

All the news about the blues, blues artists and blues events

# MAPLE BLUES NEWS

A circular logo for the Toronto Blues Society celebrating 40 years. The text "Toronto Blues Society" is curved along the top, "40" is in the center, and "CELEBRATING 40 YEARS" is curved along the bottom.

October 2025

[www.torontobluesociety.com](http://www.torontobluesociety.com)

Published by the TORONTO BLUES SOCIETY

since 1985

[info@torontobluesociety.com](mailto:info@torontobluesociety.com)

Vol 41, No 10



Jackie Richardson at WBR  
Canadian Blues Music Awards  
Story of Arhoolie Records

Pioneer Profile: Jon Arnold  
Reviews  
Loose Blues News

**Jackie Richardson is a  
featured vocalist at the 38th  
Annual Women's Blues Revue,  
Friday, November 28 at Roy  
Thomson Hall**

# TORONTO BLUES SOCIETY

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MapleBlues is published monthly by the Toronto  
Blues Society ISSN 0827-0597

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Charitable # 87487 7509 RR0001

The Toronto Blues Society acknowledges the  
annual support of the following agencies:



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We acknowledge the financial support of FACTOR,  
the Government of Canada and of Canada's private radio broadcasters.  
Nous remercions l'appui financier de FACTOR, du gouvernement  
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Dear Friends,

On behalf of the TBS, I want to share our full support for the  
Canadian Blues Music Awards (which fully replaces the Maple  
Blues Awards).

This is much more than a name change. The Canadian  
Blues Music Awards represents a complete overhaul, a whole  
new program created to serve the Canadian blues community  
with greater transparency, fairness, and unity from coast to  
coast to coast.

This new chapter is the result of many thoughtful  
conversations and countless volunteer hours from the Governing Committee. Their  
dedication has been remarkable, and their vision clear: to establish an awards program  
that reflects the strength and diversity of our national blues community.

One of the most significant changes is that the Canadian Blues Music Awards now  
operate as a separate entity from the TBS. TBS is no longer involved in governance,  
nominations, judging, voting, or any other processes. We will, however, proudly continue to  
host the awards ceremony, a role that allows us to celebrate our artists while ensuring the  
recognition process is carried out independently and transparently.

If I may, I'd like to encourage you to visit the Canadian Blues Music Awards website at  
[www.canadianbluesmusicawards.awardstage.com/](http://www.canadianbluesmusicawards.awardstage.com/) and take some time to look around.

We are excited about this bold new direction and grateful for everyone who has  
contributed to making it possible. Together, we can ensure that the Canadian Blues Music  
Awards truly celebrate the extraordinary talent, passion, and resilience of blues artists  
across our nation.

We look forward to welcoming you at the next awards ceremony (Monday, March 30,  
2026) and to continuing the celebration of Canadian blues in all its forms.

With gratitude and excitement,

Quisha Wint, Chair, Toronto Blues Society



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Friday, November 28, 8pm** Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto The 38th Women's Blues  
Revue with Jackie Richardson, Cheryl Lescom, Celeigh Cardinal, Joke Reyome,  
Angelica Jones and Shakura S'Aida hosting.

**Monday, March 30, 2026** Canadian Blues Music Awards, Phoenix Concert  
Theatre, 310 Sherbourne, Toronto

**Saturday, April 11, 2026** Members Appreciation Party, Hugh's Room, 296 Broadview  
Ave. Toronto

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CANADIAN PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT #40011871

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## WOMEN'S BLUES REVUE

The 38th annual Women's Blues Revue, will feature Jackie Richardson, Cheryl Lescom, Celeigh Cardinal, Joce Reyome, and Angelica Jones. Shakura S'Aida will do double duty as host and featured performer. Known for her commanding stage presence and genre-spanning artistry, S'Aida's return sets the tone for what promises to be an electric night.

Together, the ensemble will headline a program that has become a cultural touchstone for Toronto's live music scene, while drawing audiences from across the province and beyond.

Launched nearly four decades ago, the Women's Blues Revue was created to celebrate and elevate female artists in a genre long dominated by male performers. Over the years, the event has become a hallmark in the Canadian music calendar, known for its ability to bring together seasoned veterans and rising stars on the same stage.

S'Aida, along with the 2025 headliners, continues the tradition of showcasing a diverse mix of artistry, ranging from soulful ballads to high-energy blues anthems.

Supporting the vocalists will be the All-Star Women's Blues Revue Band, a hand-picked group of acclaimed musicians known for their versatility and stage chemistry. This year's band features Elena Kapeleris, Carrie Chesnutt, Tara Kannangara, Alison Young, Angelique Francis, Emily Burgess, Jasmine Jones-Ball and Jenie Thai.

The backing ensemble is designed not only to provide musical support but also to showcase the breadth of female talent in Canada's blues and jazz scenes. Each year, the group is refreshed to highlight different instrumentalists, giving audiences a new experience while maintaining the event's reputation for quality.

The Women's Blues Revue is curated by Quisha Wint, a local programmer and performer with deep ties to Toronto's music community. Wint returns as producer for 2025, bringing her signature passion and vision to the role. Her curation reflects a balance between honouring the legacy of the revue and introducing audiences to fresh talent. By placing emerging voices alongside established artists, Wint ensures the event continues to evolve while maintaining its roots.

Tickets are already on sale and can be purchased through [roythomsonhall.com](http://roythomsonhall.com) or by phone at 416-872-4255.



## Jackie Richardson at WBR

Jackie Richardson is an award-winning singer and actor whose career spans more than five decades, earning her national recognition as Canada's reigning queen of jazz, blues and gospel. Along with two JUNO Award nominations, Jackie's national recognition includes the Black Theatre Workshop's Martin Luther King Jr. Award (2016), a Lifetime Achievement Award from Canadian Actor's Equity (2007), an African Canadian Achievement Award, and a Canadian Black Achievement Award

(to name a few). Internationally, Jackie was honored to be an NAACP Image Award nominee in 2003 for Best Actress in a Television Movie for 'Sins of the Father.' She is also a Gemini and Dora Award-winning actor who has appeared in numerous musical theatre productions, films and television series. In 2014, the Toronto Star named Jackie one of 180 people who have helped shaped the city since it was founded. In 2021, it was announced that Jackie would be named an Honorary Member to the Order of Canada.

Jackie released her debut solo album, *A Woman's View Through Child Eyes*, in 2003, which was produced by her dear friend and collaborator, Doug Riley. Throughout her career, Jackie has been featured on a number of high-profile recordings including: Joe Sealy's JUNO Award-winning *Africville Suite* (1996); Anne Murray's *What a Wonderful World: 26 Inspirational Classics* (1999); Alannah Myles' self-titled debut album (1989); Norm Amadio's *Norm Amadio and Friends* (2009); Peter Appleyard's 2012 recording *Georgia*; David Clayton-Thomas's *"Freedom for the Stallion"* (2015); Bruce Cassidy's *My African Heart* (featured on *Weeping*, written by Dan Haymann); and Micah Barnes's *New York Story Duet* (2016). She has also performed with globally recognized Canadian orchestras; Toronto Symphony Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra, and Nova Scotia Symphony Orchestra. Jackie's guest performances with some of Canada's favourite big bands include: The Art of Time Ensemble, Brian Barlow Big Band, Toronto All-Star Big Band, Russ Little Big Band, Swing Shift Big Band and John MacLeod's Toronto Jazz Orchestra.

*cont'd on p4*

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

VOTING MEMBERS OF THE TBS ARE ELIGIBLE TO RUN FOR  
THE 2026 TBS BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

IN ORDER TO RUN YOU MUST BE A MEMBER IN GOOD  
STANDING AND YOU MUST BE NOMINATED IN WRITING BY 3  
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DEADLINE DECEMBER 2, 2025

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In the last decade, Jackie's musical theatre credits include numerous performances with Soulepper Theatre Company and the Musical Stage Company. One such performance with Musical Stage Company earned her recognition in the New York Times's "Inside Culture" where her rendition of Both Sides Now caught the attention of Editor, Scott Weller. Said Weller: "Landing on the website for the Musical Stage Company of Toronto brought me to the jazz vocalist Jackie Richardson's gorgeously solemn live rendition of Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now." Was this the best version ever? I'm no fan of Judy Collins's famous cover, but what would a YouTube deep dive offer? Neil Diamond? Grandiose. Seal? Scratchy. Carly Rae Jepsen? Bright-eyed. Rufus Wainwright? Operatic, and powerful. Still, it's Richardson for the win."

Jackie made her professional singing debut at age 16 when she joined the Toronto-based R&B group The Tiaras alongside her sister Betty. This led to both sisters appearing on CBC Television's Right On, which was hosted by Martin Short, Alex Trebek's Music Hop, as well as an appearance on SCTV as part of Edith Prickley's Prickettes. Jackie's additional film and television credits include: Mr. T's T and T, where she played his Aunt Martha, Welcome to Mooseport alongside Gene Hackman, Ray Romano, and an all-star cast of acclaimed actors, Tony Shalhoub's Monk, YTV's Catwalk alongside Neve Campbell, and she was one of Ray Charles' Rayettes on the Super Dave Osborne Show. Jackie was also host of CBC and Vision's co-production, Hallelujah, which over 26 episodes featured a notable list of guests including: Oliver Jones, Mavis Staples, Martha Reeves, Salome Bey, and Kim Richardson. Most recently, Jackie appeared in Miracle in Motor City with Smokey Robinson, and Tia Mowry, where she played Tia's Aunt. She starred alongside Jayne Eastwood in the CBC Gem original series Hey Lady! which was nominated for five Canadian Screen Awards and four Director's Guild of Canada Awards.

Today, Jackie continues to perform live both with her variety of concerts under the name Songs in the Key of Jackie, as well as within the projects of fellow musicians such as Sean Jones, Kellylee Evans, Shakura S'Aida, Patti Jannetta, Micah Barnes, and Billy Newton-Davis. She continues to look forward to more film, TV and theatre projects, as well as doing her favourite thing, which is singing with her daughter Kim Richardson.

## Pioneer Profile

# Jon Arnold

*As the TBS celebrates our 40th anniversary, we want to celebrate some of the folks who were there at the beginning and we asked one of the founding members, Jon Arnold, to offer some recollections of the early days of TBS.*

2025 marks the 40th anniversary of the Toronto Blues Society, and I was at the very first meeting in a dark corner of the Brunswick House where it all began. There is less than a handful of people whose tenure is as long as mine, going back to Day 1. I have worn many hats for the TBS over the years, and am happy to write this profile piece, not just to mark 40 years of our existence, but also because the current generation of members and blues fans may not know much about the first generation who helped build the TBS.

While today's arts and culture organizations have more structured frameworks, back in 1985, the TBS evolved organically, learning as we went and totally self-funded – there was no model to speak of for what we were to become. With my background in business, technology and publishing, I played many roles in those early days, especially around supporting the newsletter.

Back then, the newsletter was printed and mailed to members, and production had many time-sensitive elements. Aside from involvement there, I held roles for several years in managing the membership list and making sure our advertisers paid their invoices, and that members paid their renewals. More substantively, I have been one of the longest-tenured board members, and served as Treasurer for 12 years, which involved handling all incoming revenues and outgoing expenses. I was also closely involved with securing charitable status, which was a cornerstone for our operational foundation. As well, I have a professional background in market research, which was put to use in developing member surveys that we used to better understand what members wanted from the TBS.

On the personal side, I hosted a blues radio show for four years before the TBS – and even before Daddy Kool's famous blues show – and have curated a comprehensive vinyl LP collection of modern blues that is on par with anything I have yet to come across. On the fun side, I'm a lifelong recreational musician, and have performed on occasion at TBS patio events. With my long perspective, I can appreciate how challenging it is to support the blues scene in 2025. Back in 1985, all the elements were there for the TBS to thrive. The music scene was vibrant, with no shortage of

live venues, record labels and media outlets to support blues. Add to that a rich mix of blues artists – both local and outside Canada – who regularly came through Toronto, supported by fans who came out to the clubs and bought the records/CDs regularly. Also worth noting – at that time, rock was one generation removed from post-war blues, making it an easy taste to acquire, especially since many of the blues greats were still active on the club and concert circuits.

For all kinds of reasons, little of that remains today, but the spirit of the blues lives on. In today's world where everything is digital, virtual and on-demand, it's easy to take all that the TBS has done for granted. Times have certainly changed, where everything about the music business is different, and the experience of discovering and appreciating music for the fans is also quite different.

This is especially true for blues – and all forms of roots music – where there will rarely be mainstream appeal, not to mention having little or no connection to today's popular forms of music. The audience that supported the blues scene when the TBS came along has largely aged out, and the younger generations simply haven't had much exposure to the blues, along with the reality that blues doesn't resonate with them the way today's forms of music do.

The TBS's original mission was to nurture the blues scene, provide a home for those who appreciate blues, and to make the music accessible to a broader audience. Long-time supporters will know that we succeeded in all these ways for a long time, and that the TBS has matured well past being a local fan club to become a driving force in keeping the Canadian blues scene vital. At the core, it's about the music, but without this ecosystem, blues can easily fade into obscurity.

Our evolution didn't happen overnight, but in time, the TBS came to be widely-viewed as a model for other blues societies, along with other roots music organizations. I was just one of many who dedicated years or decades to make all this happen, and I hope this article gives today's membership base a better sense of what went into the TBS you are now supporting. Now more than ever, Toronto – and Canada – needs the TBS, and I hope that the next generation of leadership finds a way to keep that spirit alive.

- Jon Arnold



# About the Canadian Blues Music Awards



We are now Canada's National Blues Music Awards Programme.

Canadian Blues Music Awards is an incorporated national not-for-profit whose mandate is to govern, create, operate, maintain and update the CBMA and its processes.

Inspired by the overwhelming response to the 2023 MBAs, and the many resultant ideas that evolved, a steering committee was formed to help shape the future of the awards. Many months of research, consultation, and development resulted in a wholly independent organization that created a foundation of governance, a fair and inclusive process, transparency, and nationwide engagement, intended to maximize the integrity and impartiality of the awards.

Initially formed by Brant Zwicker and Cindy McLeod in the spring of 2024, this committee drafted a plan based upon extensive research and consultation, identifying areas requiring structure, change, and/or improvement. This draft was shared with TBS and its members, who approved the committee moving forward to fully develop a plan at the AGM in June of 2024. In December of 2024, Julie Hill was added to the committee. The plan was completed in May 2025, and resulted in the formation of a not-for-profit organization, a new brand, and the newly developed programme for the awards up to the point of the ceremony.

As a result, for the 2025 awards, the programme has transferred to a system that includes:

- Submissions for award consideration (no longer a nominating panel; artists must submit)
- Voting conducted by a panel of judges, selected from a jury pool of industry experts, who must apply to ensure their expertise, and geographical diversity & national representation, with all voting independent and anonymous (no longer a public voting system, other than for fan favourite, which continues to engage the public in the process)
- Developing a large jury pool of experts, and measuring applications, reviewing and screening to ensure applicant experience and expertise in a number of blues-related fields
- Selecting judges from the jury pool each year, reflecting geographical diversity, and creating full national representation; all voting is independent and anonymous
- Lifetime Achievement and Industry Person awards now nominated by qualifying blues societies, festivals, and venues, for voting by the judges
- Involving more regional blues societies to participate in the process, increasing regional representation
- Creating a dedicated website for online submissions, jury applications, and voting.

These changes were implemented in order to address identified issues related to, among others:

- public voting (familiarity / popularity)
- regional skewing
- less than ideal diversity voting despite inclusive nominations.

And in order to attempt to address a more accurate reflection of excellence in a long-standing art form that is to be respected and understood.

The Governing Committee oversees the process, with clear governance guidelines, to protect and preserve the integrity and impartiality of the Canadian Blues Music Awards and all its processes, including for categories, submissions, impartial judging, voting procedures, & tabulations for the Awards.

The Governing Committee determines the governance, structure, and all processes of the CBMAs (up to, but not including, an awards ceremony), and oversees all stages thereof, ensuring full documentation of all mandates, mission statements, et cetera.

## Governing Committee Members:

- are selected through an application process
- demonstrate extensive blues music industry experience
- each new member is selected by a majority ballot vote by the membership of the Committee
- must agree to fulfill the required time, impartiality, and confidentiality commitment, and sign an agreement thereof.

And equally represent at least 3 of 5 Canadian regions:

- Atlantic (New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Labrador)
- Quebec / Nunavut
- Ontario
- Prairies (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northwest Territories)
- British Columbia / Yukon Territory

Committee members cannot submit entries in any categories, and are not eligible for the jury pool or judging.

For the 2025 awards only, the eligibility period is extended to 25 months • September 1, 2023 through September 30, 2025. Thereafter, the eligibility period is 13 months (September 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026, etc.)

Each year, artist submissions will be open for two months:

- for the 2025 awards only, September 15 to October 31
- thereafter, from August 1 to September 30

Each year, two rounds of jury voting will run:

- for the 2025 awards only, from November 2025 to January 2026
- thereafter, from October through November

with the winner in each category confidentially determined by the end of voting,

and the final five nominees in each category publicly announced in January.

The 2025 Awards presentation and gala will be held Monday, March 30, 2026 at the Phoenix Concert Theatre, 310 Sherbourne, Toronto



# Chris Strachwitz

by Larry LeBlanc

Since 2016, Arhoolie Records has belonged to Smithsonian Folkways, the nonprofit record label division of the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

For over 60 years, Chris Strachwitz captured and preserved America's notable musical languages; ranging from Cajun, zydeco, Mexican-American, New Orleans jazz and brass bands, klezmer, polka, bluegrass, and gospel.

Primarily recording regional vernacular voices articulating uniquely American feelings, and thoughts.

First on 78 rpm records, and later on tape as performed in homes, backyards, front porches, gravel road, and backwoods clubs.

Among the musicians Strachwitz recorded were Clifton Chenier, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Mance Lipscomb, Lightnin' Hopkins, Bukka White, Big Mama Thornton, Big Joe Williams, Flaco Jimenez, Los Alegres de Terán, Los Pingüinos del Norte, Lydia Mendoza, and BeauSoleil who all continue to influence musicians today.

He also launched Back Room Record Distributors which soon changed to Bayside Record Distributors as a distributor of smaller independent blues labels.

Smithsonian Folkways has made more than 300 titles from the roughly 650-album Arhoolie catalog available digitally and is focused on ensuring that the remaining titles become available.

Born in 1931 in a village southeast of Berlin, Germany, Strachwitz was raised in an aristocratic family who lost most everything at the end of World War II when the region became a part of Poland.

His deceased grandmother had been an American, and her two sisters, concerned about the future of their niece, brought the Strachwitz family to America in 1947 to live in Reno, Nevada.

Sent to schools in southern California, Strachwitz became transfixed by the sounds of New Orleans jazz, R&B, blues, and hillbilly music he first heard on the radio.

Tall and good-looking, with straight hair

swept back over a high forehead, Strachwitz became a familiar figure at folk, blues, Cajun, and zydeco events throughout America while recording hundreds of albums for Arhoolie Records.

Strachwitz is a member of the Blues Hall of Fame, an NEA National Heritage Fellow, and the recipient of a Grammy Trustees Award from The Recording Academy.

He is also the subject of a full-length 2013 feature documentary, "This Ain't No Mouse Music," directed by Chris Simon, and Maureen Gosling

**Larry: I started collecting Arhoolie records in the mid-60s, and continued right through the '70s, and '80s. I likely own 200 of your recordings.**

Chris: Oh my goodness, that's amazing.

**In articles over the years it's rarely mentioned that you had a business partner, Tom Diamant.**

Yes, he is still with me, and he's part of the Foundation; although he's no longer a paid employee, he helps me enormously. He worked with me until we sold the company to our wonderful patron, (philanthropist and musician) Ed Littlefield, and his Sage Foundation. Then he (Ed) gave it to the Smithsonian because the Smithsonian had no money to buy things like that. That is a distinction worth making. Also, Tom Diamant was getting so tired of contemporary distribution which was nothing but stupid little figures being shipped. It was just a pain in the ass.

**You released 650 recordings, and the Smithsonian has digitalized about 350 of them?**

Well, they keep them all available while they can. But all of the ones that I reissued you see, except the earlier 78s. They consider them not having the rights to them. But as long as they have stock on the ones that I reissued, they keep selling them. If they run out, they don't make them available to customers anymore. That includes all of those Mexican and as well as Hawaiian recordings that I reissued.

**After Moses Asch passed away in 1986, his family donated the Folkways' catalog to the Smithsonian. Due to the Smithsonian's novel agreement with the Asch family, every release from throughout the label's history must remain in print, and be available to purchase.**

That is one of the few labels still being maintained by the Smithsonian people. And, as I said, of course, they are still making Arhoolie recordings available. It's no longer much of a business to speak of but the stuff is still out there, and still making some money from artists which was becoming a real headache. The royalty business is just

insane because it is mostly downloads and streaming now.

**If you hadn't recorded some of these artists their music would have never been heard outside their own regions.**

Well, I considered myself a sound catcher. I was lucky to be able to catch sounds that I heard when they (the artists) were at their height in their fields. That went for blues when it was really happening with people like Mississippi Fred McDowell, Bukka White, and Big Joe Williams. It was just extraordinary stuff. And the same for the Mexican and the creole music too. Zydeco, at first, was really exciting stuff, you know. It was really very pure creole music when I first heard it around Houston. There were these little groups that were playing, sometimes two accordions, and a washboard, and so on. Just that whole culture intrigued me

**You had a great run in the '70s with French-speaking, Louisiana accordionist Clifton Chenier, recording his style of zydeco which arose from Cajun and Creole music, with R&B, jazz, and blues influences. Growing up I was absolutely fixated by his Arhoolie releases, "Louisiana Blues & Zydeco" (1965), "Bon Ton Roulet!" (1967), Clifton Chenier - Live" (1972), "Bogalusa Boogie (1975), and "Red Hot Louisiana Band (1977)." You cannot not dance to this music.**

(Laughing) Well, you want it (the story) from the start because that's the lucky part. I was waiting with Lightnin' Hopkins in Houston in early '64. We were waiting for (German promoter) Horst Lippmann who was running (with Fritz Rau) the American Folk Blues Festival. I was determined to get Lightnin' to fly to Europe that year. Lightnin' said, "Chris do you want to go, and see my cousin, Clifton Chenier?" It didn't mean that much to me. I remember hearing Clifton's 78 of "Ay-Tete Fee" (1955) on the Specialty label, but it was just typical R&B.

Anyway anywhere Lightnin' would go, I went.

So we went to this little beer joint in Frenchtown (a section of the Fifth Ward in Houston), and the rats were huge crossing the road as we got there. Here in this tiny little beer joint was this tall, lanky black man playing a huge accordion, and there was just a drummer backing him, and he was singing the most lowdown blues I had ever heard. He was singing in this weird patois which I did figure out was some kind of a weird French. It was just gorgeous. It just totally knocked me out.

**Were you previously aware of Creole music? By blending the older local rural Creole music with rhythm & blues, with a touch of rock and roll, and his unique personality, Clifton invented what today is known as zydeco music.**

Yes, yes, yes, and I will tell you in a second, but you really have to remember this part. As soon as Lightnin' and I walked in, Clifton saw us. Any white guy with Lightnin' must be a record man. So Clifton immediately came over. "He said, "Oh yeah, record man, let's make a record." So we booked (Bill Quinn's) Gold Star Studios the next day to make his first record for me.

I said, "Bring two of you over to Gold Star, and we will make a good record." It's a long story, but they weren't any good. One of the guy's damn amp started smoking, and it burned out, and the other one, the damn bass put out a put-put-put sound because the cone had separated from the speaker. So we just had the piano player, the drummer, and Clifton and that was basically it.

The only (track) we put out was "Ay, Ai, Ai." It was never a huge song, but it was mainly in English. It got on the radio and Clifton was happy with it. It was on the local radio and they played it pretty soon after we pressed some.

**Clifton's "French" two-step recording, "Zydeco Sont Pas Sale" (with "Louisiana Blues" on the flip side) from the album "Louisiana Blues & Zydeco" established him as the King of Zydeco. Is it true that Clifton, believing no one would be interested in creole music, initially only wanted to record R&B in English?**

Yes. I wanted to make an album the next year. I told Clifton, "I want some of that French stuff on that." And, he finally agreed saying, "Okay, I will do half of it my way, and half of it will be the French stuff." He figured it wouldn't sell so well (if it was in French). Well, they did zydeco, and a track on the French side of the album, was that lowdown blues. Of course, being in French, I had no idea of what the name of it was. When I asked him after we cut it, he rattled off this French title. I asked, "How do you spell that?" He said, "Spell it any way that you want to." After a few moments, I said, "Can I just call it 'Louisiana Blues?'" Clifton thought a few seconds, and said, "Go ahead call it 'Louisiana Blues.'" And it was probably the smartest thing that we did because DJs if they ever saw this French title on the label, they never would have played it. But they played "Louisiana Blues." Nobody cared what the lyrics were. It was just this lowdown blues, perfectly recorded with good strong bass drum sound. It was just fantastic.

**Soon afterwards Clifton and his Red Hot Louisiana Band played the Fillmore in San Francisco, Carnegie Hall in New York, and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Tours of Europe followed. Was Clifton Arhoolie's biggest seller?**

At that time, he probably was, yes. It wasn't that much later that I recorded an album by (harmonica player) Charlie Musselwhite ("Takin' My Time" in 1971). He came out to California and was my packing man. He

would haul stuff to the post office and to the docks to ship to Japan, and so on. I remember I did that album. He said he wanted that album. That actually sold better than anything else, but because he was white, I didn't pay him that much attention. I was so stupid. Now looking back at the sales figures, he was by far my best seller for that year, and for the next year. Then (with their Southwest Louisiana music) came BeauSoleil in the early '80s.

**You had a great run with Mississippi Fred McDowell, Bukka White, Juke Boy Bonner, Clifton Chenier, Charlie Musselwhite, Big Mama Thornton, and BeauSoleil recordings.**

I was just a song catcher, really. I was never really a record label. I didn't promote things that well. I tried to as much as I could, but I was hoping that the artist would find a good deal with somebody else.

**And each of the artists I just mentioned did.**

Unfortunately, Clifton got his Grammy for a much inferior record (in 1983 for his album "I'm Here," the first Grammy for Alligator Records). It should have been for "Bogalusa Boogie that we did in Bogalusa (Louisiana).

**Well, in 2015, the Library of Congress deemed "Bogalusa Boogie" to be "culturally, historically, or artistically significant," and selected it for preservation in the National Recording Registry. The Grammys also recognized Clifton with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014.**

**Many of the later zydeco artists that followed Clifton pale in contrast.**

They are of a different generation. They just will never get that feeling. There will never be another Clifton Chenier.

**Cajun music has, however, fared much better.**

That is Cajun music. Cajun music is much easier to keep the exact....(Cajun accordion maker, and musician) Marc Savoy says he is playing just the way the older guys he heard as a kid did. But that's not so. He has definitely changed it, but not to the degree that the Creole music gets changed. What Clifton made out of that is just way beyond anything that has ever happened. Wayne Toups tried to do it in Cajun music. But that's a totally different thing. I remember Clifton once told me, "Chris, you have to be a little ahead of people. You can't be behind them. But you can't be too far ahead of them because then they won't like it. You better not be too far behind because then they won't like you, at all."

**You recorded artists in their homes, on their porches, and in small clubs. What elements were you seeking? Authenticity? Sheer emotion?**

It was basically that I didn't want to spend money on studios. I never met them (musicians) in studios so I didn't think of that. As a child almost, and for my whole career, I was totally in love with records. I thought that it (a record) was the neatest invention ever made because suddenly you could put the needle down on a piece of shellac, and out would come the most amazing sound. I have never forgotten that.

**You became part of a loose younger network of blues enthusiasts that included Les Blank, John Fahey, Robert Crumb, Paul Oliver, Sam Charters, and others who trekked to the Southern states to record musicians.**

**Among the pioneers that had saved much of the American rural music history earlier had been Moses Asch, Harry Smith, Elliott Oberstein, Ralph Peer, Don Law, and musicologists, and folklorists, John, John Jr. and Alan Lomax.**

I admired those guys. I learned about them all beginning with Ralph Peer with all that amazing, very early recording he did, even in El Paso, Texas.

**Meanwhile back in school, you also discovered New Orleans jazz music.**

That's what I started with. One day, my friend and classmate at the Cate School in Carpinteria, Bill Mellon, said, "Do you want to see this movie called 'New Orleans?'" It was showing in Carpinteria. The school that I was sent to was a very elite boy's school. I said, "Sure." I had heard about New Orleans being interesting. Then I got totally hooked on the music in that film, "New Orleans." It featured Louis Armstrong with the Kid Ory Band at the time which was in 1947, and it still had (trumpeter) Mutt Carey in it. A wonderful New Orleans band.

**Mutt Carey left Ory's band in 1947 to lead a group under his own name.**

I asked Bill Mellon as we were walking back to the school, "What do you call that music that we heard?" He said, "That's New Orleans jazz." So I went totally bananas for New Orleans jazz after that.

**(The plot of "New Orleans" was about a casino owner, and a high society singer falling in love in New Orleans during the birth of the blues. It featured Billie Holiday as a singing maid, and Louis Armstrong as a bandleader, performing together and becoming romantically involved. During one song, Armstrong's character introduces his band, including trombonist Kid Ory, drummer Zutty Singleton, clarinetist Barney Bigard, guitarist Bud Scott, bassist George "Red" Callender, and pianists Charlie Beal, and Meade Lux Lewis. Also performing in the film were cornet player Mutt Carey, and bandleader Woody Herman.)**

Then I just about flunked out of Pomona College because Frank Demond (a trombonist who would later play with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and run his own record label, the Smoky Mary Phonograph Company) had a car, and he would drive us almost every night into Hollywood (before freeways) to the Beverly Cavern club. We were both fans of (jazz clarinetist) George Lewis and his amazing New Orleans Ragtime Jazz Band. They were getting really famous. That was a black New Orleans band that was this powerhouse rhythm machine, with a wonderful singing clarinet player. They were playing a lot. I don't think those guys ever made much money because they had to play every night, so many hours at these clubs. It was fantastic. We just loved that music. They were just like Gods to us. Oh, we were in heaven every night.

**You bought records and brought them home. What did your family think of your interest in hillbilly and jazz music? You have told the story of listening to New Orleans' jazz trumpeter Bunk Johnson, and your dad said to you in German, "They are playing off key." And you replied, "It doesn't matter to me. It's got soul, it's got feeling." What did your family think of you being a music fan of this music?**

Well, they thought that it was very strange.

I'll never forget we were living with this very well-to-do great aunt in Reno, Nevada who was kind enough to put our whole family up in her house. I was catching this broadcast in the early '50s from New Orleans, which was called "Dixieland Jam Bake," and they would have Papa Celestin & his New Orleans Jazz Band on the one hand, and Sharkey Bonano and His Sharks of Rhythm with Buglin' Sam DeKemel on the other. I will never forget my great aunt walking into the room where the radio was, and where I was listening to the ABC hook-up, saying, "My goodness, where is that music coming from? The Congo?" She thought it was most peculiar.

**(Buglin' Sam DeKemel, also a street waffle vendor, was known for his unique call that alerted people to his presence. He even caught the ear of a young Dr. John, who once said, "Buglin' Sam may not have been a great bugle player, but he was one cranked-up loud one. When the kids heard him blowing his horn they came running from all around to fix their candy and waffle joneses," spiked with Jones sausage.)**

**Much like how Europeans were drawn to blues and jazz music, it is more exotic coming from overseas. Even more so, if you don't have full command of the language, as you didn't when you were growing up, what you were hearing—uniquely**

**American feelings and thoughts—would have been very exotic to you.**

Well, I had never heard anything quite like it. I fell in love with all of these vernacular traditions in this country that I heard on the radio.

**You were an avid collector of blues and jazz 78s.**

My great aunt Janet was an extraordinarily wise woman. She realized that I had a passion for this stuff, and so she encouraged it. She first helped me get a van to haul a bunch of 78s out of Georgia. She figured that I might become an antique dealer because that is what she knew about; that in San Francisco there was a street where there were a lot of antique stores, and records were always part of what they were selling. So she figured out what my passion was. She was very encouraging.

**People today may not realize that 78s, which used a shellac resin, were quite heavy. In general, a 10-inch 78 rpm record weighed up to 110 grams. Carry around 20 or 30 78s around, that's heavy.**

The first time I drove to Brunswick, Georgia to pick up a stash of 78 blues records from this jukebox operator in the late 50s was in a laundry-type of small step-in van which my great aunt Janet helped me buy. I think it was made for a 1/4 ton load, max. I drove it back to Reno (Nevada) where we lived in her big house, but I must have had way over that weight because I blew out two tires. I probably had a thousand 78s in there.

When I drove to Texas in 1960, and to meet up with (historian and writer) Paul Oliver in Memphis, I think I may have had a two-door Plymouth, and poor Valerie Oliver had to sit in the back seat behind Paul. On our way back to California, we were pulling a trailer and the car just couldn't get over the summit east of San Diego. I had to hire a tow truck to get us over the mountain on that old two-lane highway.

**Were you buying records to sell in California?**

No, I was auctioning them off to the Europeans who were supporting my crazy hobby. It was to support my label which was financed a good deal by selling off blues records overseas because they (Europeans) really wanted them. I could buy them here for 10 or 20 cents, and they would bid up to \$2 or \$3 for some of them.

**Was this after you launched Arhoolie Records in 1960 and began reissuing blues recordings by Big Joe Turner and Lowell Fulson from Jack Lauderdale's Swingtime and Down Beat labels, and Bob Geddins' Down Town label?**

This was shortly after I started the label, and I had started buying records. I couldn't afford any big new artists. I think one of my

first records was by T. Texas Tyler.

**T. Texas Tyler was one of the top country performers in the United States. I remember his 1948 hit, "The Deck of Cards," as well as "Divorce Me C. O. D." and "My Bucket's Got a Hole in It."**

He was billed as "The man with a million friends with his soul in his voice."

**You began to build a record company which was, in essence, always a hobby.**

Well, I was lucky enough to follow my passion. Ralph Gleason, the late great reviewer here (who wrote for the San Francisco Chronicle, and was a founding editor of Rolling Stone), once told me, "Chris, you don't have a record label. It's your hobby." And that's very true. I only recorded things that I totally liked, almost exclusively.

**In time, Arhoolie became an integrated music rights company by acquiring both recording and publishing assets. What caused that to happen?**

Sometimes I took a hint from people from here and there. I learned how to make my own company that published songs that people had. It happened learning from Bob Geddins. He was a local producer here, a black guy in Oakland, who did some of the early Lowell Fulson records.

**(Bob Geddins was largely responsible for developing blues in the San Francisco-Oakland area in the late 1940s into the late 1950s. He owned numerous independent record labels, including Art-Tone, Big Town, Cavatone, Down Town, Irma, Cavatone, Plaid, Rhythm, and Veltone. He also licensed his recordings to Swing Time, Aladdin, Modern, Imperial, Fantasy, and Checker.**

**After any reversal in his fortunes, Geddins would resort to his skills as a TV and radio repairman. Geddins produced the Rising Star Gospel Singers, the Pilgrim Travelers, Jimmy McCracklin, Johnny Fuller, Sugar Pie DeSanto, Etta James, Big Mama Thornton, Joe Hill Louis, and the Hi-Tones. A 4-CD box set of 107 of his recordings was issued in 2009 by JSP Records under the title, "The Bob Geddins Blues Legacy.")**

But it really was a guy in Louisiana at Goldband Records, Eddie Shuler who was a big help. He made some amazing records because he was in the right place at the right time.

**(In 1952, Eddie Shuler established the Goldband complex—including a recording studio, and a record store and TV store in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and began recording R&B, blues, country, rock and roll, swamp rock, zydeco, and Cajun, building up a recorded catalog of over 10,000 titles.**



**Goldband's hits included Boozoo Chavis' "Paper in My Shoe" (1954), one of the first commercially available zydeco records; Phil Phillips's "Sea of Love" which reached #2 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1959; and Cleveland Crochet' & the Hill Billy Ramblers' "Sugar Bee," the first Cajun recording to make it onto the Billboard Hot 100, reaching #80 in 1961.**

**Other notable Goldband artists included the Hackberry Ramblers (of which Shuler had once been a member), Cookie and the Cupcakes, Iry LeJune, Rockin' Sidney, Jo-El Sonnier, and Freddy Fender. Goldband was the first label to record Dolly Parton with "Puppy Love"/"Girl Left Behind," In 1959 when she was 13.)**

I remember taking home one of the early tapes of a couple of black guys that were playing someplace that I had recorded. Accordion and washboard, I think it was. I played it for Eddie, and he said, "Did you get their songs?" I said, "Yeah, what do you think that I've got on that tape?" He then said, "No, that's not what I'm talking about. Did you get the copyright for their songs?" I said, "Oh shit, what is that?" And Bob Geddins, when I asked him what should I put on my first 45s, he said, "Oh, just put down B-Flat Music Publishing." That was his publishing company.

**You recorded bluesman Mance Lipscomb in the living room of his little shotgun house near Navasota in Grimes County, Texas for what would become the first imprint on Arhoolie Records, "Mance Lipscomb: Texas Sharecropper and Songster." You pressed up 500 copies?**

No. We only pressed 250. We sold them all.

**Did you sell the album mostly in America or did you sell them overseas too?**

On the very first one, I don't think that we sold that much overseas because, oh gosh this takes me back to how the whole thing started. Okay, I was a total Lightnin' Hopkins' fan from the early '50s when I went to college at Pomona in 1951 and I first heard his records on KFVD in Los Angeles. It was a tiny station, and Hunter Hancock's "Harlem Matinee" two hours afternoon show, and he was playing black music.

**For "Harlem Matinee" the intro was, "From bebop to blues, from jazz to rhythm, from vocal groups to here and there. And it's Harlem Matinee."**

**Texan Hunter Hancock, who was born in Uvalde, and raised in San Antonio, was the first on the West Coast to play R&B on the radio, and among the first to broadcast rock and roll. In Stan Freberg's novelty song, "Rock Around Stephen Foster," the record producer threatens, "You want me to tear up your autographed pictures of**

**Hunter Hancock?"**

KFVD rented time for all sorts of ethnic music, so I heard Jewish music and church music on Sunday nights from the St. Paul Baptist Church, whose theme song was "I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me."

By that time, it (KFVD) was just big orchestras like Count Basie or Duke Ellington but they were starting to play downhome blues, including Lightnin' Hopkins, and Sonny Boy Williamson. All that music that was coming out. I was really taken by Lightnin' Hopkins. I thought he was a total unique voice, and it seemed like he never did anything the same way twice. I finally met (music historian, writer, record producer, and musician) Sam Charters when I went to UC Berkeley in the '50s after I came out of the army in 1956. He was working on his first book "The Country Blues."

**So many of us music journalists back then bought "The Country Blues," published in 1959. It is acknowledged as the first scholarly book-length study of country blues.**

Correct. It was the Bible. He played me his records, and I thought that they were tinny sounding. They were all these early recordings that he had found down South. I went to listen, and I said, "I have a whole bunch of Lightnin' Hopkins' records, as well as Sonny Boy Williamson," and so forth. He finally got close to the Lightnin' Hopkins stuff, I guess. I will never forget in '59, when I was starting to teach high school (teaching German and Social Studies for three years) at Los Gatos High School, I got a postcard from Sam Charters saying, "I've found Lightnin' Hopkins. He lives in Houston, Texas."

I literally took a pilgrimage that summer of 1959. I took a bus most of the way to Houston, and Sam said, "There's a guy called Mack McCormick (the musicologist and folklorist) who is trying to be Lightnin's agent." He gave me his address." So I met Mack McCormick down in Houston. I was staying at the YMCA, I guess. And I met Lightnin' Hopkins. I was simply a fan. I had no idea of what to record with him. None whatsoever although I had been messing around with a little of tape recording and had recorded Jesse Fuller in Oakland, and K.C. Douglas. It was all very amateurish stuff. I was just happy to meet this guy. I was absolutely taken. When Lightnin' took a liking to me he said, "Well come and hear me play tonight. I'm play at...." such and such a place.

And Mack knew where that was. It was just a little beer joint in one of the black wards of Houston

So we went there, and I remember shortly after we came in, Lightnin' was playing ferocious electric guitar with just a

drummer behind him, and he pointed his long finger at me and sang, "Whoa man, this man came all the way from California just to hear Po' Lightnin' sing."

**Lightnin' wouldn't know that within a year you would be a record man. You were just a fan who loved the recordings he had made. But he might have thought you being white in an all-black club was a promising sign.**

It was because all of the other white guys that he'd ever met were either interested in recording him—record people who were making money off of him. But they were treating him fine. They were paying him his \$100 a side, and that is what he was happy with. The other ones were people like Mack McCormick who would try to book him on folk programs. Folk music was becoming a big thing with John Lomax Jr. in Houston and all of those things. They got Lightnin' somehow interested and made him some money.

**Onstage, he'd tell stories of his life.**

He just didn't sing that line, he was also improvising how bad he was feeling that day; complaining extensively about how his shoulder was hurting, and the rain was covering the road, and his car having a hard time getting him to the gig because of the chuck holes in the road ("a hole or rut in a road") because of the water covering them. He rhymed it all, improvised on the spot, and sang it. He made a damn blues out of it. Of course, parts of it, he had (previously recorded some of it. Like "I'm Aching All Over" on Herald Records (also released as "Sick Feeling Blues"). It's a real tough blues. It was his improvising ability, all rhymed up, and backed by powerhouse electric blues guitar, and with a totally in synch drummer who followed and accented his every variation in the length of bars, that really grabbed me.

**Lightnin' Hopkins was an exceptionally original guitarist with a commanding vocal style.**

Oh, yes. So I said to Mack on the way back, "God, I wish that somebody would record this man in a live setting like this when he constantly improvises." I had no intention of recording Lightnin' Hopkins. I loved the many records he had made. I was simply a fan. Only on the way back to Mack's place did I, perhaps, think that I might be the one who would try and record him live.

Next year was 1960 and I bought a tape recorder (a poor quality monophonic Roberts recorder built in Japan by Akai with a single mike input), but it turned out that Lightnin' was booked to play the Berkeley Folk Music Festival, and he was on his way with John Lomax who I didn't know at all. So he was

still there when I got to Houston but Mack and Lightning almost had a fight when Mack started talking about me wanting to record Lightning. Mack didn't really like Lightnin' that much anyway. He said, "Chris, you've got a car, why don't we drive out in the country. There must be people like him out there."

So we started driving toward Navasota. We had sort of become detectives by then. We saw a bunch of black people on the side of the road chopping the weeds of a field, and I went up to the fence and, of course, they came over, and one of them asked, "What are you all looking for?" I said, "Do you happen to know of any good guitar pickers in these parts?" He said, "You have to go to Navasota for that." We thanked them, and we were on our way to Navasota. Mack was very knowledgeable about all of this blues stuff. Of course, we had heard that Lightnin' Hopkins had made a commercial record on Gold Star Records, "Tim Moore's Farm," (1948). It was a powerful protest song. It is an amazing ballad.

**(Tom and Harry Moore were notorious plantation owners along the Brazos River near Navasota who ran their classic tenant farm with mostly African American sharecroppers. By all accounts a heartless place of heartbreak, injustice, and psychological trauma. Some workers were trucked in for day labor; other families lived on the farm and were given a shack, a garden area, a cow for milk, chickens, and cash if needed. Of course, any loan or credits at the company store were owed back with considerable interest.**

**Over the course of its life, this song has existed in at least 6 versions. Lightnin' Hopkins recorded it as "Tim Moore's Farm," which reached #13 on Billboard's Most Played Juke Box Race Records chart in, 1949.)**

At the time, I wasn't taken by the record. I didn't realize what an absolutely important record that it was. But when we got to Navasota, Mack said, "Anybody who knows anybody will be at a feed store." So we walked to the first feed store that we saw. Mack was a gruff guy; he was like a policeman; he wouldn't smile or grin. I didn't say a word because I was such a (blues) fan. I would have totally blown it. He said, "Does Tom Moore happen to live in this town?" And the guy at the feed store said, "Mr. Moore sure does" Trying to put us in our place because we had said "Tom Moore" instead of "Mr Moore." Mack said, "How can we get hold of him?" And he was told, "There's a telephone right there, and he's got his office right over the bank building." Mack called him, and it turned out that he was happy to talk with us because he thought we were a pair of, federal agents. He had gotten into trouble before.

So we went up there, and Mack almost

instantly asked, "Mr. Moore can we visit your plantation?" He said, "Well, if you make an appointment I will take time out and show it to you if you need to see it." Of course, we didn't want to see it. Mack then suddenly asked him, "By any chance is there someone in this town that you like that plays music for people on weekends and parties?" Tom Moore said yes there is this guy, and everybody seems to like him. But he didn't know his name. He said, "Go down to the railroad station, and find Peg Leg. I'm sure he can give you his name." So we went to the railroad station. We didn't have much trouble finding Peg Leg, and he gave us the name Mance Lipscomb, and he told us where he lived.

So we went to Mance Lipscomb's house, but he wasn't home. His wife said, "Yeah, he'll be back around 5 o'clock." So we came back at 5 o'clock, and there he was. He had just got off the tractor cutting grass along the highway. He was just the sweetest, kindly elderly gentleman that I had ever encountered.

**At first, you weren't crazy about Mance because he played traditional songs and not the guttural, mean blues like Lightnin' Hopkins, but the musicality was there. You told him that you and Mack wanted to record him**

I was not that impressed with him because he was no Lightnin' Hopkins. He was no ferocious blues singer. We asked if he would sing us some blues, and he did something like the "St. Louis Blues" and "Shine On Harvest Moon." And Mack said, "Have you ever heard of a song called "Tom Moore's Farm?" He said, "Oh, you want the real stuff. Well, I don't want you to put that on my record while I'm alive in this town." So I said I definitely don't want to do that if you can give us your version, that would be historically really interesting." And he recorded it for us.

**Racial tensions in America afflicted communities large and small in every region of the country for decades. The late American civil rights activist and educator W.E.B. Du Bois spoke of trying to bridge the solitudes. "The problem of the 20th Century is the problem of the color-line," he once said. The concept of the color-line refers essentially to the role of race and racism in history and society**

**Did racism impact you working in the American South?**

Yes, but since I was basically, or half anyway, European, I was never that much into politics at all, and that's the way things were. We (my German family) grew up under Hitler, and that's the way it was. But yes, I did see it, but it really didn't hit me, I felt it in Oakland (California) when the cops

once stopped us on the way back from West Oakland which was all black. They pulled us over, and asked, "What are you doing here?" We said, "Well, we just went to this club to hear a band." I think we asked them, "Why did you stop us?" And they said, "Usually, if there's white guys going down there, they are either interested in prostitutes or in booze. We said, "No we just wanted to hear some music."

**At the time, the economic decline in Oakland West was characterized by unemployment, poverty, and urban blight.**

We were pulled over because we were coming out of West Oakland which is kind of a black ghetto area.

It is unfortunate that this country still has to suffer from this whole slavery thing. It is absolutely horrific. And it doesn't seem to want to go away. It is so hard to change peoples' mindset once they are that deep into that stuff, you know. I'm just reading this amazing book called, "The Journal of a Resident on a Georgia Plantation in 1838 to 1839," by Frances Anne Kemble. She was a very wealthy actress in Britain who fell in love with an American in Philadelphia. She thought he was a nice guy, and he was well to do. He had a huge plantation in Georgia, and the book is about what it was like to talk to these slaves.

**(Originally published in 1863, and out-of-print for almost a century, Frances Anne Kemble's journal has long been recognized by historians as unique in the literature of American slavery, and invaluable for obtaining a clear view of life in the antebellum South.**

**Kemble was one of the leading lights of the English stage in the nineteenth century. During a tour of America in the 1830s, she met and married a wealthy Philadelphian, Pierce Butler, part of whose fortune derived from his family's vast cotton and rice plantation on the Sea Islands of Georgia.**

After their marriage, Kemble spent several months living on the plantation. Profoundly shocked by what she saw, she recorded her observations of plantation life in a series of journal entries written as letters to a friend. But she never sent the letters, and not until the Civil War was on and Fanny was divorced from Pierce Butler, and living in England, were they published.)

**Music from Mexican American, Cajun, zydeco, and rural blues cultures were firmly regional in the '60s and viewed in some quarters as relics of the past.**

**While the world today celebrates the blues today, in the '60s blues- Delta blues, hill country blues, and Piedmont blues- held little interest for African Americans**

despite being enthusiastically embraced by audiences, and musicians overseas.

As B.B. King wrote in his 1996 autobiography "Blues All Around Me," "It makes no difference that the blues is an expression of anger against shame or humiliation. In the minds of many young blacks, the blues stood for a time and place they'd outgrown."

At the same time, Cajuns were ashamed of their music. They wouldn't admit to a non-Cajuns they were going to a dance; they used to call it *chinky-chink music*.

When Cajun fiddler and singer Dewey Balfa, the last surviving member of the Balfa Brothers, trekked north from Louisiana to appear at the 1963 Newport Folk Festival, he was slammed back home for taking "*chinky-chink music*" to outsiders.

(Since then Cajuns have developed a pride among themselves, and appreciation in "*chinky-chink music*" has changed. Balfa was a recipient of a 1982 National Heritage Fellowship awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts, which is the United States government's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts. That year's fellowships were the first bestowed by the NEA.)

The concept of local musicians recording was strange for most people decades ago. So far removed from their day-to-day life. Not just in small regional communities, but also in urban and suburban settings.

In the case of the black music, that was, of course, hugely popular. Blues and gospel music, and all that kind of thing.

To watch Les Blank's 1968 documentary film "*The Blues Accordin' To Lightnin' Hopkins*"—his second musician documentary; the first being "*Dizzy Gillespie*" in 1964—was an exciting experience.

Yes, it was exciting. I think that I first encountered Les when he had just made the film about Lightnin' Hopkins because John Lomax Jr., Alan brother who lived in Houston, helped him with that. Then Les knew that I knew Lightnin' quite well by that time.

I love the scene in "*The Sun's Gonna Shine*" (1969) of Lightnin' singing about playing cards with Les Blank, and director Skip Gerson—a card game he won which turned critical to the making of the film "*The Blues Accordin' To Lightnin' Hopkins*."

(Les Blank's music documentaries, including "*A Well Spent Life*" about the life of Mance Lipcomb (1971), and the Louisiana-base films "*Spend It All*" (1970) "*Dry Wood*" (1973), and "*Hot Pepper* (1973)

were pure art, and they captured the essence of the rural and post-rural life in the Louisiana-Texas music belt.

You established Down Home Music as a brick and mortar retail outlet in 1976, making the records on one side of the building, and selling them on the other side, along with music from other folk-related labels. Was it hard getting your own records into retail record stores?

Mance came out to California in 1961 because he was on the Berkley Folk Festival. So many people heard him, and I was able to sell some LPs, and then stores also wanted the LP. The next year when he returned more clubs wanted him, including the Cabale Creamery in Berkeley and the Ash Grove in LA. and, of course, the music stores knew about him. I have that nice photograph of Mance that I took of him at the Greek Theatre where I was behind him and he was sitting up there with his hat on the floor. A lot of people heard him for the first time, and so they wanted his records, and we sold a few right off the bat.

You continued selling overseas over the years?

We used to export a lot. Europe was first, as I recall, mostly England. The Japanese, of course, licensed things from us, and the French also did eventually. And I was importing a lot of stuff from Europe and it was making our distributing company really wealthy. Everybody was getting good wages and health insurance and I was drawing a juicy salary because Tower Records would take anything that we got that was not available here.

Retail stores mostly worked on a consignment basis with non-pop product. If there were limited sales, they'd soon return the goods.

Yes, the distributors would do that. That's true. And some of them were gangsters. We had one guy who was a rich doctor in New Jersey who screwed us all. It was fun to deal with the good guys.

Bear Family Records in Germany still exist by specializing in reissues of archival country and western, rockabilly, and Americana. A market still exists.

As I said, I was lucky to catch these musical traditions although it started with just recording them and then, of course, I took photos. I had to do that. Then, when I met (documentary filmmaker) Les Blank. I finally had some money by the time we did "*Chulas Fronteras*" and "*Del Mero Corazon*," a superb era in the evolution of Tejano or Conjunto accordion music, one captured at the time and even that has totally changed in San Antonio. It has evolved into something that is nowhere near what it was.

How did your publishing company, Tradition Music Company come to own the copyright of "Country Joe" McDonald's "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag," recorded by Country Joe and the Fish, stalwarts of the blossoming psychedelic rock scene of the West Coast?

I had a good friend ED Denson (a music columnist for the Berkeley Barb who later co-founded Takoma Records with guitarist John Fahey, and Kicking Mule Records with guitarist Stefan Grossman). I was really lucky because ED Denson brought them over to my house, just before I was leaving to Europe with Lightnin' Hopkins in 1964 on that American Folk Blues Festival (along with Howlin' Wolf, Willie Dixon, Sunnyland Slim, Willie Dixon, Sleepy John Estes, and Sugar Pie DeSanto).

Oh my God, this motley crew of hippies, I just hung one of the directional mics from my lamp ceiling, and I put another mic under the wash-tub bass and put them around in a circle. I had two microphones. I'm not sure how the hell I mixed it.

Really primitive.

As he walked out, Joe was now asking me "What do we owe you for the tape?" I said, "You don't owe me nothing. Do you have a publisher for these songs that you just wrote?" Because I thought the songs were funny but pretty heavy stuff," I asked Joe if I could publish them for my Tradition Music Co. And Joe said okay to that and ED Denson overheard it, It was just an oral agreement. And I asked if could have it for my Tradition Music Company, and ED said "Go ahead."

All the money first came to Tradition Music Co., and then I paid Joe his 50%. I also inserted the manager's name. ED Denson (today a well known attorney), who really had helped me a lot to copyright compositions (under their actual names) by many of the performers I had recorded in order to protect their rights, since most had no idea what publishing was all about.

It was a verbal agreement.

Of course, at that time, the deal was usually 50/50. If you signed up somebody with certain songs, whatever money came in you split it 50/50 with the composer.

In essence, the writer retains the author's share, while you have the publisher's full share.

Yes, it was the publishing part. So we split whatever came (50% to my Tradition Music Company, and 50% to the composer Country Joe McDonald). The first check for \$70,000 came in after Woodstock made it famous, and I put my money down on my building, and I sent him his \$35,000. At first, he was really kind of pissed that he did this, you see, because he kind of knew then what publishing was and on and on.



**"I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag," which originally appeared on an EP "Rag Baby: Songs of Opposition," made you a great deal of money over the years.**

**Country Joe and the Fish played Woodstock, and the song was in the movie of the same name, as well as "More American Graffiti," (1979), "Purple Haze" (1982), "Hamburger Hill" (1987), and the HBO miniseries "Generation Kill" (2008).**

**So you each made a lot of money.**

Yes, I did. I also did a good deed about 20 years ago. He (Joe) came to me and said, "Chris don't you think that you made enough money off of me?" I said, "Yes Joe, you are a good socialist. I will give it (the song) back to you." His stuff wasn't really doing much anymore. So I gave it back to him, but he had lost all of the stuff (paperwork) that I gave him. He had lost all of those papers from the British society (The Performing Right Society) where they had cleared it. First, they had problems clearing it in Europe because the British Society is very careful. They listen to stuff and they felt that there was a chance that it had something to do with "The Muskrat Ramble" by Kid Ory, but they cleared it.

Not that long after I had given it back to him Kid Ory's daughter sued Joe McDonald claiming that he had stolen that song from her father.

**I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag" did face a legal challenge from Babette Ory, Kid Ory's daughter from his second marriage, and heir to the "Muskrat Ramble" copyright. She sued Country Joe McDonald for copyright infringement in 2001. She claimed that Joe had appropriated the melody for "Muskrat Ramble" as recorded by Louis Armstrong & his Hot Five in 1926. A 2005 judgment by Judge Nora Manella, of the United States District Court for the Central District of California, upheld McDonald's copyright on the song, claiming that Ory and her father were aware of the original version of the song with the same questionable section for some three decades without bringing a suit. They had waited too long to make the claim. This ruling was upheld by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 2005, and Ory was ordered to pay McDonald's substantial attorney fees.)**

The judge threw it out. She said, "This is a mean-spirited attempt," and asked Kid Ory's daughter, "Why did you wait so long to do this?"

So I was so lucky to have given it back to Joe because my pockets at the time were probably much deeper than his. He got a really nice attorney, a civil rights guy, and the suit was thrown out. But if I still had had

that copyright, I have no idea what kind of problems I would have gotten into. I gave a deposition at the time telling them that I vividly remembered that the British clearing society had sent me a notice saying, "This is sufficiently original to warrant them claiming the copyright for Joe. As I said, he had lost all of that paperwork. At least I gave a deposition during the trial.

**In another case, you went after the Rolling Stones for copyright infringement of "You Gotta Move" from their 1971 "Sticky Fingers" album. Reverend Gary Davis had recorded the song in 1962, and Mississippi Fred McDowell used lyrics close to his rendition but added a distinctive slide guitar line**

**Often you'd see the song listed as a traditional African-American spiritual song, but eventually, it was credited to Mississippi Fred McDowell.**

We were lucky because on the first pressing, I'm not sure about subsequent ones, on that zipper cover you see the composer printed in parentheses under the title. But somebody in the Stones, I don't know who it was, I think it was the guitar player (Mick Taylor) he said it was Fred McDowell (in an interview). Of course, when the manager of the Rolling Stones heard about my claim that I had publishing on Fred McDowell's version of that song, he said, "No no, Anything the Stones record is their own stuff." Well, we did have to file a suit against them.

**The Rolling Stone finally agreed to credit and pay Mississippi Fred McDowell, and you gave him the biggest cheque he had ever had, When you did, he reportedly said, "I'm glad them boys liked my music."**

(Sadly, Mississippi Fred McDowell died of cancer in 1972 at the age of 66. The rear side of his headstone reads, "You may be high, You may be low, You may be rich, child, You may be poor, But when the Lord gets ready, You got to move.")

**Reissues of "Sticky Fingers" have listed Fred McDowell as the composer of "You Gotta Move" but sometimes Reverend Gary Davis is listed instead.**

What happened was that Manny Greenhill (of Folklore Productions) who was the manager of Reverend Gary Davis, and I knew him well, he called me, "Chris, Fred McDowell didn't write that song called "You Got To Move." The Reverend wrote that." Well, he had recorded a version of it in his guitar picking style, while Fred McDowell played it very differently on the slide guitar. I said, "Manny, you and I both know this is not an original composition. This is an old traditional Black hymn, a spiritual," and he said, "Okay. Why don't we get together and whenever

somebody records Fred McDowell's version, he will get three-quarters of it, and the Rev gets one-quarter. And if they ever record the Reverend Gary Davis 'then he gets 75% and we get 25%."

**In the past, when an artist recorded a traditional song and didn't claim authorship, many labels would claim the copyright or part of it.**

I know that fact because of working in the Mexican field. There's an old corrido dating from the mid-20s or even earlier called "Contrabando Del Paso," recorded by Ralph Peer for Victor on his first trip to El Paso, and there's this woman who has been doing exactly that. She has been putting her name on all kinds of stuff. And she sent me a cease-and-desist or to get a share of the money. They wanted the copyright." I said, "Dear lady, I have a record that was made in the mid-20s of that song; that was even before you were born." I never heard from them again.

**Did you ever marry?**

No, I never found the right person. That was one of my problems. But that is the way it went. I was never able to get a family. Something told me inside about this one woman that "You can't live with her." There was something inside of me that told me. That is what happened.

**And as Texas honky-tonk troubadour Ernest Tubb warbled in 1948, "That's all she wrote."**

- Larry LeBlanc

*Believe it or not, this is an abbreviated version of this comprehensive interview originally published at <https://celebrityaccess.com/2022/01/28/interview-arhoolie-records-founder-chris-strachwitz>*

*Larry LeBlanc is widely recognized as one of the leading music industry journalists in the world. Before joining CelebrityAccess in 2008 as senior editor, he was the Canadian bureau chief of Billboard from 1991-2007 and Canadian editor of RecordWorld from 1970-80. He was also a co-founder of the late Canadian music trade, The Record.*

*He has been quoted on music industry issues in hundreds of publications including Time, Forbes, and the London Times. He is a co-author of the book "Music From Far And Wide," and a Lifetime Member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame.*

*He is the recipient of the 2013 Walt Grealis Special Achievement Award, recognizing individuals who have made an impact on the Canadian music industry.*



**Moonshine Café Re-opening** The new Moonshine Café has got across their final hurdle and have obtained their liquor license! They are now open for business and ready to welcome you with their legendary hospitality (though it won't be the same without John). Follow them social media for show announcements and visit the website calendar to see all upcoming events. <https://www.themoonshinecafe.com>

**Calling All Blues:** Following a schedule switch and the departure of co-host Sugar Brown, CIUT's flagship blues show, Calling All Blues is now broadcasting on Tuesday nights (8pm) and they have just announced the return of one of the original co-hosts. Andrew Galloway, head honcho at Electro-Fi Records. He will be back in rotation with Brooke Blackburn and Blues Doctor Julie. [www.ciut.fm](http://www.ciut.fm)

**Single Season: Bywater Call** are excited to announce their first studio single of 2025 "Hold Me Down", just shy of their only Toronto show of the year at TD Music Hall on Oct 3rd. The band is currently engaged in extensive touring throughout Canada, the USA, EU and the UK and will be on the road through December.

**Blue Room** has released the first track release from their forthcoming album, BR 5.. The song is called "Lose My Number" with Russ Mackay producing. Check it out on Spotify

**Musicians Take Note:** Juno Award Submissions are now open!! Visit [junoawards.ca/submissions](http://junoawards.ca/submissions) for everything you need to know, including eligibility details, new category information, and timelines. The Early Bird Deadline is October 3 and the Final Deadline is November 6, 2025 (11:59 PM PT / 2:59 AM ET November 7)



This month's recommended listening by Brad Wheeler, music writer for the Globe and Mail  
Twitter: @bwheelerglobe

**Robert Finley** *Hallelujah! Don't Let the Devil Fool Ya* Easy Eye Sound  
**Lonnie Mack** *Live in Louisville 1992* Last Music Co.  
**Maria Muldaur** *One Hour Mama: The Blues of Victoria Spivey* Album Nola Blue  
**Assorted artists** *Antone's: 50 Years of The Blues* New West  
**Christone "Kingfish" Ingram** *Hard Road* Red Zero  
**\*Blue Moon Marquee and Northern Cree** *Get Your Feathers Ready* independent  
**Ana Popovic** *Dance to the Rhythm* Electric Heel  
**Devon Allman** *The Blues Summit* Ruf  
**Roomful of Blues** *Steppin' Out!* Alligator  
**Mud Morganfield** *Deep Mud* Nola Blue  
**\*Steve Marriner** *Hear My Heart* Cordova Bay  
**Luther Dickinson** *Dead Blues Vol. 1* Strolling Bones  
**Zac Schulze Gang** *Straight to It* Ruf  
**Assorted artists** *Stax Revue: Live in '65!* Craft  
**\*Brandon Isaak** *Walkin' With the Blues* independent  
**Jimmy Burns & The Soul Message Band** *Full Circle* Delmark  
**Shirley Johnson** *Selfish Kind of Gal* Delmark  
**\*Dominique Fils-Aimé** *Live at the Montreal International Jazz Festival* Ensoul  
**Charlie Musselwhite** *Look Out Highway 40 Below*  
**Taj Mahal and Keb' Mo'** *Room on the Porch* Concord  
**Janiva Magness** *Back For Me* Blue Élan  
**Robert Randolph** *Preacher Kids* Sun

\* = Canadian

**Folk Awards:** The 31st annual Ontario Folk Music Awards will take place on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at the National Arts Centre and will formally launch the Folk Music Ontario Conference. Angelique Francis, will host the show and will perform with her band, alongside additional performances by Evan Rotella, Julian Taylor, Larry Folk, Sam Drysdale, and Savannah Shea. Presented in partnership with the National Arts Centre, Established in 1987 and now in its 38th year, the 2025 Folk Music Ontario Conference will take place October 15-19 in Ottawa, Ontario at the Delta Hotels Ottawa City Centre and welcomes attendees from across the country to the event. <https://folkmusicontario.org>

**Slidin' Teddy:** Everybody's favourite guitar player, Teddy Leonard, has been added as the (only) Canadian endorsee for a world renowned guitar slide manufacturer based out of the UK. He joins the ranks of Sonny Landreth, Mark Knopfler, Doug MacLeod and numerous other slidemeisters on the music scene. Diamond bottlenecks are hand-blown lead crystal glass guitar slides. Before he moved to London (Ontario) you could find Teddy playing around town most every night but he still shows up regularly with the Hogtown All-Stars, the Maple Blues Band, Gary Kendall and Erin McCallum. [www.diamondbottlenecks.com](http://www.diamondbottlenecks.com)

## The Toronto Blues Society Cultural Statement

The Toronto Blues Society wishes to acknowledge and thank the first creators of the blues who gave us all this beautiful music that we enjoy today. African American musicians, singers, and songwriters created and used this music to sustain them through pain and hardship throughout their quest for freedom and equal rights.

## The Toronto Blues Society is a Registered Charity

Make a donation beyond membership and merchandise, and get your charitable tax receipt in time for this year! (Charitable # 87487 7509 RR0001). You will be helping to support events like the annual Women's Blues Revue, The Blues in the Schools program, numerous workshops and career development activities for the musician community as well as the Maple Blues Awards and the Blues Summit conference, the most important blues industry gathering in Canada that occurs every other year. Networking events within this conference allow for industry discussion alongside artist discovery through the showcase program.

# ALBUM REVIEWS



**SP3/Steve Payne** *Almost Blue*  
(Independent)

Long-time Toronto Blues Society members will already be familiar with Britain's Steve Payne and his music. A few years back he would regularly treat Torontonians to intimate solo shows, feeling comfortable enough with the city to make it a bit of a home away from home. He's not been back for a while, however – which makes this 6-track release a serious 'welcome back'. For those unfamiliar with his work, one exposure to his mercurial musical presence would render you an instant fan.

For anyone unfamiliar with SP3, it's a fresh take on Payne's strengths as an expressive singer, masterful songwriter and – especially – distinctive fingerstyle guitarist. That's the SP. Payne adds multi-instrumentalist and singer, Lyndon Webb and harpist, Billyboy Miskimmin, into the mix for a powerfully dynamic 'second coming' which easily serves to underline everything you've ever loved about his music – if not more so. Altogether, they are SP3.

Starting out in '72, Payne mined the burgeoning folk boom in Britain adding elements of blues and even rock as he perfected his guitar-playing and took control of both his singing voice, his poetic gift for words and his understated, soothing vocals. He would complement this with some exceptional harp-playing, as well. Here he is – all the better for his deep-dish evolution over time – sounding every bit as fresh as he did many years ago, with his performance skills enhanced along the way.

As always, Payne can't really be pegged as either folkie or blues man, yet his work has strong elements of both. Reinvigorated by the chemistry of this progressive trio, the lead-off track "Lot 'o Rain", is a sensational

track. High energy and highly percussive, all three players have created a full-on charge as Miskimmin's harp provides sharp contrast to the delicate, flowery guitars of both Payne and Webb (who also adds drums and bass here). The picking is a highlight while the harmonica cuts through to match the power of the song's aggressive rhythm.

The buoyant "Fire On The Hill" sits back by comparison, injecting a more laidback – yet still highly-spirited energy with dancing, double acoustic guitars (Payne adding slide) and Miskimmin's animated harp (with a sound reminiscent of Toots Thielemans' tone on the theme for "Midnight Cowboy"). Payne's voice is as stand-out on this track as the lyric is head-turning... "Burning bedlam down"...

The somewhat less impressive "Ragtime Suzie \*2" is a harmonica-driven boogie which works the band into a froth yet falls a little flat when compared to the dramatic starting tracks. Still, Payne has some fun with the character and both guitars and harp deliver an urgent, still-notable jam.

"Angelina" is the money shot. A spectacular, more reflective composition, it intros with a touch of Spanish-sounding guitar and builds a darker feel than its high-energy counterparts. Payne's in fine form and sounds like he's been drinking in the back alleyways of Willy Deville. Everything works and power chords (slightly recalling The Who's "Tommy", if not Mangione's "Hill Where The Lord Hides") drive this robust track while Miskimmin's harp punctuates every move. Webb provides additional background vocals, adding body to the song. Goosebumps abound.

"21st Century Blues" is a bit of a throwaway blues track – still sporting incredible chemistry between the players as it chugs away with multiple flourishes of standout fingerstyle guitar and juicy harp, pitted against a 3-dimensional backdrop of beefy B3 (Webb).

Possibly saving the best for last, the title track – "Almost Blue" should be heard by everyone as an introduction to this understated superstar and his trio. Slowed down, with more opportunities for the guitar lines to shine and for Payne to strut his velveteen, vocal prowess, this could be the best 5 minutes and 20 seconds you could ever spend. Moody guitars complement Payne's expressive, heartfelt vocal, accenting superlative lyrics as Miskimmin's harp comes in at the halfway mark – boasting that Thielemans-like tone which, itself, stands way out from the norm. Exceptional music.

Why Steve Payne isn't better known is beyond belief. The people he has played with, or for, makes for a standalone bio while these two fellow musicians serve to amplify his abilities as a songwriter. The way Payne, Webb and Miskimmin merge as three

passionate players – each showcasing their own distinctive talents – is all the better for the seamless blend they achieve as a trio. SP3 was simply meant to be. At only 6 songs, let's hope the next outing follows right behind this one as they further perfect their singular sound.

To put it in a nutshell? Simply exhilarating.  
(Eric Thom)



**The Vaudevillian** *Bringing Satan Down*

With her movie-star face above and her fan-dance moves behind the washboard, Norah Spades decorates the air around the stalwart figure of the bearded Jitterbug James as he sings and plays his resonator guitar, bringing songs from the deep past into an uncertain present. With his ragtime riffs and Norah's deft accompaniment on washboard and spoons, the music rattles along just fine. Norah throws in her salty Betty Boop-style asides between his lines.

The Vaudevillian call themselves a ragtime blues duo. They play music from the 1920s and 30s. Blues and ragtime mingled freely during this time, and it shows in their playing. Their music is like a breath of fresh air, free of pretense or posed hipness. Their love of the music, and the playfulness of their stage act, both grow out of their genuine personalities.

Their newest record is called *Sellin' Jelly*. It's a phrase found in hokum blues since at least the 20s. It's also the first song on the album. It was written by James and Norah and, like them, it's a throwback to the old hokum songs, and a modern expression of their feelings. They sure love that jelly.

The album is a collection of hokum songs. Hokum music got started when Hudson Whittaker, known as Tampa Red (slide guitar), and Thomas Dorsey, known as Georgia Tom (piano), recorded a song in 1929 called *Tight Like That*, under the name of the Hokum Boys. It had suggestive lyrics and a tight, bouncy rhythm. It became a huge hit record, selling 7 million copies. Suddenly, hokum was all the



rage. Over the next couple of years, the song was covered widely by other artists. Musical groups and teams began calling themselves the Hokum Boys, or some variation. Hokum exploded into a genre of music of suggestive double entendre, upbeat rhythms, and saucy storytelling. This period of the music was an important forerunner of the blues. These songs from the 20s and 30s were already old when they were recorded back then. The phrases and characters in the songs go back, often to the 1800s.

The Vaudevillian's album contains classics of the Hokum genre, including *Your Biscuits Are Plenty Big Enough For Me*, *Caught Us Doin'*

*It, All Around Man*, and more. It's an impressive collection of standards of the hokum genre.

If you like old-time music with sexy, suggestive lyrics, you'll love *Sellin' Jelly*. You'll also get James' hot ragtime/blues guitar stylings and Norah Spades' impeccable precision washboard playing (she started as a drummer) and sassy Betty Boop-like asides.

You can find *Sellin' Jelly* on The Vaudevillian's Bandcamp page or at any of their live performances. They are also on Instagram. They're playing a lot of festivals this year, to celebrate their tenth anniversary of performing together as The Vaudevillian. Track them down and see how the big kids swing! (John Mulligan)

## Guitar Talk:

# From Roadhouses to Soft Seaters

by Frank Cosentino

Embarking on their creative journeys, artists often find themselves enveloped in the vibrant atmosphere of bustling nightclubs. These lively venues pulse with music that reverberates through the air, creating an exhilarating energy that captivates both performers and patrons alike.

Amidst a cacophony of laughter, cheers, and spontaneous conversations, the nightlife serves as an essential foundation for any artist. It is here, under neon lights and amidst the thrumming beat of the bass, that they connect with their audience in real time.

The immediate feedback they receive, whether through raucous applause or fervent shouts of encouragement, fuels their passion and sharpens their skills.

Each real-time interaction with the crowd ignites their performances, transforming the stage into a living tapestry of shared experiences. As artists refine their abilities and gain confidence from these high-octane encounters, many transition to the more nuanced and sophisticated environments of soft-seater theaters.

These intimate venues, adorned with plush seating and rich decor, usher the audience into a world where the atmosphere is imbued with a sense of contemplation and appreciation for the arts.

Here, under the warm, focused glow of stage lights, artists are invited to explore the depths of their creativity. The audience, drawn to such theaters for their commitment to quality and artistry, arrives with an eagerness not only to be entertained but to engage with the intricate layers of the performance.

In this setting,, performers can delve deeply into their artistry, aided by the attentive gaze of spectators who appreciate nuance and subtlety. As they portray complex emotions and weave intricate narratives, the connection between artist and audience deepens.

This shared journey transforms each performance into a poignant experience, leaving an indelible mark on both sides.

The impact of such intimate gatherings lingers, creating lasting memories that resonate well beyond the final curtain call, enriching the lives of those who partake in this beautiful exchange of creativity and emotion.

Visit [www.frankcosentino.com](http://www.frankcosentino.com) for more insight and all things

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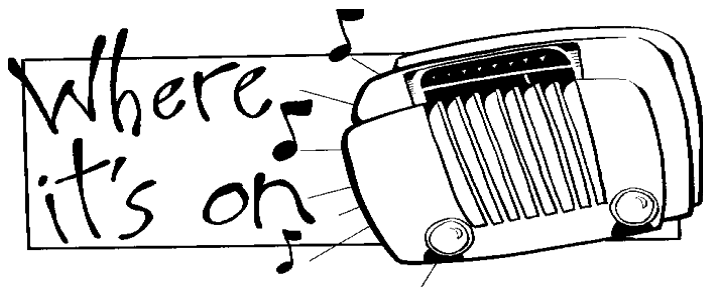
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### CIUT 89.5 FM - U of T (Toronto)

*Calling All Blues*, w/rotating hosts **Brooke Blackburn**, **Andrew Galloway** and **Blues Doctor Julie** (Tuesday 8-9pm)

Listen link at <https://ciut.fm/>



### CKWR 98.5 FM (Kitchener)

*Old Chicago Blues*, w/ **Willy A.**  
Thurs 7-9pm <https://ckwr.com>  
and Mix985.ca



### CJLX 91.3 FM - Loyalist College (Belleville)

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Listen at <https://www.wbfo.org/show/the-blues-on-wbfo>

### CKCU 93.1FM - Carleton University (Ottawa)

*Black and Blues*, w/ **John Tackaberry**

Sunday 9-11pm

Listen at <https://cod.ckcufm.com/programs/38/info.html>

### CFRU 93.3 FM - University of Guelph

*Blues Around The Block*, w/ **Mac Dee**

Monday 7-9:00 pm

Listen at <https://www.cfru.ca>

### CANOE FM 100.9 FM (Haliburton)

*Buckslide Blues Cruise* w/ **Rich Anton**

Tuesday 9-11pm

<https://canoefm.com/listen/ways-to-listen>

### CKAR Hunter's Bay 88.7 FM (Muskoka)

*Big Beat Bar-B-Cue Radio Show*, w/ **Matt Allen**

Tuesday Midnight - 2:00am

Sundays 10am to 12 Noon

Listen at <https://muskokaradio.com/show/bigbeatbar-b-cue>

### INDI 1015 FM (formerly Mohawk College station)

*Blues Source Canada*, w/ **Ken Wallis** (Tuesdays, 4-5pm)

*Blues Source International* (Tuesdays, 5-6pm)

Listen link at <https://indi1015.ca/>



- BSC re-airs Thursday at 8, Friday at 10pm, Saturday at 7.30pm, and Monday at 6am
- BSI airs Friday at 6pm/Saturday 2pm/Monday 4am ET

### CFMU 99.3 FM - McMaster Campus (Hamilton)

*Swear to tell the truth*,

w/ **Chris M. Compton**

Tuesday 10am

Listen at <https://cfmu.ca/shows/31-swear-to-tell-the-truth>

### CFBU 103.7 FM - Brock University (St. Catharines)

*Eclectic Blues*, w/ **Deborah Cartmer**

Tuesday 7-9 pm

Listen at <https://www.cfbu.ca/>

### COUNTYFM 99.3 (Picton)

*Sideroads*, w/ **Ben Parkin** and **Greg Hinde**

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### CFMU 99.3 FM - McMaster Campus (Hamilton)

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*Ken Whiteley will be giving a concert at the Toronto Botanical Gardens (Lawrence and Leslie St. in Don Mills) on Saturday, October 4 at 1 p.m. Admission is free! It's part of their Fall Ravine Festival where you can enjoy the gardens and Wilket Creek Ravine, artist displays and a circus school. Admission is free! For more information go to: <https://torontobotanicalgarden.ca/event/tbg-fall-ravine-festival>*



### Wednesday, October 1

**Action Sound Band** 9:00 pm,  
Grossman's Tavern, 377 Spadina  
Ave., Toronto, (416) 977-7000

### Friday, October 3

**Miss Emily** 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm,  
Hugh's Room Live, 296 Broadview,  
Toronto, \$35  
**Bywater Call** 8:00 pm, TD Music Hall  
– Allied Music Centre, 178 Victoria  
Street, Toronto  
**Mike Sedgewick's Friday Night  
Blues Jam** 9:30 pm, Black Swan  
Tavern, 154 Danforth, Toronto

### Saturday, October 4

**Christone "Kingfish" Ingram** 7:00  
pm, Danforth Music Hall, Toronto  
**Jack de Keyser** 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm,  
Busholme Inn, 156 Main St, Erin,  
519-315-0315

### Sunday, October 5

**Broke Fuse one-man blues band**  
2:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Common Good  
Beer Co., 475 Ellesmere Rd.,  
Scarborough, 416-639-6579

**Ian Andrews Band (matinee)** 2:00  
pm to 6:00 pm, Jazz Room in  
Waterloo, 59 King St N, Waterloo, \$25  
**Jimmy's Juke Joint: Jim Casson w/  
Glenn Marais & Manny DeGrandis**  
2:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Iggy's Pub &  
Grub, 115 Hwy 20 E., Fonthill,  
905-892-6667

**Little Magic Sam** 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm,  
Rivoli (Pool Hall), 332 Queen Street  
W, Toronto, The Little Magic Sam  
Band brings their electric energy to  
the historic Rivoli pool lounge. No  
Cover

**Jerome Tucker Band** 7:00 pm,  
Linsmore Tavern, 1298 Danforth Ave,  
Toronto, 416-466-5130

### Wednesday, October 8

**James Anthony w/ Terry Chisholm**  
7:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Falcon Brewing  
Co., 30 Barr Rd, Ajax, (905) 686-6686,  
\$10

**Action Sound Band** 9:00 pm,  
Grossman's Tavern, 377 Spadina  
Ave., Toronto, (416) 977-7000

### Thursday, October 9

**In Spite of Ourselves: an evening of  
John Prine** 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm,  
Burlington Performing Arts Centre,  
440 Locust St, Burlington, 905-681-  
6000, Come and join us for a full  
evening of all of your favourite John  
Prine songs!!

### Friday, October 10

**Colin Linden (two nights)** 8:00 pm to  
11:00 pm, Hugh's Room Live, 296  
Broadview, Toronto, \$50  
**Mike Sedgewick's Friday Night  
Blues Jam** 9:30 pm, Black Swan  
Tavern, 154 Danforth, Toronto

### Saturday, October 11

**Colin Linden (two nights)** 8:00 pm to  
11:00 pm, Hugh's Room Live, 296  
Broadview, Toronto, \$50  
**Coin Purse w/Chloe Watkinson** 8:30  
pm to 11:00 pm, The Emmet Ray, 924  
College St., Toronto, 416-792-4497, A  
new instrumental groove-funk-rock-  
blues band with special guest vocalist  
Chloe Watkinson, \$12  
**Jimmy's Juke Joint w/ host Jim  
Casson, guests Marty Allen &  
Kenny Lee** 9:00 pm to 11:30 pm,  
Lucky's at Fallsview Casino, 6380  
Fallsview Blvd, Niagara Falls,  
905-354-7775

### Sunday, October 12

**The Legendary Castaways** 7:00 pm,  
Linsmore Tavern, 1298 Danforth Ave,  
Toronto, 416-466-5130

### Wednesday, October 15

**Action Sound Band** 9:00 pm,  
Grossman's Tavern, 377 Spadina  
Ave., Toronto, (416) 977-7000

### Friday, October 17

**Mike Sedgewick's Friday Night  
Blues Jam** 9:30 pm, Black Swan  
Tavern, 154 Danforth, Toronto

### Saturday, October 18

**The Swingin' Blackjacks** 8:00 pm to  
10:00 pm, Noonan's Irish Pub, 141  
Danforth Ave, Toronto ON, 416 778  
1804, Hi-Octane Rockabilly &  
Roadhouse Blues

## Toronto Blues Society

# Volunteers Needed

Do you love Blues Music?  
TBS can use your help at our  
live events

More Info and Register at  
[info@torontobluesociety.com](mailto:info@torontobluesociety.com)



**Blowin' The Blues** feat. **Dan Walsh, Mark Stafford, Chris Nemeth, Dennis Rondeau, Chris Arsenault, Bob Boisclair** 8:00 pm, Polish Hall Brantford, 154 Pearl St., Brantford, 519-753-0414, \$20

#### Sunday, October 19

**Steve Marriner & Local Electric (matinee)** 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Busholme Inn, 156 Main St, Erin, 519-315-0315

**Little Magic Sam** 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, Rivoli (Pool Hall), 332 Queen Street W, Toronto, The Little Magic Sam Band brings their electric energy to the historic Rivoli pool lounge. No Cover

**Mike Sedgewick's Blues Revue** 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm, Linsmore Tavern, 1298 Danforth Ave, Toronto, 416-466-5130

#### Wednesday, October 22

**Matt Weidinger** 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Hugh's Room Live, 296 Broadview, Toronto

**Action Sound Band** 9:00 pm, Grossman's Tavern, 377 Spadina Ave., Toronto, (416) 977-7000

#### Friday, October 24

**Charlie A'Court** 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Hugh's Room Live, 296 Broadview, Toronto

**Charlie A'Court** 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm, Hugh's Room Live, 296 Broadview, Toronto, \$30

**The Hogtown Allstars** 8:30 pm to 11:30 pm, Stonewalls Restaurant, 339 York Blvd., Hamilton, 905-577-0808, "Hittin' The Hammer" Ticket info: <http://www.stonewallshamilton.com>, \$25.00

**Mike Sedgewick's Friday Night Blues Jam** 9:30 pm, Black Swan Tavern, 154 Danforth, Toronto

#### Sunday, October 26

**The Swingin' Blackjacks** 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, Smokeshow BBQ and Brew, 744 Mt Pleasant Rd, Toronto, 416-901-7469, Hi-Octane Rockabilly & Roadhouse Blues, \$15.00

**The Frank Cosentino Band** 7:00 pm, Linsmore Tavern, 1298 Danforth Ave, Toronto, 416-466-5130

**Ken Yoshioka** 9:00 pm, Grossman's Tavern, 377 Spadina Ave., Toronto, (416) 977-7000, Blues jam, PWYC

#### Wednesday, October 29

**Action Sound Band** 9:00 pm, Grossman's Tavern, 377 Spadina Ave., Toronto, (416) 977-7000

#### Friday, October 31

**The Johnny Max Band & Shawn Kellerman** 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Market Hall Performing Arts Centre, 140 Charlotte St, Peterborough, Johnny Max & Shawn Kellerman get together for the best in Blues & Soul - All Blues, No Filler

**Mike Sedgewick's Friday Night Blues Jam** 9:30 pm, Black Swan Tavern, 154 Danforth, Toronto

#### Saturday, November 1

**The Last Waltz – A Musical Celebration of The BAND** 8:00 pm to 11:30 pm, Uxbridge Music Hall, 16 Main St S., Uxbridge, See Website

#### Sunday, November 2

**Broke Fuse one-man blues band** 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Common Good Beer Co., 475 Ellesmere Rd., Scarborough, 416-639-6579

**Jimmy's Juke Joint w/ host Jim Casson, guests Carl Jennings & Matt Gormley of Freedom Train** 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Iggy's Pub & Grub, 115 Hwy 20 E., Fonthill, 905-892-6667

**Little Magic Sam** 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, Rivoli (Pool Hall), 332 Queen Street W, Toronto, The Little Magic Sam Band brings their electric energy to the historic Rivoli pool lounge. No Cover

**Erin McCallum** 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, Stonewalls Restaurant, 339 York Blvd., Hamilton, 905-577-0808, Full band performance. Tickets: [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com), 20 – 25

#### Wednesday, November 5

**Joe Bonamassa** 8:00 pm, Great Canadian Casino Resort @ Woodbine, 1133 Queens Plate Drive, Etobicoke



*Miss Emily will have the Album Release Show for 'The Medicine' at Hugh's Room Live, Friday, October 3rd, 2025. The album is due out on all platforms November 7th, produced by Colin Linden featuring new music written by Emily, Colin and Rob Baker. This performance will be the official unveiling of the new album.*

#### Sunday, November 9

**Jimmy's Juke Joint w/ host Jim Casson, guests Fergus Hambleton, Bruce Mack & Sam Weller of the Satalites** 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Iggy's Pub & Grub, 115 Hwy 20 E., Fonthill, 905-892-6667

#### Wednesday, November 12

**Guy Davis** 8:00 pm, Flato Markham Theatre, 171 Town Centre Blvd, Markham, 905-305-7469

#### Sunday, November 16

**Jimmy's Juke Joint w/ host Jim Casson, guests The Weber Brothers – Sam Weber & Ryan Weber** 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Iggy's Pub & Grub, 115 Hwy 20 E., Fonthill, 905-892-6667

**Little Magic Sam** 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, Rivoli (Pool Hall), 332 Queen Street W, Toronto, The Little Magic Sam Band brings their electric energy to the historic Rivoli pool lounge. No Cover

*Go to [www.torontobluessociety.com/events](http://www.torontobluessociety.com/events) to submit your GTA Blues Events to be included here as well as the TBS website and our weekly "Where it's At" e-blast.*

*As the MapleBlues goes all-digital starting with the March 2025 issue, we want to remind the blues community that it is our mission to spread the word on new releases. We invite all blues influencers and aficionados to send us reviews for new releases by Canadian blues artists (CDs, and EPs). If it has been previously published please advise so we can give credit.*



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Wednesday, November 19

**Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue** 8:00 pm, TD Music Hall – Allied Music Centre, 178 Victoria Street, Toronto, \$80

Sunday, November 23

**Jimmy's Juke Joint w/ host Jim Casson, guests Shawn Kellerman & James Rasmussen** 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Iggy's Pub & Grub, 115 Hwy 20 E., Fonthill, 905-892-6667

**Rocky Verweel and Queen City Blues** 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Smokeshow BBQ and Brew, 744 Mt Pleasant Rd, Toronto, 416-901-7469, Live Horn/ Guitar driven Blues and R&B, Tip jar

**Ken Yoshioka** 9:00 pm, Grossman's Tavern, 377 Spadina Ave., Toronto, (416) 977-7000, Blues jam, PWYC

**Jimmy's Juke Joint w/ host Jim Casson, guests Blair Packham & Steve Goldberger** 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Iggy's Pub & Grub, 115 Hwy 20 E., Fonthill, 905-892-6667

**Little Magic Sam** 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, Rivoli (Pool Hall), 332 Queen Street W, Toronto, The Little Magic Sam Band brings their electric energy to the historic Rivoli pool lounge. No Cover

Thursday, December 4

**Johnny Max's A Bluesy Christmas w Chuck Jackson & Cheryl Lescom** 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Fergus Grand Theatre, 244 St. Andrew St W, Fergus, (519) 787-1981, Your favourite Blues singers and all of your favourite Christmas songs and a whole ton of laughs!!

Muchas Gracias



*The ever-present volunteer and long-running board member and Volunteer Co-ordinator **Ed Parsons** has retired from his multiple roles supervising the newsletter mailing and herding the volunteer cats and will be sorely missed at TBS events where he was always handing out newsletters and telling folks about the the benefits of being a member. As Ed would say, "If you love the blues, join the TBS."*

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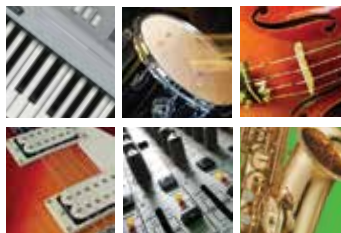
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## Concerts of Note

Miss Emily | Hugh's Room Live | Toronto | October 3  
 Christone "Kingfish" Ingram | Danforth Music Hall | Toronto | October 4  
 Colin Linden (two nights) | Hugh's Room Live | Toronto | October 10  
 Colin Linden (two nights) | Hugh's Room Live | Toronto | October 11  
 Matt Weidinger | Hugh's Room Live | Toronto | October 22  
 Charlie A'Court | Hugh's Room Live | Toronto | October 24  
 Joe Bonamassa | Great Canadian Casino Resort @ Woodbine | Etobicoke | November 5  
 Guy Davis | Flato Markham Theatre | Markham | November 12  
 Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue | TD Music Hall – Allied Music Centre | Toronto | November 19



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- **20% discount** on **Women's Blues Revue tickets** & exclusive early bird ticket access
- **Savings** on Advance Tickets to shows
- **10% off every purchase** from the **Dead Dog Records**, Toronto (1209 Bloor St. West)
- **TBS voting rights**
- **Discount** tickets to all **TBS events** (including TBS Workshops)
- **Discounts** on TBS merchandise purchases at TBS events
- **Exclusive** access to industry discounts, ticket giveaways, and more!

## Membership Options

**CHARTER MEMBERSHIP – \$50 for 1 year / \$95 for 2 years / \$135 for 3 years**

See benefits list above.

**FAMILY MEMBERSHIP – \$70 for 1 year / \$135 for 2 years / \$195 for 3 years**

Same benefits as CHARTER membership for a maximum of 2 adults and 2 children under 19.

**INSTITUTIONAL or BENEFACTOR MEMBERSHIP – \$125/year**

Same benefits as CHARTER membership, plus discounts on Maple Blues Newsletter advertising.

**STUDENT MEMBERSHIP – \$20/year**

Same benefits as CHARTER membership. (please include name of post-secondary institution)

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP – \$35/year**

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