

Preserving and Promoting the Blues in the Pacific NW

A bi-monthly publication of the Cascade Blues Association | cascadebluesassociation.org

bluesnotes



Jan/Feb 2024

Volume 38 | Issue 1 (FREE)

Photo by
Pat McDougall

International Blues Challenge

The best place to find Blues from around the world!

(See page 2)



Portland's opportunity to showcase our best Blues

Support our local bands

Have you ever wanted to see and hear some of the best live blues music from around the world?

What if you could do it in person without having to fly all over the US and beyond to do it?

The International Blues Challenge offers that and so much more. This renowned competition hosts music acts from around the world every January in Memphis, Tennessee. It is put on by the Blues Foundation and gives an opportunity to blues societies everywhere to showcase their local blues musicians that have won competitions in their own hometowns.

The annual event is celebrating its 39th year and has launched the careers of many successful blues artists. Notable blues artists that have competed



in the IBC over the years also includes Fiona Boyes, Eden Brent, Michael Burks, Tommy Castro, Sean Costello, Albert Cummings, Døvydas, Larry Garner, Zac Harmon, Homemade Jamz Blues Band, Howell-Devine, Richard Johnston, Julian Fauth, Super Chikan, Susan Tedeschi,

Southern Avenue, and Watermelon Slim

It is the world's largest gathering of blues musicians and also offers seminars, showcases, master classes, film screenings, networking events, book signings, and receptions for blues societies, fans, and professionals.

The Cascade Blues Association has participated for years in sending local musicians to the competition. The Kivett Bednar Band and the TJ Wong and Alec Donn solo duo won the honor to represent our great northwest during the competition held last July 4th at the Waterfront Blues Festival.

Other musicians from the Northwest have had the incredible experience of being on Beale Street during the IBC and have gone on to place in the finals. Karen Lovely and Ty Curtis won 2nd in the competition, Rae Gordon Band won 3rd and Ben Rice, Johnny Wheels and the Swamp Donkeys and Lucy Hammond also made the finals stage.

Musicians from around the world have made life-long friendships, connections and grown as not only musicians, but as humans. The experiences that happened on the famed Beale Street and ▶

Blues Notes is a publication of the Cascade Blues Association

Help us promote and preserve the lyrical emotion and sultry sounds of blues music in Portland, become a member! Visit <http://cascadebluesassociation.org> today!

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bluesnotes

► in the surrounding areas will live on in the hearts and minds of musicians and the fans forever.

One such musician is multi-Blues Music Award winner Lisa Mann. She was there in 2011 representing the Cascade Blues Association and was able to showcase her amazing vocals, band and original songs, along with her incredible bass playing. “We all had an absolute blast in Memphis and Clarksdale”, she says. “We got to see the Stax Museum, and that was like going to Mecca. Plus we got to see so many old friends, and make new ones too.”

She also made some connections that have lasted since then with musicians from other states including Diane Blue from Boston, who she calls amazing. “She knocked all of our socks off when we competed against each other at BB King's.”, she explains. “She contacted me soon after and we did a bunch of shows together in the Northeast as well as the Northwest. Now we're lifelong friends for sure.”

The International Blues Competition isn't just a way to see the best

from around the world on just one round-trip plane ticket - it's putting the community in music community - one song, one person at a time.

That's her main takeaway from this exciting competition that celebrates blues in all of its forms from all over the world. That it's truly about having fun, meeting amazing people, and sometimes sharing the stage with them. She finishes “It's important to work hard and give it your all, but you can't get hung up on winning or losing. The IBCs are a celebration of Blues music and the people who love it!”

And that is really what music is all about, togetherness and those precious connections. *That makes us all winners.*



To follow the Journey to Memphis artists follow along on Facebook.com/cascadebluesassociation and on our website CascadeBluesAssociation.org. To learn about the IBC, go to blues.org/international-blues-challenge.

More in twenty-24

Blues by You!

Dear Blues Lovers: thank you for loving live music and showing up in person to see so many amazing acts this past year. We saw more support in 2023 for our local greats and the talent touring through our beautiful states of Oregon and Washington then we have in a few years. While we may not have consistent pre-pandemic size crowds yet in our wonderful venues, we are getting closer! 2024 is gearing up to be even more exciting with more opportunities to watch our favorites and discover new ones at a number of venues and other establishments that are growing their music programs.

We will be honoring the musicians, venues and festivals that brought you the best in the northwest during 2023 at the Muddy Awards on January 28th, 2024 at the Alberta Abbey in Portland. This is our region's annual opportunity to celebrate all the great music we have seen and heard and



the people who helped make it happen. That includes you! The fact that you picked up the BluesNotes in a venue that hosts live blues music, means that you supported that business and that helps us all keep the blues alive and well!

If you are not a member of the Cascade Blues Association, please join us this year and join our mission to preserve and promote the blues. It's only \$25!

May we all enjoy more, more, more in 2024!

Your Partner in the Blues,

Rae Gordon
(CBA President)

Blues not to miss!

Check Out These Upcoming Showcases!

The CBA hosts regular showcases, on the first Wednesday of every month, highlighting local and touring acts in the Portland area. Open to the public, these shows also provide an opportunity to hear about upcoming shows, win prizes, and meet other live music fans!

On January 3rd the CBA welcomes performances by Journey to Memphis winners

Kivett Bednar Band and the TJ Wong & Alec Donn Duo. Both acts will be headed to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, Tennessee January 16th to 20th to compete representing the Cascade Blues Association and our area.

February Showcase is yet to be announced.

Showcases start at 6:30pm and are free to CBA members (well worth the \$25 membership fee!) and only \$5 for the public. All ages are welcome so you can bring the family!

New Location until June 2024: Mekong Bistro, 8200 NE Siskiyou St, Portland (the cross street is 82nd Ave).

Blues on Tour

There are some terrific artists coming our way in early 2024. Let's get out and support live music!

Jan 17 Victor Wooten & Wooten Brothers Sweat Tour (revolutionhall.com)

Jan 28 - Feb 4 Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise #40 (bluescruise.com)

Feb 9 Mark Hummel's Harmonica Blowout w/



Mark Hummel

Lee Oskar et al. *2 shows* (jacklondonrevue.com)

Feb 11 Gov't Mule (roslandpdx.com)

Feb 16 Jon Batiste at the Schnitzer (portland5.com)

Feb 17 & 18 Cory Wong featuring Monica Martin (revolutionhall.com)

Mar 4 Tommy Emmanuel, CGP at the Newmark (portland5.com)

Monthly Showcase

January 3rd 6:30PM

NEW LOCATION

Mekong Bistro
8200 NE Siskiyou St, Portland

Members - FREE
Non-members \$5
~ Open to the public
~ All ages welcome!



Kivett Bednar Band and TJ Wong & Alec Donn Duo

► **Mar 7** Coco Montoya
(albertarosestheater.com)

Mar 7 Aladdin: The
Record Company Roll With
It Tour (aladdin-theater.com)

Blues, Roots & a lil' bit Country at The Artichoke!

by Shelley Garrett, Arti-
choke Executive Director

Jan 5 & Feb 2 Lloyd
Jones "First Fridays" guests
TBA check for tickets

Jan 12 Sam Leyde-
Americana songwriter (Jan
Lowry's son) special solo
acoustic show

Jan 26 Arlo Leach cele-
brates National Kazoo Day!
r

Jan 28 Cuchulain/Jenner
Fox (Americana)

Feb 16 Mark Hanson &
Greta Pederson

Fundraisers for Artichoke!

Jan 6 Shirley Nanette &
the Beacon Street Titans-
Jump Blues, R&B

Jan 10 Woodlander...
Formed from the acoustic
kernel of Wheatfield
(Oregon Music Hall of
Fame inductees 2011)
at DeNicola's Italian
Restaurant

Jan 20 Mary Flower and
True North Duo

Artichoke supports Music
Portland and Music Oregon

and is a proud partner of
Portland Music Month. A
portion of your ticket price
will be donated to the Echo
Fund to support local music
creators. Find out more here
and check out artichokemu-
sic.org to find shows that
are participating.

AND Join them on Jan 22
as they host a free Music
Portland member meet up
"Sound Legal" presented by
Michael Jonas and the folks
at Rational Unicorn Legal
Services to learn about
issues facing independent
musicians.

Blues in Town

Every night of the week in
January and February, you
can find live music shows
and jams.

Billy Blues, Vancouver

- Tuesdays - Ben Rice &
the Hustle



Ben Rice

- Blue Diamond, Portland
- Thursday - Fenix Project
- Sundays - Kevin Selfe
Jam

Jack London Revue, Portland

- Jan 4 - Curtis Salgado
- Feb 9 - Mark Hummel's
Harmonica Blowout
- Feb 29 - Mel Brown B3
Organ Group

Cascade Tavern, Vancouver

- Jan 20 - Big Dave Band
- Jan 26 - Scott Steele
Band
- Feb 17 - Big Dave Band ►

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► Catfish Lou's, Beaverton

- Mondays - Dave Fleischner Jam
- Tuesdays - Cascade Zydeco DJ Dance & Lesson

The Garages, Lake Oswego

- Jan 7 - Dave & Bill Music Variety Show
- Jan 7 - Mel Brown Organ Trio
- Feb 3 - Ty Curtis
- Feb 24 - Billy D & the Hoodoos Release Party

The Lair, Milwaukie

- Thursdays - 145 Jam with Chad Rupp

Tigardville Station, Tigard

- Thursdays - Jam

Trails End Saloon, Oregon City

- Sundays - Jason Thomas Jam

White Eagle, Portland

- Mondays - Chad Rupp Jam

bluesnotes

Note: This calendar is not meant to be a complete list of all the great blues in town for the month of January and February. Please make sure to check the calendars of venues and your favorite blues acts for up-to-date and detailed information.

To submit your dates for the March/April BluesNotes, please send your information to president@cascade-blues.org.

Cascade Blues Association is proud to present the Muddy Awards on Sunday, January 28th. This night of live music and awards has been a long-time tradition of the CBA for over 20 years, honoring bands, solo artists, festivals and events in our music community. It is now back after a hiatus.

This ceremony that honors notable and outstanding Blues for 2023 will take place at the Alberta Abbey (126 N. Alberta Street, Portland). Tickets will be available online at AlbertaAbbey.org and you won't want to miss this celebration of the best in northwest blues!

CASCADE BLUES ASSOCIATION

Celebrating the Best in Northwest Blues

SUNDAY JAN 28TH

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Spotlight: The Revival Brothers Band

by David Spacek

50 Years in the Making

Do you remember the first time that you heard The Allman Brothers Band? On the radio, at the record store, or in person? For some, it was one of their first three albums, none of which sold well, but contained many of their classics still listened to today. For the masses, it was *Live At Fillmore East* in July of 1971 from The Allman Brothers LIVE that captured what they couldn't replicate in the studio.

Local drummer, Jeff Frankel, grew up on Long Island in a musical family with, as he called them, permissive parents. Jeff and his teenage buddy, Ed Berman, would travel into NYC for shows at the Fillmore East and the Allman Brothers Band quickly became one of their favorites. In fact, Frankel and Berman were in the front row for the March 1971 dates when *Live At The Fillmore East* was recorded. The Fillmore East closed at the end of June 1971 and Jeff and Ed were at the last show that included Albert King, J Geils, and the Allman Brothers jamming well into the morning. But wait, there's more.

Jeff and Ed continued to follow the band and had



tickets for their show on July 21st at The Huntington Theater. While the opening band was playing, Frankel was waiting in line, and noticed some of the road crew heading over to the backstage entrance, so he asked someone to hold his place and scurried over to the backstage entrance. Jeff said to one of the guys "hey you're on the back of the Allman Bros album," and the guy says, "no man, I am on the front, I'm Dickey Betts!" Jeff said "sorry!" Dickey said "no worries" and invited Jeff backstage. Once backstage, Jeff met Red Dog and sat him down behind the PA two feet away from Greg's B3. This began a relationship that lasted through the summer of 1971 until Duane's passing in October. These memories during their ascendency, backstage at most shows, and socializing (if you know what I

mean), created a bond with the band during the peak of their short period of time with both Allman Brothers. Jeff and Ed were dubbed by Jaimoe and Butch "Mutt and Jeff."

Fast forward to last November, Jeff met Brady Goss and that dream was realized when they formed The Revival Brothers Band in preparation for The Tigard Balloon Festival on June 23, 2023. I missed that show. In August, I heard that Kevin Selfe is joining The Revival Brothers Band, while still fronting his own band, and will be stepping in for the role of Dickey Betts. They were gearing up for a show at The Trails End in October, opening for the Brady Goss's band, and I didn't miss this one. Impressed that this 7 piece band with 2 drum kits, 2 keyboards, 2 guitars, bass, plus percussion fit on stage for a sound as tight as it

was onstage! As an Allman Brothers fan, seeing those two goldtop Les Paul's and two kits was visually appealing, but when I closed my eyes to listen, it was like magic. I was transported back in time.

The Revival Brothers Band features the legendary Chuk Barber on percussion and sharing vocals with Brady Goss on keys, Justin DeFreece on Les Paul slide, Kevin Selfe on the other Goldtop lead, Timmer Blakey on bass, with Jerry Jacques and Frankel trading beats. Each band member is an all-star player that we could feature, so due to space limitations, look them up, or catch their next show in 2024!

You don't reach that level without putting in the work. These guys have put the work in and their official launch was November 28th at the Mekong Bistro and they played to an SRO packed house. And get this, The Mekong recently expanded their stage that houses the Bayou Boys on Monday Nights, enlisted Bobby P Productions, and did a full house lighting upgrade, and the results are stunning for this outstanding venue is NE Portland.

Look for upcoming shows at revivalbrothersband.com. Submit your band for a spotlight to president@cascadeblues.org

Music in Motion

Upcoming tunes

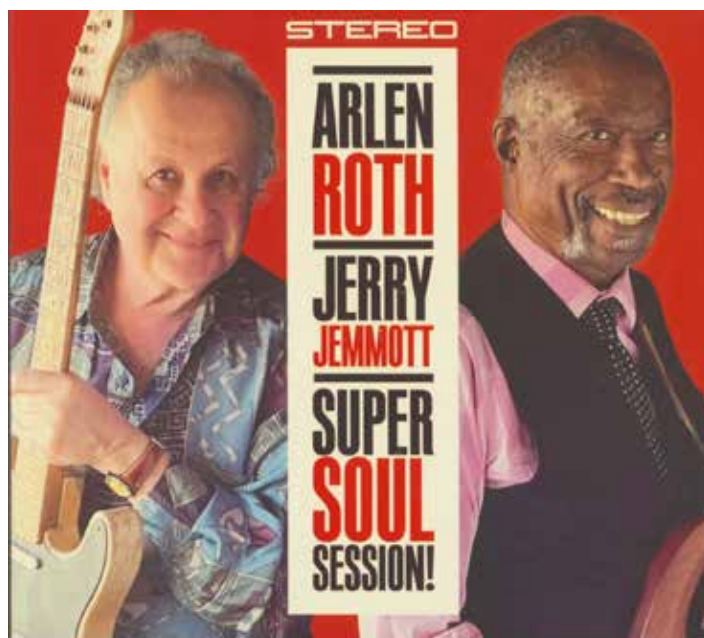
In each edition of Blues-Notes we'll catalog all the new music we receive and add a brief review on those recordings of special merit. If you come across any new recording you'd like to see on the list, drop us a line at bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org - Randy Murphy

If I May (Gee Wee Productions) by G. Weevil:

Any album that includes a tune called "Spy Balloon Blues" deserves a shout out, and it helps if it's a terrific song too. Hungarian-born guitarist Little G. Weevil's new album constantly delights with its collection of tight, spooky blues.

Super Soul Session Blue Heart Records by Arlen Roth and Jerry Jemmott

Guitarist Arlen Roth and Bassist Jerry Jemmott, both renowned session players, have assembled an impressive list of musicians, including keyboardist Bruce Katz and drummer Chris Parker, for this groove-infused collection of cover tunes; it doesn't disappoint. Roth and Jemmott picked an wide-ranging selection of tunes—from "Chain of Fools," to "The Weight" to "(Your Love Keep Lifting Me) Higher and Higher"—and they manage to breathe life into every one of



these songs, not an easy accomplishment with such well-known warhorses. In fact, their version of "Drift Away," outshines Dobie Gray's original—to my ears anyway. This album's a treat and an absolute hoot. Highly Recommended.

Dirt Woman Blues (Blue Heart Records) by Gráinne Duffy

This appealing and eclectic recording, the fifth from Ireland's soulful Gráinne Duffy, mixes solid, bottom-heavy blues rock with a healthy dose of Celtic mysticism and a dash of the Delta. And with the tune, "What's It Gonna Be" there's even a terrific side trip to Southern California (circa 1978) that would've slid comfortably into anyone's 8-track back in the day. Highly Recommended.

Back to Baton Rouge (Nola Blue Records) Lil' Jimmy Reed with Ben Levin:

85-year-old Lil' Jimmy Reed has joined up with pianist Ben Levin for a superb assortment of original tunes and covers. Here Reed and his comrades pay tribute to a wide selection of classic blues and R&B—including Elmore James, Slim Harpo, and a splendid rendition of Chuck Berry's "In the Wee Wee Hours"—along with the music of Reed's native Louisiana.

Gallery of Echoes (Out of the Past Music) by Steve Howell

It's a tough assignment nowadays to find a new recording that offers an authentic musical experience, but Steve Howell's new record does the trick.

From Blind Willie McTell's "Statesboro Blues," to Rev. Gary Davis's "Twelve Gates to the City," to Blind Lemon Jefferson's "Easy Rider Blues," Howell's sublime finger-picking guitar style and calloused, world-weary voice instills all these well-known tunes with an emotional vitality that's rarely heard today—Howell's version of the traditional tune "All My Friends are Gone" is simply glorious. I must admit that this album, shorn of any pretension or posturing, fits precisely into my prejudice for honest Americana music; I'm a dead sucker for this stuff. Highly Recommended.

Cruisin' Kansas City (Blue Heart Records) by Mike Bourne Band

This is not the recording to play when the in-laws stop by for Sunday brunch. This is kick-in-the-bum, crack-on-the-jaw, fire-breathing, Kansas City blues, and it's a real keeper. Turn it up—the neighbors will thank you.

Who Needs This Mess!?? (Cross Cut Records) by Frank L. Goldwasser (Paris Slim)

This record contains a real treat: an epic 2014 performance of Elmore James's "Bleeding Heart" at our own Waterfront Blues Festival. But there's much more here to recommend than ▶

► just that one cut. French native Goldwasser—or, if you prefer, “Paris Slim”—has put together a winning assortment of tunes, but the highlight is certainly the title tune “Who Needs This Mess!?!?” where Sugararray Rayford, Charlie Musselwhite, Kirk Fletcher, and Jim Pugh join in for a gritty good time.

Songs of Beauty for Ashes of Realization (Treated and Released Records) by Reverend Freakchild

Perhaps it's the obvious echoes of the Grateful Dead, its unique tack to the blues or just the sheer cheek of the tunes, but this appealing treasury of music latches on and refuses to let go. Is it blues? Sure, I suppose so—at least in spots, but that's probably not the right question. Here you'll find funk, straight-ahead rock, country, trippy psychedelia, delta blues; you name it—and it's nothing if not

fun. The band's killer too. Highly Recommended.

Other Releases

- Joanne Broh Band: Head Full of Trouble. Double Y Records
- Joel Astley: Seattle to Greaseland. Blue Heart Records
- Lady J. Huston: Groove Me Baby. Earwig Music
- Mark Cameron: Nasty Business. Blue Heart Records
- Mike Guldin: the Franklin Sessions. Blue Heart Records
- Skylar Burrell: Broken 45's. Independent
- The Name Droppers: Blue Diamonds. Horizon Music Group
- Tim Woods: For You. Tim Woods Music
- Willie J. Campbell: Be Cool. Blue Heart Records

The Blues Bash I

FREE: All Ages OK - Public Welcome

When: 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 - 9:30pm

Where: Aurora Borealis, (16708 Aurora Ave. N. Shoreline)

The Blues Bash II

No Cover: 21+

When: 4th Tues, 7:00 - 9:30pm

Where: CCR Sport & Entertainment, (215 Cypress Ave. Snohomish)



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Weekly Blues Jams

Monday

- Catfish Lou's, Beaverton w/Dave Fleschner (youth friendly)
- White Eagle, Portland w/Chad Rupp

Wednesday

- Jack's Tap Room, Portland, Wed w/Eric Rabe & Toby Worthington

Thursday

- Celebrities Parkway Grill, Fairview w/Eric Rabe, Eric Savage
- The Lair, Milwaukie w/Chad Rupp

- Tigardville Station, Tigard w/Dan Hess

Sundays

- Blue Diamond, Portland w/Kevin Selfe
- Montavilla Station, Portland w/Scott Steele and Kirk Bryant
- Trails End Saloon, Oregon City w/Jason Thomas

Information subject to change and may not be complete. Please confirm with the venue directly. Send your jam to president @cascadeblues.org

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Live in London

Music Review



Christone “Kingfish” Ingram on Alligator Records

Before I began this review of Christone “Kingfish” Ingram’s new live album, *Live in London*, I went back and reread my 2019 review of his debut recording, *Kingfish*. In that review, I wrote that if Ingram wasn’t already on the short list of greatest living blues guitarists, he wouldn’t have long to wait. Turns out, he had about four years.

Live albums can be tricky. Capturing the energy of such a combustible performer as Ingram is not an easy chore, but this album, recorded at the venerable Highbury club The Garage, manages to pull it off. In fact, if I have a quibble, it’s that the recording is perhaps a bit too pristine. I prefer live



albums, particularly live blues albums, to sound like live albums: a little rough and a little gritty. This recording is nearly flawless and sounds terrific — perhaps too terrific. As I said, this is just a quibble. If you’re able, spring for the vinyl edition of the recording as it has a bit more edge and bite to it than the digital version.

Ingram debuts two new numbers during this live set, “Mississippi Night” a blistering instrumental, and “Midnight Heat” a rollicking, funk-infused tune that would sound right at home in a Gordon Parks film. He also includes various tunes

from his earlier releases and adds a fierce and incendiary cover of Michael Burks’s “Empty Promises” that reveals Ingram’s growth as a singer. For me, this tune is the highlight of an album that’s simply chock-full of amazing performances.

Ingram’s band, Christopher Blackmon on drums, Paul Rogers on bass, and Deshawn “D-Vibes” Alexander on piano and Hammond B3 organ, is as tight as they come and provides the perfect backdrop for Kingfish.

Ingram is such a stylistic chameleon that it’s

by Randy Murphy

difficult, and not too helpful, to contrast him to other guitarists; pick any classic blues guitarist from the last, say, 100 years or so, and you’d probably find an apt comparison. What so impresses about Ingram’s playing is his seemingly effortless mastery of musical genres: soul, traditional blues, blues rock, funk — they’re all here, and Ingram shifts easily between them with guile and grace.

Total Time: 1:45:26

Available on CD, Digital Download, and Vinyl.

- *Disc One: She Calls Me Kingfish /*
- *Fresh Out /*
- *Another Life Goes By /*
- *Empty Promises /*
- *Hard Times /*
- *Mississippi Night /*
- *Been Here Before /*
- *Something In the Dirt*
- *Disc Two: You’re Already Gone /*
- *Listen / Rock & Roll /*
- *Not Gonna Lie /*
- *Midnight Heat /*
- *Outside of This Town /*
- *662 /*
- *Encore Intro /*
- *Long Distance Woman*

Black & White Together

By J.F. Walsh Jr.

The Origin of the Blues (part 5)

Slavery introduced Africans to European music and instruments and introduced Europeans to African styles of playing. Colonial newspapers indicate that slaves learned to play flutes, horns, keyboards, and, especially, fiddles. We also know that African-American fiddlers were in high demand at white dances. Africans also made an African instrument in slavery, the banjo, and there are many stories of whites learning to play the banjo from African-American teachers. The most important learner was Joel Sweeney, who would establish the first minstrel style of banjo and pass it on to others.



**Scoop Neck
Banjo, 1865**



Fisk University Singers

Although it had roots going back to the 18th century, minstrelsy--a national disgrace--achieved its set form and first musical style in the 1840s. Most minstrel songs owed more to Ireland and Scotland than to Africa (ex., "Zip Coon," later known as "Turkey in the Straw"). But the Irish-Scots style of melody was absorbed by blacks as well as whites, and such songs as "Jump Jim Crow" may have had black origins despite their Gaelic elements.

Other minstrel songs had more obvious African-American origins ("De Boatman Dance"). And the performance styles of minstrel songs had genuine African-American characteristics (certain kinds of syncopation, rough

vocalizing, African-influenced banjo styles, the use of bones as a rhythm instrument). Indeed some minstrel songs became popular among blacks, including among black slaves (exs. "Old Dan Tucker," "Jim along Josey"). Minstrel verses became part of the African-American folk tradition.

But the white imitation of blacks in minstrelsy was not only degrading; it also wasn't very good. While it had African elements, it was too narrow a slice of black music, and it was too white. Something different was needed to bring a more genuine African-American music to white audiences.

That something arrived in 1871. The Fisk University Singers were sent on tour

to raise money for their college. They had originally sung European art songs and popular songs, but they added spirituals to their repertoire about 1869. These songs, sung in a style influenced by European art music, had a tremendous impact as the Singers toured North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia. They were the first exposure of most white Americans to African-American music other than minstrelsy, and they whetted white American tastes for other kinds of black music. This would encourage the growth of African-American influenced popular songs, including songs that would influence the style of some kinds of blues and would also contribute to the floating verses available to blues performers.

Next time, the African-American postwar folk tradition.



J.F. Walsh, Jr. is a music historian and ex-New York streetfighter. Questions? Email him at Vito-JW51@gmail.com

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