are some rock moments sprinkled throughout the record ("Turn It Up" rocks especially hard), but the pleasure of the album is that while King and Auerbach are fairly rooted in the album's chosen genre, there are enough pleasant surprises, like strings and up-front guitars, to make the album feel new and contemporary. This is a Marcus King album but it's very much a collaboration, with Auerbach and King bringing out the best in each other." – Steven Ovadia

**11. Fantastic Negrito: *Have You Lost Your Mind Yet?***

"It's a magnificent album that really deserves all the nominations. His music still remains unique, without brands, or, in his words... "the show can be described as 'church without the religion' and crosses genre boundaries with no passport needed." – Marcel Innocentini

**10. Robert Jon and the Wreck: *Last Light On The Highway***

"Robert Jon and the Wreck delivers its best album to date with Last Light on the Highway. Considering the strength of the band's catalog that's saying something. Last Light on the Highway is filled with memorable hooks and will be in the conversation for year end awards. It's a highly recommended album from start to finish." – Pete Francis

**9. When Rivers Meet: *We Fly Free***

"We Fly Free is the debut album released in November of this year by a British husband and wife guitar slinging duo that will blow your

socks off. Aaron and Grace Bond front a quartet with Grace playing slide mandolin ala Hendrix style as Aaron drones like Duane Eddy on his guitar. Grace's dark husky voice soars between driving guitar riffs and slide mandolin solo's on the twelve tracks." – Bob Gersztyn

**8. Larkin Poe: *Self Made Man***

"You hear something new and cool every time you play Self Made Man. It's truly impressive how Larkin Poe achieves this while also creating an album that sounds natural. They're not throwing tricks and licks at the listener; they're building tricks and licks into sturdy, captivating songs. Larkin Poe make it sound easy as easy as bringing your hands together, but really it's as hard as clapping with one hand." – Steven Ovadia

**7. King King: *Maverick***

"From start to finish, Maverick is blues rock at its best. One thing that separates Alan Nimmo and King King from many blues rock acts is Nimmo's ability to write hooks. Nimmo is a hook machine writing hook after hook. He hits the guitar solo when needed but doesn't make it overpower or take over the song. This is evident throughout the songwriting on Maverick. The album is chock-full of catchy and memorable tunes that stand up with King King's best work." – Pete Francis

**6. Mike Zito: *Quarantine Blues***

"The quick-fire nature of the album results in a different Zito energy that rocks with an uncharacteristic, and straight-up fun, abandon. The thing that grabs you about Quarantine Blues is its immediacy. It doesn't feel unfinished, but it's not particularly polished. It has a wonderful live feeling. Quarantine Blues is great company and worth paying for." – Steven Ovadia

**5. Anthony Gomes: *Containment Blues***

"Containment Blues is another winner from Anthony Gomes with no weak tracks in the bunch. While some artists are delaying releasing albums during the pandemic, Gomes was able to turn the situation

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into a positive as it inspired some truly great songs. Gomes challenged himself with Containment Blues and it pays off as one of the better albums of 2020.” – Pete Francis

#### 4. Philip Sayce: *Spirit Rising*

“Sayce has overcome many challenges and obstacles in recent years, which has inspired Spirit Rising. Well worth the wait, Spirit Rising is right up there with Sayce’s best work featuring blistering guitar and great songs from start to finish.” – Pete Francis

#### 3. Walter Trout: *Ordinary Madness*

The album is consistently great cover to cover. For an album that broaches some deeply personal subjects, Ordinary Madness succeeds in being universally relatable, not to mention extremely enjoyable. It is one of Trout’s best entries in his extensive catalog.” – Willie Witten

#### 2. The Allman Betts Band: *Bless Your Heart*

“On Bless Your Heart, The Allman Betts Band continues to do what they do best, deliver good ole’ fashioned blues-tinged southern rock. The 13 tracks take the listener on a ride and are filled with an abundance of textures.” – Pete Francis

#### 1. Joe Bonamassa: *Royal Tea*

From the album’s title to the choice of Abbey Road Studios as the

recording locale, Joe Bonamassa makes every effort to channel the aura of the great British Blues explosion on his latest LP, Royal Tea. When set against basic nostalgia, original songs and artistic nuance usually win the day as they do here. The willingness to reconceive this era rather than just revisit it makes Royal Tea a great album and an intriguing listen.” – Willie Witten



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