

2008 Keeping the Blues Alive Award Recipients Synopsis

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY: VividPix & Design

Whether you are flipping through a copy of *Blues Revue*, *Living Blues*, reading *BluesWax*, looking at your favorite CD liner notes, enjoying a Blues Music Award or International Blues Challenge commemorative program, you have seen the work of Scott Allen and Jen Taylor of VividPix. While always Blues fans, the duo began working tirelessly for the genre they love in 1999. The pair has contributed their talents to numerous CD liners with their photography and design, including Grammy-nominated recordings and many Blues Music Award winners and nominees. In addition, the pair lends their time and talents to artists, promoters, and Blues Societies for web and other design projects. Their hard work and determination to help preserve Blues history has placed them atop the list of contemporary Blues photographers/designers and their commitment to excellence will keep them there.

BLUES CLUB: Knuckleheads Saloon

In just under five years, Knuckleheads Saloon has become the place to see live Blues in Kansas City and a popular travel destination for Blues fans to see their favorite bands. Frank Hicks and the folks at Knuckleheads Saloon had tough shoes to fill in Kansas City when they started booking Blues back in 2003. After the Kansas City Jazz and Blues Festival closed and the Grand Emporium changed hands, Blues fans were left with few Blues options. Hicks, who always booked bands for the parking lot of his Kansas City biker shop, shifted his business and opened KC's best Blues club. The club books both regional and national artists and has become a #1 stop for Blues artists traveling through the Midwest, as well as hosting an open jam every Saturday from 1:00-8:00pm. Since the club began booking Blues it has expanded its capacity and made many upgrades to the facility to make it a better place to see live music and sample KC barbecue.

BLUES ORGANIZATION: South Florida Blues Society

Founded in May 2002 after attending that year's W.C. Handy Blues Awards, the South Florida Blues Society is exactly what a Blues society should be - an organization that has united that area's Blues community. Under the guidance of Bob "Bluesbobby" Weinberg, they keep Blues artists and their art form going through Blues in the Schools programs, IBC local competitions, festival sponsorships, club gigs, an annual anniversary picnic, and by just going out to have fun enjoying live Blues music. They offer a website, a weekly 60+ page electronic newsletter, and the printed *Bluesletter* to keep their members in the know. The society raised \$6,200 for the American Red Cross Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund, produced a CD sampler featuring the best of South Florida's Blues artists, and have hosted Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise pre-parties. And more. Exactly what a Blues society should be and do.

EDUCATION: Fernando Jones

When Fernando Jones starts talking the Blues, students wake up. What began as a local initiative in the Chicago area schools in 1990, his "Blues Kids of America" today has spread across the country. His program provides oral history and music instruction and is designed to teach students literacy through music with a focus on the Blues. While refuting the many negative stereotypes that haunt this music, Jones is on a mission to show people the joy and beauty through academic implementations, lectures, and concert performances throughout the world. He recently presented his BITS program at the Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame's Summer Teacher Institute and Jones will soon be featured on the Travel Channel's *Wright Across America*. In addition, Jones is a professor at Columbia College in Chicago. He designed the "Chicago Blues Scene: Past to Preservation" and is the director of Columbia's Blues Ensemble. From books to films, from sound recordings to theatrical productions, his contributions to the Blues have been paramount.

FESTIVAL: Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival

The Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival stands out from other Blues festivals in the sense that it typically never repeats the same act. Cam Hayden and Carrol Deen, festival co-producers, want their audience to enjoy a unique experience year after year. Outside of working diligently on the festival, Carrol and Cam travel the

country visiting other Blues festivals and clubs in search of the next stellar performance. From Helena to Austin to Portland, they do their homework and continually book quality Blues entertainment. Labatt gets better every year and in 2007 the festival sold out. Not only do they take care of the audience with a top-notch lineup, but they take excellent care of the acts as well, as each artist enjoys a comfortable stay while visiting Edmonton.

FILM: *10 Days Out: Blues From the Backroads*

10 Days Out: Blues From the Backroads is an historic documentary in which Kenny Wayne Shepherd takes you on a 10-day journey meeting Blues pioneers such as the Music Maker Relief Foundation's Etta Baker, Cootie Stark, and Neal Pattman, as well as Blues elders B.B. King, Henry Townsend, Hubert Sumlin, Lazy Lester, Gatmouth Brown, Honeyboy Edwards, Pinetop Perkins, and many others. Since filming was completed, six of these artists have passed away, making the film's historic value immense. The acoustic and electric pairings provide these masters a platform to show the world how the Blues was intended to be heard. In addition to home visits, the film ends with a concert featuring the surviving members of both Muddy Waters' and Howlin' Wolf's bands. While Shepherd is present throughout, it is obvious his goal is to spotlight these inspiring veterans.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION: Mississippi Blues Commission and Mississippi Development Authority, Division of Tourism for the Mississippi Blues Marker Trail

The first time most of us traveled to Mississippi on a Blues pilgrimage, the directions went something like this. "Turn left at the second cotton field, follow the dirt road for a bit and look for the wooden church with the graveyard on the right." In 2003, the Mississippi Blues Commission was created as a state agency to ensure that the thousands of Blues fans who travel to the state could follow Blues history through a series of markers. This statewide system of trail markers features either a significant Blues musician or area important to the development of the Blues. While traveling from site to site, visitors can read detailed information about the State's seminal Blues artists. With the most up-to-date biographic information available, the State hopes that these markers will pay homage to these sites and keep the Blues alive for future Blues fans.

INTERNATIONAL: Blues sur Seine

Jean Guillermo has created an amazing multi-city festival in which Blues artists perform in various towns throughout the region of Mantes Le Jolie in France for 17 days. The festival includes 140 Blues events at 80 locations throughout 22 participating small and medium villages in Paris' western suburbs. What is remarkable is that they take this festival to the people. The artists who play the festival also perform in school, hospital, nursing homes, and prison settings. In its ninth year, the festival has presented over 350 bands with this unique experience. To educate the French audience, Blues sur Seine presents a Blues in the Schools program in advance of the annual event. In 2004, a team of fifteen teachers created a Teaching the Blues Guide, while in 2007 they are hosting a two-day "Teaching the Teachers" master class for Blues musicians and music teachers to develop classroom strategies. Jean Guillermo and his staff of professional and volunteers have immersed an entire region of France into the Blues culture.

INTERNET: STLBlues.net

David Beardsley has created this website to actively support local artists and organize charitable fund-raisers. The site is not solely about the local St. Louis Blues scene; it's national in scope as the launch of the Interactive Gig Calendar in 2007 permits bands everywhere to post their gigs, create Google maps to the gigs, and is free to all bands and fans. STLBlues.net also books and manages some of the best Blues talent St. Louis offers. The site also boasts a featured CD of the week, news items for the Blues fan, interviews with performers, CD and festival reviews, links to Blues societies and record labels, and an archive of materials back to 2003. With over six million hits per year, there is an enormous amount of Blues information for all fans.

JOURNALISM: Don Wilcock

Don Wilcock learned his craft as a music journalist under fire...literally. He began his career as an Army specialist writing about the original Woodstock Festival for *The Army Reporter* in Long Binh, Vietnam. He first wrote about Blues for Britain's *Blues World* before any national American Blues magazines existed. Today, he's a contributing editor to *Blues Revue* and *BluesWax*. He's been the music writer for *The Record*, a daily in Troy,

New York, for 33 years and his in-depth interviews appear in publications as diverse as *The Audiophile Voice*, *BluesWax*, The Blues Foundation's Blues Music Awards commemorative program, and *The Blues Festival Guide*. In 1993, Don wrote *Damn Right I've Got The Blues*, Buddy Guy's authorized biography. He was the long-time managing editor of the award-winning *King Biscuit Time* magazine. He is currently working on two books, one a biography of Eddie Shaw and the other a history of the King Biscuit Time radio program. He has a B.A. in English from Tufts University and is the founder and President of the Northeast Blues Society.

LITERATURE: Arthur Flowers

"There are those of us in African American literature who feel that we are heirs to two literary traditions, the western written tradition and the African oral one, and try in the fusion to contribute something to the evolution of both." - Arthur Flowers

Flowers was born and raised in Memphis and has been writing and teaching African-American literature at Syracuse University since 1996. A writer, teacher, and Bluesman, Flowers considers himself part of the African-American tradition of writers, incorporating the Blues and pieces of the mystical belief system hoodoo into his work. His books, *De Mojo Blues*, *Another Good Lovin' Blues*, and his most recent, *Mojo Rising: Confessions of a 21st Century Conjureman*, all continue the literary storytelling traditions of Zora Neale Hurston and others. *Another Good Lovin' Blues* is the one novel all Blues fans should read. Set in the Delta and Memphis in 1918, the novel chronicles the story of Lucas Bodeen, a Blues piano player, and Melvira Dupree, a hoodoo conjure woman. Bodeen accurately embodies the archetypal Bluesman, committed to playing an everlasting Blues. Melvira is trying to fuse the traditional and the contemporary, keeping hoodoo traditions alive. Both characters are charged with keeping a cultural tradition that heals the spirit alive. Flowers continues to offer timely observations on politics, literature, culture, struggle, and the Hoodoo Way on his rootwork the rootsblog: a cyberhoodoo webspace.

MANAGER: Michael Frank

In 1972, Michael Frank met David "Honeyboy" Edwards and Blind Jim Brewer, and they soon became fast friends. In 1973, Michael started booking Honeyboy and playing harmonica with him, as well as booking Jim Brewer. In 1976, Michael formed the Honeyboy Edwards Blues Band to get gigs in Chicago's burgeoning North Side club scene and they also continued to perform as a duo. Since those early years, Michael as manager and booking agent (and later biographer and producer), gradually built up Honeyboy Edwards' career from a local to an international touring schedule and celebrity as an elder Blues oral historian. Michael founded Earwig Music Company in 1978 and recorded Honeyboy and his friends Sunnyland Slim, Kansas City Red, Floyd Jones, and Big Walter Horton for the second release of the label - *Old Friends*. Earwig has subsequently released 40 Blues CDs. Michael also managed Brewer's career until his 1989 passing and in the mid 1990s, the career of Maxwell Street Jimmy Davis. Over the past 34 years, Michael's management and Honeyboy's talent and persistence have led Honeyboy to become the preeminent elder Blues statesman, a Delta Blues legend sought after for Blues documentary films and interviews about the early days of Delta Blues. Honeyboy and Michael have in the past two years performed over 100 shows per year worldwide.

PRINT MEDIA: Jefferson magazine

Whether or not you speak Swedish, every Blues fan will enjoy flipping through *Jefferson*, the Blues magazine named after country Bluesman Blind Lemon Jefferson. Founded in 1968 by a 16-year-old Blues fan, *Jefferson* magazine is celebrating its 40th year of keeping Blues alive around the world. The mandate from the start was to focus mainly on the African-American Blues artists and their music. As such, writers, photographers, and editors traveled regularly to the United States to interview and photograph its Blues subjects. In addition, American writers like Dick Shurman write, in English, about the Blues scene around Chicago and the West Coast. Even though it is published thousands of miles from the Delta, *Jefferson*, like so many foreign publications, keeps American Blues vibrant as a unique musical art form.

PRODUCER: Bruce Iglauer

You do the math. Over 100 strictly Blues albums since 1971, 24 Grammy nominations, and a slew of recordings that won Blues Music Awards. From his first effort producing Hound Dog Taylor and the Houserockers to his production of Koko Taylor's 2007 CD *Old School*, Bruce has always brought a professional's honest dedication

and a fan's passionate enthusiasm into the studio. The hundreds of recordings he has worked on have become essential to the canon of modern Blues. Not only has Bruce accurately captured the signature sound of Blues elders like Koko Taylor, Albert Collins, Lonnie Brooks, Carey Bell, James Cotton, Son Seals, and Katie Webster, Bruce has been instrumental in producing the unique sounds of new talent like Michael Burks, Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials, Little Charlie & the Nightcats, Kenny Neal, Saffire, and Shemekia Copeland. Whether acoustic, back porch, swingin' jump, or fiery Blues rock, Bruce Iglauer is always committed to bringing out the real Blues.

PROMOTER: Don Cohen

The late Don Cohen loved the Blues and promoted the Blues for much of his life. He was an "old school" promoter and was loved by the many who knew him and worked with him over the past quarter of a century. Most people knew Don as the owner of The Musicians Exchange and as the founder of Ft. Lauderdale's Riverwalk Blues Festival. He always took pride in the artists he worked with and loved to promote shows. He was always hustling to find gigs for both local and national artists. He started the Riverwalk Blues Festival in the mid 1980s and his name became synonymous with South Florida Blues. Don was always an honest, loyal, hard working guy that had a passion for the Blues and the musicians who played the Blues. Sadly, Don passed away in 2007 on his 55th birthday.

PUBLICIST: Mark Pucci

Mark Pucci has been serving the Blues for over 35 years in many capacities. Pucci began his career in 1972 in Memphis as music editor for a monthly entertainment magazine. In July 1974 he joined Capricorn Records in Macon, Georgia, first as a tour publicist and later as national publicity director. Some of the artists he worked with included the Allman Brothers Band, the Marshall Tucker Band, Sea Level, Wet Willie, Delbert McClinton, Gregg Allman, Dickey Betts, and Elvin Bishop. In 1979 he established his first independent publicity venture, Mark Pucci Associates, in Atlanta. After a four-year return stint with Capricorn Records as Vice-President of Publicity and later label General Manager, in the early 1990s Pucci returned to Atlanta and established Mark Pucci Media. His clients have included numerous artists on Alligator, HighTone, Black Top, M.C. Records, Antone's, Blue Bella, and Stony Plain as well as such independent Blues/roots artists as Charlie Musselwhite, Nappy Brown, Roy Buchanan, Tinsley Ellis, John Mayall, Al Kooper, Gary U.S. Bonds, Sugar Pie DeSanto, and William Bell.

RADIO (COMMERCIAL): Stew "Beef Stew" Crossen

Beef Stew has been the voice of the Blues on Connecticut radio for 12 years. His *Sunday Night Blues with Beef Stew* program airs for six hours on 106.9 WCCC, a 50,000-watt powerhouse rock station in Hartford. Beef Stew invites local and national Blues personalities into the studio for interviews and live performances. Out-of-state Blues events such as the Chesapeake Bay Blues, Six Flags Blues, Brews & BBQ, and the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise have called upon him for promotional services. *Sunday Night Blues with Beef Stew* is a top Arbitron ratings winner. Beef Stew supports the Connecticut Blues Society and previously served on its Board of Directors.

RADIO (PUBLIC): Holger Petersen

For 21 years Holger Petersen has hosted *Saturday Night Blues*, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's only nationwide Blues radio show. Every Saturday night, for two hours, he treats hundreds of thousands of Canadian listeners to every aspect of the Blues. For even longer, beginning in 1969, he has presented a regional show on the CKUA Network in Alberta called *Natch'l Blues*, which, not surprisingly, is the longest running Blues radio show in Canada. He also programs the BluesTime Channel on Galaxie, which presents 24/7 Blues via satellite and cable TV across Canada. Whether spinning records of every Blues genre and era or interviewing international Blues artists, his Saturday night shows are as legendary as *Hockey Night in Canada* on television. In addition, thirty years ago Peterson also founded Stony Plain Records, one of Canada's leading roots and Blues labels. His label includes over 330 releases by many Blues icons including current label mates Maria Muldaur, Duke Robillard, Jeff Healey, and Ronnie Earl. In addition, he helped found the Edmonton Folk Festival and served fifteen years on the board of SOCAN, the Canadian equivalent of ASCAP or BMI.

RECORD LABEL: NorthernBlues Music

Founded in 2000, NorthernBlues Music has become one of the most respected record labels in Blues. Founder Fred Litwin opened shop with Otis Taylor and in 2001 released Taylor's *White African* and received a Blues Music Award nomination for Blues Album of the Year. Since then, NorthernBlues has a vibrant artist roster that has included American Blues artists like Mason Casey, Janiva Magness, Mem Shannon, Eddie Turner, and Watermelon Slim, along with Canadians like JW-Jones and Paul Reddick. In a very short time, NorthernBlues recordings and artists have become routinely nominated for JUNO Awards, the Canadian equivalent of the Grammys, and Blues Music Awards. By featuring a roster that combines new, cutting edge artists and more established ones, NorthernBlues is setting the template for today's independent record companies.

RETAIL: Cat Head Delta Blues & Folk Art

There are a few "must visit" places in Clarksdale, including the Delta Blues Museum and Morgan Freeman's Ground Zero Blues Club, but equally high on that list is Roger Stolle's Cat Head store. After seven years of Delta journeys and a year of intense planning, Roger left St. Louis to start Cat Head Delta Blues & Folk Art in Clarksdale. Since opening its doors in 2002, it has featured a full selection of Blues CDs, videos, DVDs, books, and folk art. In describing the store's mission, Roger says, "From day one, the 'Cat Head Mission' has been to promote Mississippi and its Blues music from within. We have to sell product to stay alive, but in the end, it's more about promoting the music and the place that made it famous." After thousands of customers, over a dozen mini-Blues festivals, and even a record label featuring Blues Music Award-nominated Big George Brock, Roger continues to look for ways to use the Cat Head name to promote the Delta through its music.

SPONSOR: Mike Glenn, New Daisy Theater

Mike Glenn of the New Daisy Theater on historic Beale Street has been a generous sponsor and committed supporter of The Blues Foundation since the Foundation's earliest days. His New Daisy Theater has hosted countless Foundation events, including the 13th Annual Blues Music Awards in 1992, International Blues Challenge finals dating back to when they were just a short, post-King Biscuit Sunday afternoon event up through the recent standing-room only Saturday night marathons. Mike has always opened his club's doors to assist the Foundation with numerous post-Handy jams and fundraisers of all kind and has always been the go-to guy when the Foundation needed another Beale Street club or two to host the ever-growing IBC semi-finals. What people don't know about are the times when Mike donated the New Daisy for events without charge or quietly took care of bills when the Foundation was financially struggling. In those times, few people came forward with the sense that The Blues Foundation was worth saving and Mike Glenn was one of them.