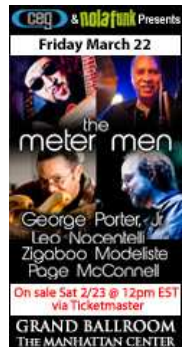




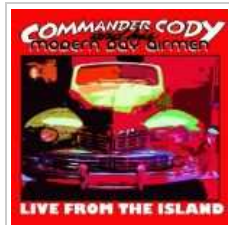
Current Issue Details

Buy Current Issue



Books CDs DVDs Shows

Published: 2013/02/23 by Brian Robbins



Commander Cody & His Modern Day Airmen Live From The Island

Woodstock Records

Archive

Commander Cody (aka George Frayne) has been making the world grin since the late '60s with his brand of well-smoked bluesy boogie, dwelling in a place where freaks and rednecks and heads and truck drivers can shake their butts in harmony. Just as a bolo tie ain't out of style at a Commander Cody show, neither's a tie dye shirt. (Or a tie-dyed bolo, damn it.) Doesn't matter if your forte is lightning-flash double-clutching on a long uphill grade or one-handed joint-rolling while tuning in the radio of your microbus – Commander Cody is playing your song.

Live From The Island is the latest offering from the Commander and his team of musical daredevils known as the Modern Day Airmen. Recorded in the Commander's hometown of Bayshore on Long Island, NY, Live From The Island finds Cody and the Airmen (drummer Steve Barbuto, bassist Randy Bramwell, and guitarist Mark Emerick) joined by special buds Professor Louie and Miss Marie of the Crowmatix. (An added bonus is a cameo by killer picker Bill Kirchen, an alumnus of Cody's original Lost Planet Airmen, who raises some six-string hell on the opener "Too Much Fun".)

Let's face it: with a career working on its fifth decade of existence, the Commander has played some of these tunes a few thousand times, right? I mean, if you're old enough to remember when Cody's "Hot Rod Lincoln" busted into the AM radio charts in 1972 (which I am), you can do the math. The point is, you might expect that this far down the road, the Commander and the Airmen would be going through the motions, picking up the check, and going home – but no.

This cast of characters plays their living asses off. I'm serious.

Cody has always maintained a balance between being a living, breathing, bigger-than-life-and-gonzo-as-gonzo-gets cartoon character and a hellishly good musician (his late brother Chris Frayne's album cover for Lost In The Ozone said it all). Live From The Island is proof that he's still pulling it off – and his band and friends are right there with him. Professor Louie's keyboard presence allows the Commander some extra freedom for boogie-woogie piano madness – and Louie's own solo forays with some fine, fine organ (check out "Riot In Cell Block #9" and "House Of Blue Lights") and tasty accordion (that good ol' "Lost In The Ozone") are perfect. Miss Marie's vocals give the tunes an extra layer of depth and sweetness; Barbuto's drumming throughout the set is a neat mix of unwavering groove and fun changeups; and Randy Bramhall may have a solid body Fender strapped over his shoulders, but he plays the thing with the ferocity and pluck of a rockabilly madman working a big, honkin' upright.



[Bob Dylan to Release Rare Demo on Record Store Day](#)

[Gregg Allman Adds a NYC Book Signing](#)

[The New Mastersounds Will Play Brooklyn Bowl on Monday](#)

[Fiya Powa: Ivan Neville, Stanton Moore, Roosevelt Collier & More to Play Jazz Fest Late Night](#)

[Grace Potter Covers "Casey Jones" at The Cap](#)

[Yoko Ono Celebrates 80th Birthday in Berlin](#)

[Heavy Pets Confirm Spring Tour](#)

[Hot Chip Announce U.S. Dates](#)

Most Read | Most Commented

- [Jimmy Herring: Tales from a Ringer](#)
- [Kyle Hollingsworth Wields His Sledge](#)
- [Dave Grohl's Sound City Players Rock NYC's Hammerstein](#)
- [Jonathan Wilson: Moving Ever Brightly](#)
- [Phish Release Free Song Download for Valentine's Day](#)
- [Jeff Ament Gets RNDM](#)
- [Doing The Radiators' Last Watusi with Dave Malone & Reggie Scanlan](#)
- [Butch Trucks: Beacon Bound](#)

In the meantime, Mark Emerick is some kind of crazy: he steers his Telecaster through wild passages that carom from Bakersfield chicken pickin' to brain-baking psychedelia to jazzy sweetness. That cartoon thing we talked about earlier? Emerick's playing is the *BAP!* and *POW!* in Cody's world.

And then there's the Commander himself, roaring, growling, spinning tales, and working those 88s ("Rock That Boogie" and "Beat Me Daddy 8 To The Bar" are ivory-keyed classics). The fun starts with Cody: it's his patter and presence as ringmaster/band leader/storyteller/space commander that fuels the set's energy and inspires his troops.

And that aforementioned "Hot Rod Lincoln"? Yeah, it's here – wild and woolly and goofy and cool, with enough musical quotes from the original to keep the long-timers happy and enough new quirks and twists to keep things lively. The energy of "Hot Rod Lincoln" sums up *Live From The Island* in general: this may not be groundbreaking music, but it's hellishly fun and magnificently played.

53 minutes worth of smiles that you can't get busted for right here, boys and girls. (Well, unless you have it cranked in a "No Loud Music" zone – but what the hell are you doing there in the first place?)

The Commander is still getting it done, big time.

Brian Robbins wears his tie-dyed bolo tie at www.brian-robbins.com

Comments

There are no comments associated with this posts

Note: It may take a moment for your post to appear

Name: (required)

Email: (required, not public)

Message:

