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ENTERTAINMENT

Music Box: Johnny Winter's guitar pyrotechnics will wow you

By MICHAEL BUCKLEY, For The Capital

Published January 15, 2009

When it comes to electric blues and blues rock, nobody does it Texas-style like Johnny Winter.

In 1962 young Johnny Winter begged his way on stage at a B.B. King show and received a standing ovation. In 1969, he recorded his own self-titled album and became a hero of the new underground FM radio station audiences across the nation.

Johnny Winter put the blues and rock 'n' roll on even footing with his electric band Johnny Winter And (1970) and as a guest with his brother's band, Edgar Winter's White Trash ("Rock and Roll Hootchie Coo").

Johnny Winter in his own way pretty much defined the electric blues rock genre with his middle-career albums ("Still Alive" and "Well" in 1973, "Saints and Sinners" in 1974 and "Captured Live" in 1976) along with the four albums he produced for Muddy Waters (1977-1980). Those albums, along with the first three albums from fellow Texans ZZ Top quadrupled the blues audience as they ate up the new



Courtesy photo

Catch Johnny Winters at 8:30 p.m. Friday or Saturday at Rams Head On Stage.

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electrifying blues rock at the popular multi-act stadium concerts of the day.

In 1991, Johnny Winter released another must-have CD "Let Me In," which features guest appearances by Dr. John and Albert "Iceman" Collins.

Johnny Winter continues to perform and wow audiences with his guitar pyrotechnics on his tours each year. Most recently, Johnny Winter is celebrated on a new DVD that walks the viewer through his most triumphant decade, the 1970s. Johnny Winter appears Friday and Saturday night at Rams Head On Stage (8:30 p.m. each night).

Rams Head Live in Baltimore presents two five-band shows this weekend. On Friday night look for Block Funktion and Liquid Lucky with Carbonstone, Panacea and The Slow Learners. On Saturday night Rams Head Live has Falling in December and Paperback Tragedy with Stupid Hero, Kill Meow and King Belvedere (8 p.m. each night, all ages welcome).

Sunday

Baltimore's Maysa is a mainstay on the Billboard Contemporary Jazz charts. After graduating from Morgan State University armed with a degree in classical music, Maysa found opportunity as a singer in Stevie Wonder's band.

Her next break came as the lead singer with the British jazz/funk/R&B band Incognito with whom she has recorded seven CDs. By the mid-90s, Maysa began recording solo records including "Feel the Fire," her latest.

Maysa performs two shows on Sunday at Rams Head On Stage (5 and 8 p.m.).

Don't miss the free show by soul singer N'dambi on Sunday night at the John F. Kennedy Center Millennium Stage (6 p.m.). N'dambi is a former singer in Erykah Badu's band. She has recorded two CDs including the latest for the legendary Stax Records label.

Also at midnight Sunday, DJ Moby spins a bewitching set at the 9:30 Club in Washington, D.C. Moby records have sold over 20 million copies. His worldwide success began in the late-90s with soundtrack work for the James Bond film "Tomorrow Never Dies." Moby tracks have been used in thousands of other films.

In 1999 Moby released the CD "Play," which was a massive hit, selling 9 million copies around the world behind singles such as "Natural Blues" and "Porcelain." The 2002 follow up release titled "18" wasn't nearly as well received but still packed a hit song "We Are All Made of Stars."

Since then Moby has been occasionally touring, drinking and selling tea and, well, finally a new dancehall album release in late 2008 called "Last Night," which received a four star review in *Rolling Stone*.

Monday

Inaugural weekend festivities begin a day early on Monday night (8 p.m.) as rapper Jay-Z as savior raises the roof at the Warner Theatre in Washington, D.C. Look for massive production from his nine-piece band, which features two drummers and a big horn section.

Jay-Z (Shawn Corey Carter) has parleyed his musical good fortune into a business empire. He owns two record labels (Def Jam Recordings and Roc-A-Fella Records), an upscale juke joint called the 40/40 Club and a portion of the NBA's New Jersey

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Nets basketball team.

Jay-Z also is recognized as a role model for the way he dresses in classy suits rather than the baggy pants and hooded sweats of the hood. His personal presentation resulted in the *GQ* International Man of the Year award.

While recently reported to have cashed in a few of his business creations (stepping down as president of Def Jam Records and selling off the clothing brand Rocawear for \$204 million), those moves, fortunately, haven't resulted in a less hungry musical artist. Jay-Z continues to find his joy and voice in the music that made all the other success possible.

Look for Erro, short for soul singer Eric Roberson, on Monday night at Rams Head On Stage (8 p.m.). In 1994 Erro was signed to the big label, Warner Brothers records before releasing the single "The Moon" from an as yet unreleased album. He finished a musical theater degree at Howard University and then worked with Jill Scott, Musiq Soulchild and DJ Jazzy Jeff in Philly. In 2006, Eric Roberson appeared on DJ Spinna's release "Intergalactic Soul."

Tuesday

The big inaugural show, "Hey, America Feels Kinda Cool Again," at the 9:30 Club on Tuesday night with Sheryl Crow, the Beastie Boys, Citizen Cope and Justin Jones sold out in a flash.

Another intriguing free show at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts features pianist Alex Hassan, an expert at novelty piano styles of the 1920s and 30s, on Tuesday evening (6 p.m.). Hailing from Northern Virginia, Mr. Hassan also is a collector of syncopated novelty piano-based 78s, and 3,000 pieces of sheet music from the "Golden Age" of popular music.

Wednesday

The band name Enter the Haggis conjures up visions of Celtic troubadours, but the Toronto band takes pride in stretching out. They include elements of rock, bluegrass, folk and more while never straying to far from their Celtic roots.

Look for an exciting and musically intelligent offering from Enter the Haggis. The Wild Rovers open the show at Rams Head On Stage on Wednesday night (8 p.m.).

Head to the free show Wednesday night at the John F. Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage and witness the Peruvian American band Chicha Libre (6 p.m.). Chicha is corn-based liquor and it also is a style of Peruvian dance music.

Like Enter the Haggis, Chicha Libre plays Chicha classics laced with other styles they love such as Latin rhythms, surf music and psychedelic 70s classic rock and Columbian cumbia. This is my kind of show!

Next Thursday

The Neil Diamond tribute band has arrived and they are Super Diamond, featuring Surreal Diamond and Super Diamond. What? The San Francisco band had been performing songs by the pop king for 15 years when it finally happened. The actual Neil Diamond came to see Super Diamond at the House of Blues Hollywood, came backstage, then while watching the show came on stage to sing none other than "I Am, I Said..." Super Diamond-style.

Relive the magic at Rams Head On Stage next Thursday night (8:30 p.m.)

Hot tickets

Tickets for Morrissey's Tour of Refusal concert at 8 p.m. March 14 at the Warner Theatre in Washington, D.C., go on sale at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Tickets also go on sale at the same time tomorrow for another concert, An Evening with Kris Kristofferson at 8 p.m. Feb. 28 at the Sixth and I Synagogue in D.C.

Get tickets at www.LiveNation.com or charge by phone at 1-877-598-8696.

Coming up

The blues are coming back.

The Chesapeake Bay Blues Festival will return to Sandy Point State Park from May 16-17.

Promoter Don Hooker said the event is set even though he has yet to finish booking all the acts.

But so far he confirmed the lineup includes Los Lonely Boys, Jonny Lang, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, perennial favorite Shemekia Copeland and others.

The festival benefits Special Olympics Maryland, We Care and Friends and the Johns Hopkins Cleft and Craniofacial Center.

The festival started in 1998 and has run seven out of the past 10 years. In that time over \$700,000 has been raised for the charities.

The festival was last held in August 2007 but sweltering heat became too much for some to bear. This year Mr. Hooker returned to a May slot figuring people would prefer putting up with potential May rain than the heat of August.

More details will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. Meanwhile, information is posted on the festival's Web site at www.bayblues.org

Michael Buckley is writer, producer and host of the Sunday Brunch each week from 7-10 a.m. on 103.1 WRNR-FM. You can reach Michael at voicesofthebay@aol.com

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