



Ottawa BLUES Society

# OBScene

Winter 2011

## Ottawa Maple Blues Awards



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## In this issue ...

... OBS News and Updates; CD reviews of many nominees at the 15<sup>th</sup> Maple Blues Awards; Maple Blues Awards results, following the Awards Ceremony held at Toronto's Koerner Hall on Monday, January 16; and information on the Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge which will be held in Memphis TN, January 31- February 4, including the new Ottawa Blues Society/Montreal Blues Society co-venture, the 1<sup>st</sup> Great Canadian Polar Bear Blues Showcase to be held at the Kooky Canuck Restaurant on Thursday, February 2, 2012.

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### OBS CONTACTS

**Website:** [www.OttawaBluesSociety.com](http://www.OttawaBluesSociety.com)

**E-mail:** [ottawabluesociety@gmail.com](mailto:ottawabluesociety@gmail.com)

### CORRESPONDENCE AND ADDRESS CHANGES

Ottawa Blues Society  
P.O. Box 8124, Station "T"  
Ottawa, ON K1G 3H6

### OBS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND DIRECTORS

**President:** Liz Sykes

**Acting Vice President:** Gary Paradis

**Secretary:** Cleo Evans

**Directors:** Dave Brennan, Brent Diab, Denis Paquin, Debra Thornington

**Treasurer:** Gary Paradis

**Legal Advisor:** Doug Smyth

### OBS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Corporate Liaison:** Brent Diab

**Membership:** Dave Brennan

**Merchandise:** Denis Paquin

**OBS DAWG'ON BLUES:** Debra Thornington

**Volunteers:** Dave Brennan

**Website Liaison:** Cleo Evans

### OBScene STAFF

**Editor:** Liz Sykes

**Proofreader:** Gary Paradis

**Design:** Commeleon Inc.

**Printer:** TEKA

**Writers:** James Doran, Sarah French, JW-Jones, Gary Paradis, Liz Sykes

**Photographers & Graphics:** Eddy Earwig, Alison Edgar, Kathy Gillespie, Nik Schnell, Doug Smyth, Liz Sykes, Eric Thom, [www.jw-jones.com](http://www.jw-jones.com), [www.rootsmusic.ca](http://www.rootsmusic.ca)

**POLAR BEAR SHOWCASE GRAPHICS:** Irene Ippersiel

**COVER PHOTO:** Doug Smyth

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### From the Editor ...

It's been a busy 2012 so far, with the Maple Blues Awards in Toronto, and preparations for the 1st Great Canadian Polar Bear Blues Showcase in Memphis in conjunction with the International Blues Challenge (more info on pages 14-15).

I was honoured to be chosen by the Toronto Blues Society Board as the recipient of this year's Blues Booster of the Year award. The Maple Blues Gala was great fun, as always - it's like a family reunion and, given the size of our country, offers an annual opportunity to see and catch up with friends one may not see other than at national events such as this one. On page 7, you can read what I said as I accepted the award - on behalf of the OBS Board and all of you.

Ottawa Blues fans were pleased to hear that our own MonkeyJunk again came away from the Maple Blues Awards with some 'hardware' (actually Plexiglas, but I digress!) A particularly fulfilling award was that of 'Recording of the Year' for their sophomore CD "To Behold" (see brief review, page 18). It was a resounding 'thumbs-up' for this eclectic disc, and very well-deserved. Former Ottawa resident Suzie Vinnick picked up important awards as well, including the coveted 'Songwriter of the Year' for her all-blues release, "Me 'n' Mabel". It's also one of the five finalists in the Blues Foundation's Best Self-Produced CD competition and the winner will be announced at the IBC on Saturday, February 4. Go Suzie!

Liz Sykes  
[lizblues@rogers.com](mailto:lizblues@rogers.com)

### OBS Mission

To foster appreciation, promotion, preservation and enjoyment of the blues in all of its forms

### OBS Mandate

To bring together the blues community in Ottawa through participation in blues events and activities.

To work with the blues community in expanding awareness and appreciation of the blues.

To publish a newsletter to inform the blues community of all aspects of the local blues scene and events as well as some highlights of the Canadian and international blues scenes of interest to OBS members.

To provide timely blues information to OBS members by a website & e-mail.

To develop, maintain and increase its membership as a means of fostering and supporting blues.

To stage or assist in staging events that will foster appreciation and awareness of the blues.

To present a "Blues Heart" award to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the blues.

# OBS 2011 in Review

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## PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT - OBS 2011 in Review

### January

4 OBS Board members attended workshops & showcases at Blues Summit 5 in Toronto. Al Wood & the Woodsmen were showcased to a very receptive audience. MonkeyJunk won 3 Maple Blues Awards - Electric Act of the Year, Harmonica Player of the Year (Steve Marriner) & Drummer of the Year (Matt Sobb winning his 1<sup>st</sup> Maple Blues Award).

### February

DAWG FM began a series of blues showcases called Studio DAWG, held at Greenfield's Pub. OBS Board members & friends braved the huge storm to travel to Memphis for the International Blues Challenge; the weather played havoc with luggage. Our inaugural duo, Brandon Agnew & Benny Gutman overcame technical difficulties (sound feedback) & won the crowd over with their persistence! Although they didn't advance to the Semi-Finals, they did us proud! Al Wood & the Woodsmen experienced adversity - guitarist Marty Sobb's guitar didn't make the connecting flight to Memphis. In true 'when life hands you lemons, make lemonade/margaritas' philosophy, Marty found a guitar on Craigslist & in 1<sup>st</sup> round competition, played his 'new-to-him' Fender Telecaster! He brought it back to Ottawa & it has a new home ... new owner Al Wood has fondly named it 'Memphis'! Al & his Woodsmen put on 2 sizzling sets at the Rum Boogie Café & advanced to semi-final competition, but did not advance to the finals (no Canadian band made it). Harrison Kennedy gave a wonderful performance in the Solo/Duo finals & was runner up to winners, George Schroeter & Marc Breitfelder.

### March

OBS co-sponsored 2 screenings of Rita Chiarelli's documentary "Music From The Big House" at the Mayfair Theatre.

### April

Our first OBS member-only ticket giveaway - 3 lucky OBS members won tickets to see Joe Bonamassa.

### May

In OBS ticket giveaway #2, 2 members won free CDs & tickets to see Dylan Wickens at the Rainbow. OBS R2M Solo/Duo challenge held 2 qualifying rounds at the Atomic Rooster & finals at Irene's Pub. 5 entries of the original 11 competed in the finals - Dan Summerville, Kelly Prescott & Anders Drerup, Al Tambay, Al Wood & Simon Meilleur, & Jeff Hagerman. Judges Irene Ippersiel, Mark Hall & Alan Marsden chose Kelly Prescott & Anders Drerup to go to the IBC.

### June

DAWG FM celebrated their 1-year anniversary. 2 members won tickets for 2 to see David Gogo at the Rainbow.

### July

OBS manned a kiosk at Bluesfest. 2 members won tickets for 2 to see Ross Neilsen & Bluestone & a CD from each.

### August

2 winners got a free CD & tickets for 2 to see the 24<sup>th</sup> Street Wailers at the Rainbow in our 5<sup>th</sup> ticket giveaway. OBS was a sponsor of the Inaugural Class Axe Calabogie Blues & Ribfest at Calabogie Peaks. The lineup was all Canadian - OBS Solo/Duo IBC entrants, Kelly Prescott & Anders Drerup & the Van Meters band opened the festival on Friday; Sunday, all 3 of OBS Road To Memphis bands to date were featured - Al Wood & The Woodsmen, the Jesse Greene Band & MonkeyJunk, who closed the festival. OBS DAWG'ON BLUES celebrated our 1-year anniversary.

### September

A lucky OBS member won our 6<sup>th</sup> ticket giveaway - 2 tickets to see Daddy Long Legs at the Elmdale House Tavern & a CD grab bag from Busted Flat Records. 13 bands entered our R2M Band competition. 3 qualifying rounds were held; Big Chill, Terry Gillespie Trio, Victor Nesrallah Band, Bluestone, the Yohawks & Lil' Al's Combo advanced to the finals. Finals judges Bruce Boucher, James Doran & Lynn Saxberg chose The Terry Gillespie Trio to go to the 28<sup>th</sup> IBC.

### October

OBS member ticket giveaway #7 was 2 tickets to see Chris Antonik at the Rainbow & a copy of Chris' first solo CD. OBS DAWG'ON BLUES expanded our weekly program to a full hour.

### November

Our last ticket giveaway was tickets for 2 & the latest release of Douglas Watson's R&B Revue. In 2011, 14 OBS members won tickets & CDs in this member-only promotion. MapleBlues Awards nominations were announced; leading the nominations - Ottawa's MonkeyJunk with 7 nominations (Entertainer of the Year, Electric Act of the Year, Recording of the Year, Male Vocalist & Harmonica Player of the Year [Steve Marriner], Drummer of the Year [Matt Sobb] & Songwriter of the Year for Steve, Tony & Matt). The Awards will be presented at the MapleBlues Gala at the prestigious Koerner Hall in Toronto, Monday, January 16. No Canadians are among this year's Blues Foundation's Keeping the Blues Alive Awards nominees.

### December

The fall Bureau of Broadcast Measurement ratings came out - DAWG increased their share in key demographic categories.

## Where's Blues in Ottawa ...

For the latest news of  
who's on at the venues

- ♪ Tune in to 101.9 DAWG FM
- ♪ Tune in to CKCU 93.1 blues & jazz radio shows for listings, Sunday 9 pm with John Tackaberry & Wednesday 9 pm with Ron Sweetman
- ♪ Check for live regular and special events at the OBS web site: <http://www.OttawaBluesSociety.com>
- ♪ Check the going-out guides & venue ads :  
Thursdays in the Ottawa Xpress  
Saturdays in the Ottawa Citizen  
Wednesdays & Fridays in the Ottawa Sun

- ♪ Contact [ottawablues@rogers.com](mailto:ottawablues@rogers.com) to subscribe to Ottawa Blues This Week, an e-mail summary of local blues events or check the blog at <http://ottawablues.blogspot.com/>
- ♪ Subscribe to Jazz Happenings at <http://www.jazzworkscanada.com/html/program.html>
- ♪ Check the Ottawa Blues & Jazz Guide for Jim Roy's on-line calendar of monthly and weekly events at [www.ottawabluesjazz.ca](http://www.ottawabluesjazz.ca)

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## OTTAWA CLUBS

Rainbow Bistro, 76 Murray St

[www.therainbow.ca](http://www.therainbow.ca)

Tucson's, 2440 Bank St

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

Irene's, 855 Bank St

[www.irenespub.ca](http://www.irenespub.ca)

Elmdale Tavern, 1084 Wellington St

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

Atomic Rooster, 303 Bank St

[www.atomicrooster.ca](http://www.atomicrooster.ca)

Fatboys Southern Smokehouse, 34 Murray St

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

Bass Line Station, 2557 Baseline Rd

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

Heart & Crown, 353B Preston St

[www.irishvillage.ca/preston.aspx](http://www.irishvillage.ca/preston.aspx)

D'Arcy McGee's Pub

44 Sparks St

<http://ottawa.darcymcgees.com/>

655 Terry Fox Dr, Kanata

<http://kanata.darcymcgees.com/>

360 Moodie Dr, Bells Corners

<http://nepean.darcymcgees.com/>

Greenfield's Pub, 900 Greenbank Rd

[www.greenfieldspub.ca](http://www.greenfieldspub.ca)

Black Sheep Inn, Wakefield QC

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

Louisiannie's, 1518 Main St, Stittsville

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

## OBS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Friday, December 2 @ Tucson's

The Ottawa Blues Society's AGM was held Friday, December 2, in conjunction with the annual Christmas Party and our final Road to Memphis fundraiser. President Liz Sykes presented the OBS 2011 Year in Review (see page 3 for a synopsis). Treasurer and Acting Vice-President Gary Paradis announced the latest OBS event - a joint effort with the Montreal Blues Society. The First Great Canadian Polar Bear Blues Showcase will be held Thursday, February 2, as part of the International Blues Challenge in Memphis TN. All IBC entries representing Canadian affiliates of the Blues Foundation will be invited to participate. (For more information, see page 10-11). One Director position for 2012-13 was up for election; Debra Thornington was nominated for another term and acclaimed as Director.

Music for the Christmas Party was presented by an expanded Terry Gillespie Band, with Victor Nesrallah helping out on guitar and guest Stephen Barry on bass. All cover charges and raffle ticket sales supported the R2M fundraising efforts. Raffle prizes included gift certificates to local restaurants (donated by DAWG FM), tickets to Blues on the Rideau (donated by Choose the Blues/James Doran), tickets to Virée Blues Boréale (donated by Alexandre Petit), tickets to Sue Foley & Peter Karp show at CentrepoinTE Theatre (donated by Shantero Productions), gift certificate for pizza (donated by Lorenzo's) and CD packages (donations from this year's R2M entrants, Northern Blues Music and the Ottawa Blues Society). Final fundraising tally for all R2M 2011 events was \$7200, to be shared between the five musicians who make up our IBC representatives, the Terry Gillespie Trio (band) and Kelly Prescott & Anders Drerup (solo/duo).

Thank you to all who supported the OBS throughout 2011!

## OBS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please consider how you might help to "Foster appreciation, promotion, preservation and enjoyment of the blues in all its forms" through supporting your Ottawa Blues Society as a volunteer.

- ♪ **The OBScene is looking for a new EDITOR!** Other newsletter positions include layout and production, writing & research.
- ♪ **Interested in volunteering for OBS DAWG'ON BLUES?** You must be an OBS member. Please use the feedback form on the OBS website to indicate your interest <http://www.ottawabluessociety.com/contact.php>. You will be contacted with further information.
- ♪ **WANT TO VOLUNTEER for the "Road to Memphis" events?** We're looking for outgoing, energetic & friendly OBS members to help promote raffle sales during each evening of the competitions. (cover charge at R2M events is optional for volunteers)

For further information on volunteer opportunities contact the Ottawa Blues Society by email at [ottawabluessociety@gmail.com](mailto:ottawabluessociety@gmail.com)



# OBS DAWG'ON BLUES

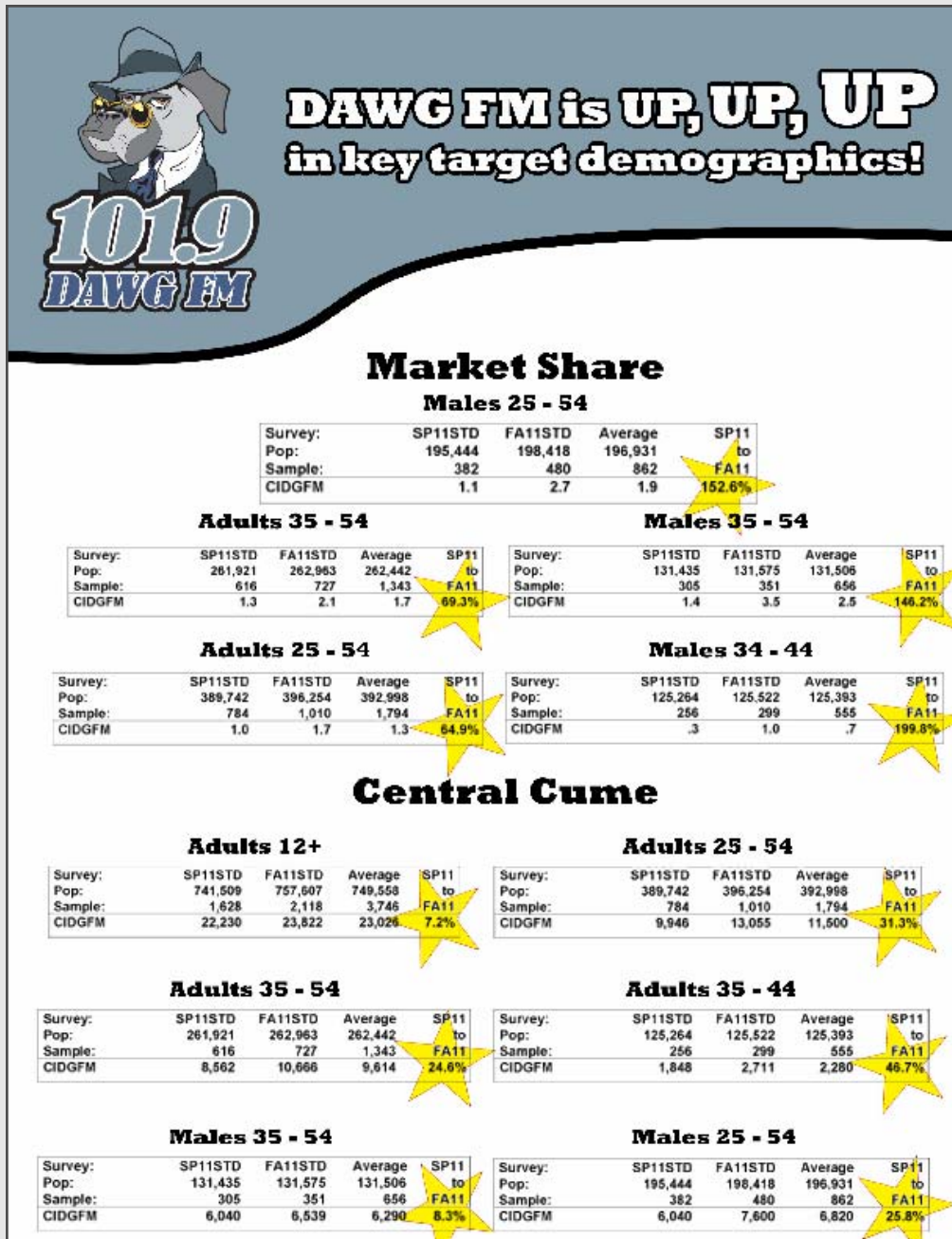
## Sundays @ 8 pm

Each week OBS hosts keep you up to date on what's happening in the Ottawa area blues scene, play great blues from local bands and showcase regional and Canadian talent.



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## News from the DAWG house



## BLUES RADIO in OTTAWA

CIDG DAWG-FM 101.9  
www.dawgfm.com  
Blues 24/7

CKCU-FM 93.1  
www.ckcufm.com  
Sundays: 9-11 pm  
Black and Blues  
with John Tackaberry  
Wednesdays: 9-11 pm  
In A Mellow Tone  
with Ron Sweetman

CBC Radio One  
91.5 FM  
Saturdays: 9 -11 pm  
Saturday Night Blues  
with Holger Petersen

CJHR 98.7  
Valley Heritage Radio  
Thursdays: 8-10 pm  
Got the Blues  
With Pat Watters

CHEZ106 FM  
Sundays: 6-7 pm  
House of Blues Hour  
hosted by Dan Aykroyd  
(AKA Elwood Blues)

## Canadian showcases at the 2012 International Folk Alliance Conference

Charlie A'Court (Dartmouth, NS); C.R. Avery (Bastard Township, ON) ; Meaghan Blanchard (Charlottetown, PE); Annabelle Chvostek (Toronto, ON); Rose Cousins (Halifax, NS); Crooked Brothers (Winnipeg, MB); Kat Danser (Edmonton, AB); Sherman Downey and The Silver Lining (Corner Brook, NL); Wendell Ferguson (Streetsville, ON); Tracy Grammer (Greendfield, MA); Dave Gunning (Pictou, NS); Cassie and Maggie MacDonald (Antigonish, NS); Sarah MacDougall (Whitehorse, YT) ; The Magnificent Sevens (Winnipeg, MB); David Myles (Halifax, NS); Sierra Noble (Winnipeg, MB); Joe Nolan (Calgary, AB); Oh Susanna (Toronto, ON); Old Man Luedecke (Chester, NS); Oliver Swain's BIG MACHINE (Victoria, BC); Olympic Symphonium (Fredericton, NB); Qristina & Quinn Bachand (Victoria, BC); and The Sojourners (Vancouver, BC).

[www.eastcoastkitchenparty.net/news\\_Folk\\_Alliance.php](http://www.eastcoastkitchenparty.net/news_Folk_Alliance.php)

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## FOLK ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL

The annual International Folk Alliance Conference comes back to Canada in February 2013 at Toronto's Delta Chelsea Hotel, before relocating to Kansas City in 2014 for a five-year stay. To get ready for the 2013 Toronto conference, there will be several special Canadian events during the upcoming 24<sup>th</sup> annual International Folk Alliance Conference this coming February in Memphis. The 2012 International Folk Alliance Conference will include an exciting centennial celebration of the life and music of Woody Guthrie, and will



showcase over 200 musical artists, host over 100 panel discussions and workshops, and bring together over 2000 members of the Folk music community. As in the past, Folk Alliance will feature 30+ Canadian artists in official showcases (see list above), numerous Canadian industry reps in education programming, special Canadian rooms in the private showcase system, the annual FMC hosted Canadian social, and several events highlighting Canadian members and participants.

More information at [www.folk.org](http://www.folk.org)

## CANADIAN BLUES ALLIANCE

Subsequent to the formative meeting of the Canadian Blues Alliance (CBA) held at the 2011 Blues Summit, another informal meeting was held in Toronto on January 16, 2012.

CBA Chair Gord MacAuley reported that the Alliance is now federally incorporated under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. A committee is now being formed to amend the pro forma bylaws used for the purposes of getting incorporated which will need to address the issues of membership, voting rights, etc. A press release will be drafted to announce the establishment of the CBA in order to get Canadian



Canadian Blues Alliance, at the 2012 Maple Blues Awards, Jan 16th Koerner Hall (L to R) Gary Paradis, Brian Slack, Doc MacLean, William Petrie, Liz Sykes, Irene Ippersiel, Peggy Voigt, Gord MacAulay, Ken McColm

Blues societies, potential corporate members and interested individuals on board. Work will also start on the development of the CBA website.

In addition to Gord, CBA directors in attendance included: Gary Paradis, CBA Treasurer (Ottawa Blues Society), Brian Slack (Montreal Blues Society), Peggy Voigt, CBA Secretary, and Ken McColm (Loyal Blues Fellowship) and William Petrie. A number of

other interested individuals were also in attendance. The Canadian Blues Alliance is an umbrella organization intended to serve as a network of Blues societies, Blues festivals, artists and presenters.

Gary Paradis



**Ottawa Maple Blues Awards  
Celebration Party  
Irene's Pub  
Tuesday, January 17**



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## **Ottawa Blues Society's Liz Sykes Wins Blues Booster Of The Year Award**

The Toronto Blues Society is proud to announce the recipient of the **Blues Booster of the Year** award, a very special **Maple Blues Award** honouring outstanding contribution to the Canadian blues music industry.

This year, the Blues Booster of the Year Award goes to **Liz Sykes**, President of the Ottawa Blues Society. She will receive the Blues Booster of the Year Award at the 15th Annual Maple Blues Awards gala on January 16 in Toronto.

Sykes, who has been president of the Ottawa Blues Society for ten years, started out as a volunteer writer and editor on the newsletter committee after becoming passionate about blues music through her son. "My older son Marc is the one who got me interested in blues, which would have been in late 1994 - early 1995. He was 18 at the time, too young to be going to the bars to hear blues, but he somehow managed!" she recalls.

The Ottawa Blues Society was formed in 1997, and is led by a small dedicated Board of Directors. The society's ongoing activities include publication of the quarterly OBScene newsletter that highlights Ottawa area live blues events, bands and CD reviews from artists. The OBS has also participated in the **Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge**, held annually in Memphis TN. For the past four years the OBS has held competitions and fundraisers for Ottawa area bands to participate with all fundraising dollars going towards travel costs for Solo/Duo and Band representatives to attend the IBC competitions.

"I really do believe that the things that we at the Ottawa Blues Society have accomplished and that have made us prominent in the blues community are not because of one person". Sykes explains. "It is a team effort and the award belongs to all of the directors and volunteers who have helped make the OBS a success."

(Sarah French, Toronto Blues Society)

### **Maple Blues Awards, Monday, January 16, 2012**



Thank you to the Toronto Blues Society Board; it's a real honour to be recognized by one's peers.

As part of our Society's mandate, the OBS works to bring together the blues community in Ottawa through participation in blues events and activities – like the Road to Memphis local blues challenges we've presented over the past four years – and we also strive to expand awareness and appreciation of the blues. We supported our friends at DAWG FM when they were just puppies; now they're big dogs and they, in turn, support the OBS in many ways, one of which is with a one-hour show .... OBS DAWG'ON BLUES ... for those who don't know, it's on Sundays at 8 pm (you can listen on the internet!)

People involved in Blues Societies are first of all fans ... and we're passionate about this music that means so much to us. To promote Canadian blues, the Ottawa Blues Society's latest venture, in partnership with the Montreal Blues Society, is the First Great Canadian Polar Bear Blues Showcase we're putting on as part of the International Blues Challenge. On Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Kooky Canuck in Memphis, all of the 2012 Canadian IBC entries – seven bands and seven solos and duos, representing 10 Canadian affiliates of the Blues Foundation – will be showing IBC attendees just how great Canadian blues is! No one person does these things alone ... it's an effort and commitment of many. So this award really recognizes the accomplishments of all the members of the Ottawa Blues Society Boards over the past years, along with our group of dedicated volunteers and our members who support our initiatives. On their behalf, thank you!

Liz Sykes





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## COAST TO COAST BLUES ARTISTS HONoured WITH MAPLE BLUES AWARDS

Canadian Blues Artists from coast-to-coast were honoured by their peers at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Maple Blues Awards gala in Toronto last night as a crowd of blues lovers gathered to celebrate Canadian blues at Koerner Hall.

Ottawa's MonkeyJunk took three awards, including, Electric Act of the Year, Recording of the Year and Drummer of the Year (Matt Sobb). New Brunswick's Matt Andersen left with awards for Entertainer of the Year, Acoustic Act of the Year and Male Vocalist of the Year. Now based in Toronto, Saskatoon native Suzie Vinnick won awards for Songwriter of the Year and Female Vocalist of the Year. MonkeyJunk, Andersen and Vinnick have each had a very successful year with national and international touring and extensive radio airplay, giving exposure to their own talents and further promoting Canadian blues artists as leaders in the industry.

Long-time Toronto talent buyer Randy Charlton and blues scholar Rob Bowman presented the Blues With a Feeling (Lifetime Achievement Award) to veteran entertainer and guitarist Paul James. James has been performing for over four decades and is considered to be a Canadian music icon. Toronto Blues Society President Derek Andrews and Montreal Blues Society President Brian Slack presented the Blues Booster of the Year award, a very special Maple Blues Award honouring outstanding contribution to the Canadian blues music industry, to Liz Sykes, President of the Ottawa Blues Society.

Other highlights include British Columbia's Sabrina Weeks & Swing Cat Bounce taking the New Artist of the Year Award, presented by performers and Maple Blues Award nominees Bill Johnson and Rita Chiarelli. Other notable presenters of Maple Blues Awards were Stony Plain Records Holger Petersen, Andrew Galloway of Electro-Fi Records, Borealis Records Grit Laskin, SOCAN CEO Eric Baptiste, and CRTC Vice-Chairman Tom Pentefountas.

Hosted by internationally recognized blues artists Shakura S'aida and Treasa Levasseur (both of whom gave stunning performances at the gala) the Maple Blues Awards included outstanding performances from Maple Blues Award nominees past and present, including Nova Scotia's Joe Murphy, last year's Blues With A Feeling Award winner Rita Chiarelli, Toronto's Fathead, long time blues fixture Bill Johnson from Victoria, B.C., Ottawa's MonkeyJunk, as well as the awards gala house band, The Maple Blues Band.

Sarah French Publicity/Toronto Blues

### WINNERS OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MAPLE BLUES AWARDS

#### ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

Matt Andersen

#### ELECTRIC ACT OF THE YEAR

MonkeyJunk

#### ACOUSTIC ACT OF THE YEAR

Matt Andersen

#### MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

Matt Andersen

#### FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

Suzie Vinnick

#### NEW ARTIST OR GROUP OF THE YEAR

Sabrina Weeks & Swing Cat Bounce

#### RECORDING OF THE YEAR

"To Behold", MonkeyJunk

#### BLUES WITH A FEELING (Lifetime Achievement)

Paul James

#### BB KING INTERNATIONAL ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Gregg Allman

#### GUITAR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Steve Strongman

#### HARMONICA PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Carlos del Junco

#### PIANO/KEYBOARD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne

#### HORN PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Chris Whiteley

#### DRUMMER OF THE YEAR

Matt Sobb

#### BASSIST OF THE YEAR

Alec Fraser

#### SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Suzie Vinnick

#### BLUES BOOSTER OF THE YEAR

Liz Sykes



# Maple Blues Awards

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Top: Shakura S'Aida & Treasa Levasseur; MonkeyJunk. Middle: Joe Murphy; Mike Hilliard & Sabrina Weeks.  
Bottom: Matt Andersen; Paul James; Suzie Vinnick & Liz Sykes.

All photos - Eric Thom (online [www.rootsmusic.ca/2012/01/18/the-15th-annual-maple-blues-awards](http://www.rootsmusic.ca/2012/01/18/the-15th-annual-maple-blues-awards) )

## About the Blues Foundation ...

The Blues Foundation is Memphis-based, but world-renowned as THE organization dedicated to preserving blues music history, celebrating recording and performance excellence, supporting blues education and ensuring the future of this uniquely American art form. Founded in 1980, The Blues Foundation has 4,500 individual members and 195 affiliated local blues societies representing another 50,000 fans and professionals around the world.

For more information, visit the Blues Foundation website at <http://www.blues.org>

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## International Blues Challenge 2011

The Blues Foundation will present the 28th International Blues Challenge January 31-February 4, 2012 in Memphis, TN. The world's largest gathering of Blues acts represents an international search by The Blues Foundation and its Affiliated Organizations for the Blues Band and Solo/Duo Blues Act ready to take their act to the international stage. Each Affiliate has the right to send a band and solo/duo act to represent the organization at the IBC on Beale Street. This year there will be 226 acts, for a total of 748 individual musicians, filling the clubs up and down Beale Street for the quarter and semi-finals on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and the finals at the Orpheum Theater on Saturday.

In addition to the evening Blues competition, the days are filled with seminars and workshops and topped off in a moving Saturday morning brunch in which the Blues community honours its own with the prestigious Keeping the Blues Alive (KBA) awards that recognize the men and women who have made significant contributions to the Blues music world, and the best clubs and festivals, as well as managers, promoters and producers.



## OBS Road to Memphis 2011 says thank you ...

... to all twenty-four acts who participated in this year's Road to Memphis Solo/Duo and Band challenges.

... to our OBS volunteers, judges and the good folks who hosted at the Atomic Rooster, Irene's Pub and Tucson's.

A special shout out to blues fans (that's you!) and our OBS Corporate Sponsors for your generous support – the total revenue for all R2M fundraisers was an impressive \$7,182!

All fundraising dollars go toward travel & accommodation costs for our Solo/Duo and Band representatives to attend the IBC competitions.

## Heads Up!

### OBS Road to Memphis Competitions 2012

The **Solo/Duo** competition takes place in April 2012 at Irene's Pub.

The **Band** competition takes place in September 2012 at Tucson's.

More information about the OBS Road to Memphis Challenge  
will be available in February on our website:

[www..ottawabluesociety.com/road2memphis.php](http://www..ottawabluesociety.com/road2memphis.php)

Are you a member of the Blues Foundation?

The Ottawa Blues Society is a Blues Foundation Affiliate!

For info on Membership Incentives, Membership Levels and more

<https://www.blues.org/members/index.php>



# OBS @ IBC 2012

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## Kelly Prescott & Anders Drerup - OBS Solo/Duo Entry



Kelly and Anders first met when they were cast in the roles of Gram Parsons & Emmylou Harris in the critically-acclaimed, musical production "Grievous Angel: The Legend of Gram Parsons", which has sold out shows throughout Ontario and Quebec. In the fall of 2010 this theatrical concert made a 3-week whirlwind tour of Northern California, Oregon & Washington.

Kelly is a third generation performer (from both sides of her family) and her first blues CD, "I Leave You Dreaming", released in 2011, entered the DAWG Top 20 almost immediately upon release and remained there for several weeks.

Anders is a singer/songwriter with two solo albums and two songs from his "Blues For The Common Man" are in rotation on DAWG FM - 'Bank Street Blues' and 'I'm In Blues'. He's toured the UK, Australia, Cuba and Canada with Silver Creek and with Cuban guitar virtuoso, Elmer Ferrer.

Kelly Prescott and Anders Drerup were chosen in May 2011 to represent the Ottawa Blues Society in the Solo/Duo category at the 2012 International Blues Challenge.

## Terry Gillespie Trio - OBS Band Entry

Active in establishing the Ottawa blues & reggae scene in the late '60s, Terry Gillespie disappeared from the music scene. He's a musician and producer with early roots in Detroit blues, years of experience who plays solo or in band confirmations from duo to much larger. Since re-emerging on the Ottawa music scene in 2004, he's been busy making and recording music, in a variety of genres.

Wayne Stoute is a drummer-percussionist from Trinidad, who studied at Drummer's Collective in New York and Concordia University Montreal and, in addition to blues, plays world and Caribbean music.

Lyndell Montgomery is a multi-instrumentalist touring machine. She's toured and recorded with countless artists around the globe from India to Australia to Northern BC!

Terry's Trio (with Wayne Stoute on drums and Lyndell Montgomery on bass & violin) are the OBS representative in the Band category at the 2012 International Blues Challenge.



PHOTOS: Kelly & Anders - Liz Sykes; Terry Gillespie Trio - Nik Schnell



# OTTAWA BLUES

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REPRESENTING **Terry C**  
THE OBS: **Kelly**





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**Gillespie Trio**  
**Prescott & Anders Drerup**  
[www.ottawabluessociety.com](http://www.ottawabluessociety.com)



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he Ottawa Blues Society and Montreal Blues Society are pleased to announce The **First Great Canadian Polar Bear Blues Showcase** – featuring all IBC 2012 bands, solos and duos sponsored by Canadian affiliates of the Blues Foundation. This event provides another opportunity... for Canadian bands and solo/duo acts to demonstrate their talents and a chance for fans to catch all Canadian entries in the same place.

Host Johnny Max will emcee the Canadian showcase, which starts at 12 pm (noon) Thursday, February 2 at the Kooky Canuck restaurant located at 97 S. Second Street. The first 150 people will receive gift bags containing CDs from Canadian artists and other Canadian promotional material including a voucher for a complimentary “Canadian” beverage.

#### **CANADIAN BANDS & SOLO/DUO ACTS AT THE SHOWCASE**

##### **Bands**

Fraser Melvin Blues Band - Collingwood Jazz and Blues Society

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

Jimmy and the Sleepers - Edmonton Blues Society

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

Conor Gains Band - Grand River Blues Society

[myspace.com/officialconorgainsband](http://myspace.com/officialconorgainsband)

Robbie Antone's Blues Machine - Great Lakes Blues Society

[www.reverbnation.com/robbieantonessbluesmachine](http://www.reverbnation.com/robbieantonessbluesmachine)

The Kim Pollard Band - Loyal Blues Fellowship

[www.facebook.com/pages/Kim-Pollard-Music/305810652426](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Kim-Pollard-Music/305810652426)

Terry Gillespie Trio - Ottawa Blues Society

[www.terrygillespie.ca](http://www.terrygillespie.ca)

The 24th Street Wailers - Toronto Blues Society

[www.the24thstreetwailers.com](http://www.the24thstreetwailers.com)

##### **Solo/Duo**

Kevin Marcus Dillon - Collingwood Jazz and Blues Society

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

Breezy Brian Gregg - Edmonton Blues Society

[briangregg.com](http://briangregg.com)

Ross Neilsen - Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival

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

The Roper Show - Loyal Blues Fellowship

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

Dawn Tyler Watson & Paul Deslauriers - Montreal Blues Society

[dawnandpaul.com](http://dawnandpaul.com)

Kelly Prescott & Anders Drerup - Ottawa Blues Society

[www.myspace.com/kellyprescottmusic](http://www.myspace.com/kellyprescottmusic) & [www.myspace.com/andersdrerup](http://www.myspace.com/andersdrerup)

David “Boxcar” Gates - White Rock Blues Society

[www.davidboxcargates.ca](http://www.davidboxcargates.ca)

**PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE OBS WEBSITE WHEN AVAILABLE**

# CD Reviews

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## **“Strictly Whatever” - Harry Manx & Kevin Breit**

*Stony Plain Records (2011)*

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

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

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

*Reviewed by James Doran*



Here's a grand album from two very talented Canadian artists - Harry Manx and Kevin Breit. It's their third collaboration. The first, "Jubilee", was recorded in 2003 on Northern Blues. It was followed by "In Good We Trust" (2007) and now "Strictly Whatever", both released on Stony Plain Records. All 3 are terrific.

Both Harry and Kevin have had highly successful solo careers and have a long list of Awards to prove it. Harry has been nominated for multiple Maple Blues Awards (including 3 more this year), won 7, received 6 Juno nominations, a Canadian Folk Music Award and CBC radio's "Great Canadian Blues Award". Kevin has performed on albums that have received 13 Grammy Awards, been named "Musician Of The Year" by the Toronto Musician's Association, won a Juno, a Gemini and together they've won a Maple Blues Award for Best Acoustic Act. Impressive credentials indeed!

Their styles are quite different, enough so that you wouldn't think of them as a natural pairing - Harry is known for his unique blend of Indian music and traditional North American blues while Kevin is more of a folk/jazz style artist - but the mix works beautifully. They share similar talents. Both are highly skilled on a variety of stringed instruments and you hear all of them on this CD: Harry on baritone guitar, lap slide, national steel, banjo and Mohan Veena; Kevin on acoustic & electric guitar, national steel, electric sitar, ukelele and mandolin. Both are great singer/songwriters as well.

Kevin has 6 originals on the album, Harry contributes 4 and there are two covers - Bobby Hebb's classic 'Sunny' and John Lee Hooker's 'Mr Lucky' - which sound almost like originals

because of their unique arrangements.

Kevin and Harry first met at the Owen Sound Folk Festival a number of years ago where they ended up jamming together after their respective shows. They had so much fun that they decided to do an album together. There was no elaborate pre-planning when they went into the studio - they just showed up with a few of their own songs, sat down, started playing and voila! the record emerged. It's been the same formula since. When I talked with Harry back in March on my INSIDE THE BLUES radio show on DAWG FM he said that "since we don't know each other really well it helps create the magic - we embellish each other's music in different, unexpected ways. Part of the fun is in not knowing what's coming next".

My favourite songs on the CD include 'Looking For A Plan' - one of Harry's originals featuring him on vocals and baritone guitar with Kevin injecting some killer wah wah guitar, 'Looking For A Brand New World' - which has a similar sound and name yet it was written by Kevin! And I do love the two uniquely reworked cover tunes - 'Sunny' and 'Mr. Lucky'.

"Strictly Whatever" is strictly "First Class" and, although it has some great competition this year for the Maple Blues Award for "Album Of The Year", I think it deserves the gold.

♪ Maple Blues nominations ♪

**"Strictly Whatever" - Recording of the Year**

**Harry Manx - Acoustic Act & Songwriter of the Year**

**Kevin Breit - Guitar Player of the Year**



## CD Submissions to OBS

We welcome CD submissions but do not guarantee all CDs will be reviewed. We give priority to local CDs, while trying to present a variety of different styles and labels, and independently-produced CDs. We also select music to include in the OBS DAWG'ON BLUES radio show on 101.9 DAWG FM.

We guarantee that, once listened to and considered, each CD we receive is passed along, via raffles, prizes or giveaways to our members and friends, thus sharing your music with a wider audience. For further info, please contact the Editor.

### **“Harmonica Shah LIVE at The Cove with Jack de Keyzer”**

*Electro Fi Records (2011)*

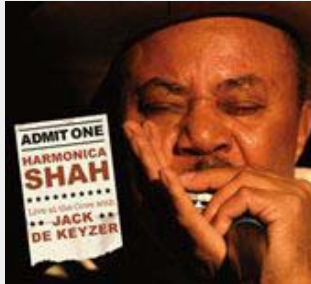
[www.electrofi.com](http://www.electrofi.com)

*Reviewed by James Doran*

This is the second Harmonica Shah album I've reviewed for OBScene (see “If All You Have Is A Hammer, Everything Looks Like A Nail” Summer 2009). Some might say I have a conflict of interest in this one, as I produce the Series where this live album was recorded - Blues On The Rideau at The Cove Inn, Westport - but the truth is I just plain love this man's stuff! The Shah plays the Blues rough, raw, down and dirty - Detroit style - and no wonder. Let's not forget that Detroit has a rich blues heritage with Hastings Street once rivalling Chicago's Maxwell Street during the 1940s and '50s.

Harmonica Shah was born in Oakland CA in 1946 and grew up seeing artists like Lowell Fulson, Jimmy McCracklin, Juke Boy Bonner and Big Mama Thornton perform. He also spent time in Texas with his blues harmonica/guitar playing grandfather Sam Dawson whom he later credited with planting the Blues bug in him. He moved to Detroit in 1967 and took a job with the Ford Motor Company where he worked for 15 years - a great place to develop the Blues! At age 30 Shah picked up the harmonica and once he did, as he says, “there was no turning back”. He played local Detroit blues clubs for years until finally releasing his first album “Motor City Mojo” in 2000. It established his unique style immediately - soaring harp, solid vocals and some of the most unique, hard-edged and hilarious lyrics you'll hear anywhere - probably because he pretty much makes them up as he goes along. The Shah, like Lightnin' Hopkins did, will start a song with little more than a name, the key and a solid groove then proceed to improvise with “stream-of-consciousness” lyrics - a sort of Blues Rap.

This is his 6<sup>th</sup> album, his 4<sup>th</sup> on Electro-Fi and his first-ever live. You couldn't have picked a better spot than the Cove to record it. A 100 seater - small and intimate with a very appreciative audience and a packed dance floor - the kind of place where Blues is best heard. Just listen to the background hootin' and hollerin' to give you an idea of how much fun everyone lucky enough to be there that night had.



“If you're going to work without a net it's a wise idea to surround yourself with musicians who truly know their stuff” as Producer Andrew Galloway says in the liner notes and that the Shah certainly did with Juno Award winning Jack de Keyzer on guitar. I've seen Jack play live many times and put down some great shows but I think he delivers some of his best stuff ever on this CD. He and the Shah

bounce off each other beautifully. Alec Fraser (Jeff Healey Band) on bass and Al Cross (Big Sugar) on drums provide a rock solid backline.

There are 10 songs on the disc, 9 originals and a Little Walter tune. It's hard to pick favourites but I particularly like ‘Who's The Fool’ - “you're a wise man today, tomorrow you're a fool”, ‘Mrs' Obama's Boogie’ - featuring a great John Lee Hooker groove (wonder if the First Lady will ever hear this tune?), ‘Woman I Want You To Love Me’ - a slow crawler with some classic Shah lyrics and killer guitar riffs by Jack and ‘Big Boss Lady’ - with a great driving beat and more terrific interplay between the Shah's voice and harp and Jack's smokin' guitar.

A lot of live albums tend to go over the top with songs that run too long and frequent instrumental excesses - but not this one. The whole album feels like you're on some kind of a hypnotic Blues cruise with everything flowing together naturally and tightly. Kudos to Shah, Jack and the band for a dynamite performance, The Cove for providing such a fabulous venue, the appreciative audience, excellent sound by Tim Greencorn, Little Chicago Productions and Andrew Galloway, Electro-Fi Records for capturing this night and producing the album.

I'm not the only one who loves this CD. Living Blues Magazine did a very laudatory Review on it in their August issue and has had it in the Top 20 on their monthly Radio Chart (compiled from playlists submitted by Blues DJ's from across the U.S and Canada) for the past couple of months - not bad for a live album recorded at “the remote Cove Country Inn in Westport, Ontario”. You can purchase this CD at leading music stores, on-line at [www.electro-fi.com](http://www.electro-fi.com) or download it at iTunes, cduniverse, amazon.com and others.

# CD Snapshots

## Maple Blues Awards

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### “To Behold”– MonkeyJunk



2011 Stony Plain

[monkeyjunkband.com](http://monkeyjunkband.com)

Reviewed by Liz Sykes

MonkeyJunk's sophomore outing, the first in a 3-record deal with Canada's Stony Plain, doesn't disappoint. Ottawa's purveyors of 'swamp R&B, soul boogie and bedroom funk' give us all that, and more. The band is tighter, rocks harder, sings sweeter and - they're simply better! Stronger on the 'original material' front, seven of ten songs are co-written by the trio (with producer Ken Friesen on two), and they run the gamut from rousing instrumentals like 'The Marrinator', to the socially-conscious lyrics of 'Mother's Crying', to the poignant story in 'Let Her Down' and the rockin' beat of 'Right Now'. There are two solo writing contributions: Steve Marriner's 'With These Hands' introduces background vocals to the MonkeyJunk repertoire, and Tony D's 'All About You' is a love song, featuring Steve's heartfelt vocals and wonderful backing Hammond organ and, of course, Tony's guitar. The sole cover is what all great covers should be - an original interpretation, not a rehash of someone else's take on the song. MonkeyJunk's Hank Williams cover is the bluesiest Hank you'll ever hear; 'You're Gonna Change or I'm Gonna Leave' is the icing on this CD's cake.

🎵 Maple Blues nominations 🎵

“To Behold” - Recording of the Year

MonkeyJunk - Entertainer, Electric Act, Songwriter of the Year

Steve Marriner - Male Vocalist & Harmonica Player of the Year

Matt Sobb - Drummer of the Year

### “Me ‘n’ Mabel”– Suzie Vinnick

2011 Independent

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

Reviewed by Liz Sykes

“Me ‘n’ Mabel” isn't Suzie's first CD, but it is her first all-blues CD and it's a gem. Nine covers and five originals, four co-written with other Canadian musicians. Mabel is a Canadian-built Larrivée parlour guitar whose 'voice' blends beautifully with Suzie's. Good friends join Suzie on this disc: Tony D contributes lovely guitar solos on Percy Mayfield's 'Please Send Me Someone to Love' and Suzie's 'I Can Tell'; Rick Fines' slide guitar and vocals work perfectly on 'Crazy 'Bout Lovin' Me'; Roly Platt adds harmonica to 'The Honey I Want' and 'Never Been To Spain'; and Chris Whiteley is on cornet in 'Oh My'. But the star of this show is Suzie! Her incredible feel for these songs means her guitar parts fit them like a glove and her voice is soft, sweet, sultry and soaring - as required! Favourite tracks include 'Save Me For Later', co-written with Kristi Magraw, 'Get Some', co-written with Rita Chiarelli, 'Sometimes I Think I Can Fly', co-written with Dan Kershaw, and Roy Forbes' 'Crazy 'Bout Lovin' Me'.



This recording has received unanimous critical acclaim and was submitted by the Toronto Blues Society to the Blues Foundation's 'Best Self-Produced CD' competition (part of the International Blues Challenge). The original 74 submissions were reduced to a second-round total of 30, then to five finalists, including “Me ‘n’ Mabel”. The winner will be announced Saturday, February 4, at the IBC finals in the Orpheum Theater in Memphis.

🎵 Maple Blues nominations 🎵

“Me n’ Mabel” - Recording of the Year

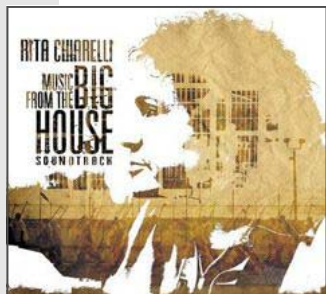
Suzie Vinnick - Acoustic Act, Female Vocalist, Songwriter of the Year

# CD Snapshots

## Maple Blues Awards

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### “Music From The Big House” – Rita Chiarelli, Mad Iris, 2011



If you haven't seen Rita Chiarelli's documentary, “Music From The Big House” (shown throughout North America in 2010; locally co-presented by the Ottawa Blues Society at the Mayfair Theatre last March), you're missing a very powerful and moving film. Recorded over a brief four days at the Louisiana State Penitentiary, the music accompanying the stark, sometimes bleak, video includes four originals alongside covers including the traditional ‘Glory, Glory’ and ‘Midnight Special’. Although some tracks on this sound track are introspective and resigned, others are uplifting and joyous. Inmate groups The Jazzmen, Pure Heart Messenger and Little Country are featured. The DVD is due out soon.

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

♫ Maple Blues nomination - Female Vocalist & Recording of the Year

### “Broad” – Treasa Levasseur, Slim Chicken, 2011

Right up front Treasa tells us “four groups, three studios, two cities” produced this one CD. She knew who she wanted to record with, she went for it - and it works! The backing bands are a great fit with the songs chosen for them (9 of 12 are original); it doesn't hurt that Canada's best musicians are included. The songwriting shines with originality and contemporary themes: the songs make you laugh, maybe cry, but always make you think. Some of the all-time best lines ever: “I think you forgot your pants!” (‘A Little Pride’) and the poetic “A troubadour always finds a way to get fed” (‘Let Me Sleep On It’). It's no surprise that this CD is #1 on Sirius/XM Bluesville's ‘Picks to Click’ (week of January 14). Congratulations, Treasa! Blues fans, go out right now and buy this CD ... you'll thank me!

[treasalevasseur.com](http://treasalevasseur.com)

♫ Maple Blues nomination - Female Vocalist of the Year



### “I Almost Lost My Mind” – Keith Hallett, Independent 2011



Although this CD came out late last year, it is one of my top picks of 2011. Keith Hallett is a young East Coast guitarist, vocalist & songwriter, who was nominated for a Maple Blues Award at 17 years old, the same year that he made an impressive debut with his power trio at the 2008 International Blues Challenge in Memphis. This, his second release, is produced by Garrett Mason who also plays baritone guitar on one track on the disk. Stripped down, raw ... recorded live off the floor ... this is ‘real deal’ blues ... and the notes tell us “No computers were used in the recording and mixing of this album.” Having seen Keith, Garrett and the band on tour, I can attest that this recording is a spot-on portrayal of the live show.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItH\\_fOhnbAQ&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItH_fOhnbAQ&feature=related)

♫ Maple Blues nomination - Electric Act of the Year

All CD Snapshot reviews (pages 18-21) written by Liz Sykes

CDs by other Maple Blues nominees have been reviewed in past issues\* of the OBScene:

Winter 2010 - Shakura S'Aida “Brown Sugar” - Entertainer & Female Vocalist of the Year  
 Robin Bank\$ “Livin' Life” - Female Vocalist of the Year  
 Roly Platt “Tangled Roots” - Harmonica Player of the Year

\* back issues of the OBScene available online at [www.ottawabluesociety.com/newsletters.php](http://www.ottawabluesociety.com/newsletters.php)



# CD Snapshots

## Maple Blues Best New Artist

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### “Dirty Little Young’uns” – 24<sup>th</sup> Street Wailers, 2010

Representing the Toronto Blues Society in the 2012 International Blues Challenge in Memphis TN, these four young folks play tough, raw blues. B3 virtuoso Lance Anderson guests on this all original (writing credits to all four band members) and live-off-the-floor debut CD. The liner notes tell us “We wanted the listener to feel as though they are sitting in front of us, right in the action! So, when listening to this, have a drink and a good time! Enjoy!” Cue up ‘Standley’ on your CD player and grab a drink. Take my word for it ... you **do** feel like the band is right in your living room, and you **will** enjoy!

[the24thstreetwailers.com](http://the24thstreetwailers.com)



### “Broken Hearted Man” – Douglas Watson R&B Revue, 2011

Douglas Watson has an enviable blues pedigree – son of Eddie ‘Lovie Lee’ Watson who played in Muddy Waters’ band for several years. He started singing in church, then inspired by his father, moved on to blues and R&B. Early in his career he was a session musician with many well-known blues acts and toured with A.C. Reed & the Sparkplugs for nine years. The band is a 4-piece – guitar & rhythm section trio with ‘Mississippi’ Pete Temple on harmonica, but the CD features guests on organ and sax. This CD is short ... just six tracks, only two of which are originals – ‘The Best Way I Can’ and the title track, “Broken Hearted Man”, probably the strongest on the recording.

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

### “Passin’-A-Time” – Kat Danser, 2010

Another all-original project (one track is a co-write), Kat spent some time in Mississippi, and these songs were influenced by that eye-opening experience alongside her Saskatchewan roots. She performed with the Toronto Blues Society’s Women’s Blues Revue in November 2011 and reviewer David Farrell ([www.FYImusic.ca](http://www.FYImusic.ca)) called Edmonton’s self-styled Swamp Blues Queen “the highlight of the night” with her “commanding presence, powerful and expressive voice and a deft touch on guitar and other stringed instruments. In a word, her performance glistened.”

The Mississippi-influenced ‘Miss Bessie’s Blues’ is a standout track.

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



### “Tales from Lenny’s Diner”

#### – Sabrina Weeks & Swing Cat Bounce, 2010

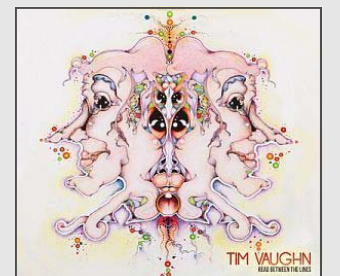
The songwriting was what first caught my attention (10 of the 11 tracks are originals co-written by Sabrina Weeks & Mike Hilliard); the lyrics are stories and mix it up nicely between serious and seriously hilarious! From ‘roses from Wal-Mart’ and a Cuisinart - gifts from the protagonist in ‘Bad Boys’ - to the laundry list of tasks for the woman in ‘Spend a Little Time’ - including pilates and karaoke (what?) - these songs have the ring of authentic life experience (well, maybe not the ‘roses from Wal-Mart’!) The band just boogies on throughout!

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

### “Read Between The Lines” – Tim Vaughn, 2011

Produced by Wide Mouth Mason frontman and guitarist Shaun Verreault, it’s no surprise, then, that this recording rocks hard. The ten originals have a variety of themes that the publicity tells us “give the record’s sound a sharp edge that that is purely Rock and Roll”. Difficult to categorize this CD, I defer to the musician himself who says it’s “like Prince, Led Zepelin, Stevie Ray Vaughn, Jimi Hendrix, and Radiohead all met Los Lobos at the bar in ‘From Dusk ‘Til Dawn’, and Jack White was playing there with Elvis Costello. I think there’s a little bit of myself in there too.”

[www.timvaughnmusic.ca](http://www.timvaughnmusic.ca)





# CD Snapshots Maple Blues Awards

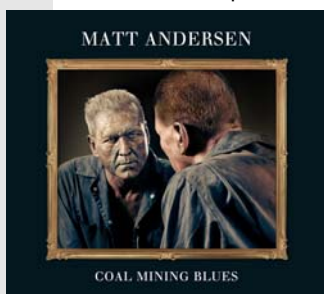
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## “Coal Mining Blues” – Matt Andersen, Busted Flat, 2011

Another exceptional rootsy/bluesy recording from Matt Andersen. Collaborator Colin Linden produced this one, plays on many of the tracks and also co-wrote six of the 11 originals. The well-chosen covers include one from Willie P. Bennett and one from Charlie Rich. There's something for everyone here, in terms of instrumentation ... Matt with acoustic guitar & band, Matt with electric guitar & band (& occasional horns), Matt acoustic with drums/acoustic with Colin on mandolin, even Matt acoustic with John Sheard on piano. Credit also to the stellar rhythm section of Geoff Arsenault & Dennis Pendrith. Love the whole CD but, for me, the pièce de résistance is the title track, 'Coal Mining Blues'.

[www.stubbyfingers.ca](http://www.stubbyfingers.ca)

♫ Maple Blues nomination - Entertainer, Acoustic Act & Male Vocalist of the Year



## “Shame the Devil” – Harrison Kennedy, Electro-Fi 2011

Harrison Kennedy's "Shame The Devil" is a songwriting tour-de-force. Eric Thom wrote the liner notes and they give a fascinating history of Harrison's songwriting career, which began with encouragement from Edward Holland Jr. (of the legendary Holland Dozier Holland writing team). Of course, Harrison is also a multi-instrumentalist (guitar, slide, harmonica, mandolin, banjo & percussion) and he has a killer voice. His 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish at the 2011 International Blues Challenge has raised his profile and he's no longer a Canadian 'secret'. This is a great CD, but take my advice - get his entire discography!

[harrisonkennedy.ca](http://harrisonkennedy.ca)

♫ Maple Blues nomination - Acoustic Act, Male Vocalist & Songwriter of the Year

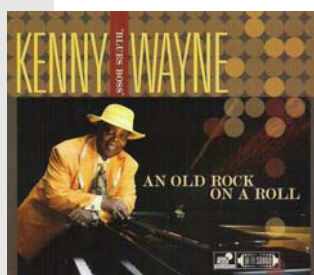


## “An Old Rock on a Roll” – Kenny ‘Blues Boss’ Wayne, Stony Plain 2011

An all-original recording that has an 'old school' sound, Kenny is backed by the Duke Robillard Band, including a four-piece horn section. There's a pleasing mix of tempos and topics, but Kenny's vocals and piano are the focus. One of 2011's best shows in the Ottawa area was Kenny's CD release at Le Petit Chicago presented by Virée Blues Boréale. Kenny was 'dressed to the nines' as we have come to expect, and it was a 'Rocking Boogie Party' from beginning to end. The CD was produced by Duke Robillard, who obviously knows how to get the best sound and clearly enjoyed his duties; Duke notes on the cover that "This album really WAS as much fun as it sounds to make ...."

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

♫ Maple Blues nomination - Entertainer & Keyboard Player of the Year

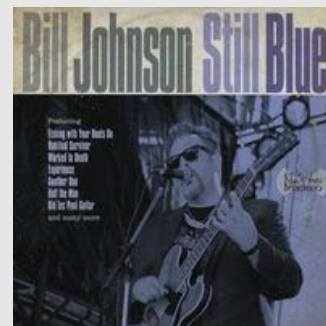


## “Still Blue” – Bill Johnson, Independent, 2011

Bill has been playing blues a long time in British Columbia and spent some time in Calgary playing with Donald Ray Johnson and in the infamous King Edward Hotel band. He was nominated for Guitarist of the Year in 2006 and his earlier release, "Work Songs" garnered very positive reviews. On this disk, he plays electric guitar and slide; he also plays acoustic, though not here. The eight originals are, to my ears, stronger than the covers. Bill is quoted in the liner notes as saying "I am forty six years old, I believe all you need is love, and I'm still blue."

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

♫ Maple Blues nomination - Electric Act, Recording & Songwriter of the Year





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## Postcards From The Road #24: 2012

I'm writing from the back of the new blues-mobile as we cruise through palm trees and warm air - heading to Key West from Miami in January. You know... touring is hard work! As glamorous as that sounds, there is a flip side. We have played 7 venues in 6 days, operating on 3 hrs of sleep, 6 hr drives to afternoon shows, followed by night shows, followed by more of the same. We won't catch up until half way through the full week of Key West shows.

We hit our stride musically at the Bradfordville Blues Club in Tallahassee, FL - a real juke joint in the woods where the bands stay in a haunted band house. A roaring bonfire outside warms the air and passionate blues fans from miles away make this one of the absolute best gigs anywhere. We pulled into the driveway at the haunted house, and promptly after turning the engine off, we hear blaring-loud James Brown, distorting the speakers with his soul power. We opted to take this moment in and not get out of the truck yet (yea that's it... take it in...!?) Jansen found the source and unplugged the late-70s radio sitting on the floor of the dusty garage. Two or three seconds of snap-crackle-and-pop came from the radio, and it died. We were totally freaked out, but shook it off. Half an hour later, we thought we'd go check out the radio again. Plugged it in, and it was nothing but static. We each came to various conclusions, some more super-natural than others... but all in all, it was a haunting experience.

Leading up to this was a big 5-week, 3-country European Scandinavian tour where we spent the first week with new friends, Bryan Lee and Mike Zito - on JT Lauritsen's Blues Cruise and a trip to the Arctic of Svalbard, Norway, the most northern town in the world. 3000 polar bears, 2500 people, and an amazing blues festival. We ate everything from raw seal to reindeer stew. I don't recommend the former. Readers should "like" us on Facebook for the regular updates of our shenanigans on the road!

We recorded our new record, "Seventh Hour", before heading out on this tour. Two days of tracking the band, a bit more time on vocals and picking our favourite takes, and then waiting on 3D photography



and graphic design. We're pushing the boundaries more than ever and opted out of guests on this one. There is a very select group of blues-royalty that I still aspire to record with, someday... just not on this project. We did bring in some high-powered help at the mix though - multi-Juno winner Steve Dawson from Vancouver. His talent added a super-cool spin to the production, and we can't wait for everyone to hear it. My uncle, Tim Wynne-Jones has just been appointed an officer in the Order of Canada, it must have something to do with co-writing all these cool songs on the last couple records, and then 3 more for the new one, right? OK, probably not, but it sure is an honour for him to be part of an elite group of Canadian royalty, and for me to have the coolest uncle!

It's been a tough year for losses to the blues community, and one of the hardest-hitting was Hubert Sumlin's passing. The last time I saw him was at Bluesfest, and he was all smiles, as usual. I will never forget the moment (that happens to have been caught on video), after we recorded together at Sun Studios for Midnight Memphis Sun. I was putting my guitar down and as I turned around, Hubert was coming in for a hug. A true gentleman of the blues, an innovator and a legend. I know I'll miss his spirit along with so many others.

"Seventh Hour" street date is March 27, and the CD Release Party is March 30 at the Rainbow Bistro - Juno weekend!

Bluesy best to y'all,

JW



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January 20 & 21

From Toronto

#### DIANA BRAITHWAITE & CHRIS WHITELEY BAND

Winners of 8 Maple Blues Awards & 6 Juno nominations. Backed by members of the DOWNCHILD Blues Band and Chris's talented son Dan on mandolin.

PROCEEDS TO RIDEAU VISTA & ST. EDWARD'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

February 17

From Kitchener

#### THE ORIGINAL HOMEWRECKERS w. MISS ANGEL

The late great Mel Brown's band and singer/partner. Mississippi/Chicago style with a little New Orleans Mardi Gras thrown in.

PROCEEDS TO RIDEAU WATERWAY LAND TRUST



March 16 & 17

From Toronto

#### BLACKBURN

2010 Maple Blues Best New Artists. Canada's version of the Neville brothers!

PROCEEDS TO EASTER SEALS ONTARIO & HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

April 20/21

From Toronto

#### DAVID ROTUNDO BAND w. JULIAN FAUTH

Multiple Maple Blues Award winning harp player/singer David with Juno Award winning keyboardist Julian and Italian guitar sensation Enrico.

PROCEEDS TO WESTPORT IN BLOOM & WESTPORT LIBRARY



May 18

From Toronto

#### CHRIS ANTONIK BAND

2011 Maple Blues Award nominee for Best New Artist. He brings his excellent band with him including vocalist Josh Williams.

PROCEEDS TO RIDEAU DISTRICT MUSEUM



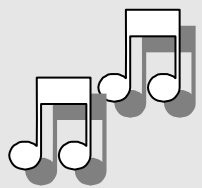
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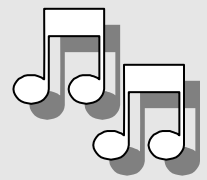
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