



# GOLDEN GATE GROOVES

## FROM THE EDITOR



Happy New Year, Blues lovers! 🎸 This year passed incredibly fast (as they all do, it seems to me). The Golden Gate Blues Society (GGBS), which was founded in April 2009, heads into 2010 with some challenges ahead. We're still looking for a new location for our weekly pro blues jam since the closure of The Little Fox, our beloved home base, in early December. Keep the faith; we hope to be up and running again soon, and continuation at the Little Fox is a possibility. We're proud of what we have accomplished, which includes a viable and growing Blues in the Libraries program. And I'm personally proud of the caliber of contributions to this fledgling newsletter. Thanks from the bottom of my heart to everyone who has invested time and energy into making this publication happen!

In this issue of *Golden Gate Grooves*, **Dorothy Hill**, to whom I owe a personal debt of gratitude for her contributions (for more than what you see in print), reviews a recent **Sista Monica** show at Biscuits & Blues in San Francisco. Sista Monica is a local (and national) treasure who has battled back from serious illness to once again energize and amaze her audiences with her voice.

🎸 **Joseph Jordan** presents his interview with **Cathy Lemons and Johnny Ace**--a musical and life partnership that keeps growing in interesting directions. You may recall the article Johnny contributed to the last edition of the newsletter on bluesman Stu Blank. That article touched many readers in unexpected ways. Cathy and Johnny have just finished a new CD, *Shoot to Kill*, which they hope will be released in the next few months.

I'm very pleased to welcome, and introduce, a new contributor to the GGBS newsletter, **Phil Kampel**, an artful photographer based in Sacramento. Most recently, Phil has been concentrating on photographing at various music venues around the Sacramento and San Francisco Bay areas. Many California bands and musicians currently feature his photos on their websites, MySpace pages, and Facebook pages, as well as on CD covers and packaging. A showcase of Phil's photos of Bay Area "sidemen" is provided herein.

We also present in this issue reviews of two CDs by artists close to the heart of the GGBS. The first CD is by **Henry Oden**, a prime mover in our Blues in the Libraries program, reviewed by **Joel Fritz**, and the second CD is by **Bluestate**, which is the band of GGBS President Vince Caminiti, reviewed by **Joseph Jordan**. 🎸 Please look for the dates of upcoming sessions of the Blues in the Libraries program undertaken by the Education Division of the GGBS later in this issue. 🎸 As a continuing service to the blues community, GGBS Treasurer **Brad Robertson** has written a follow-up article to his tax tips for musicians presented in the last issue of *Golden Gate Grooves*, this one entitled "**Music Is Your Business**."

🎸 *Go out and support live Blues! See you on the Blues trail. -Deb Lubin* 🎸

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## Sista Monica Live at Biscuits & Blues

*Article and photos by Dorothy L. Hill*

Monica Parker began her musical voyage in the church choir in her hometown of Gary, Indiana, but it wasn't until she moved to northern California that she made her mark in the blues realm. Longtime resident of Santa Cruz, Parker has won acclaim performing at clubs and festivals all over the world and recorded nine CDs on her own indie label (Mo Muscle Records & Entertainment). Along the way, she garnered a host of prestigious nominations and awards.

Dubbed the Blues Lioness, Parker opened her show on November 7, 2009, at Biscuits & Blues looking the part in a flowing animal print caftan. She opened with what could be



described as an ode to her life story, "Can't Keep a Good Woman Down." As a survivor who battled life-threatening cancer, she knows whereof she speaks. On "Windy City Burner," Parker put all her projective intensity into the lyrics of this tribute to Chicago. Searching the audience for those who would admit to singing in the bathroom or in the car,

she invited them to join her on a funky version of "I'll Take You There." "The Sista Don't Play" was a smoldering warning, crisply delivered with grit and determination. She

engaged the audience on a long conversational prelude related to her tactics to entice a former lover just one more time before launching into "Never Say Never." Parker's gospel influence was showcased on an inspirational "Live in the Spirit." The highlight of the evening was her passionate rendition of "Pussy Cat Moan," which she prefaced with a tribute to the legacy of women like Katie Webster, saying they made it possible for her to sing the blues. She was absolutely delightful on



"Stop Talkin' 'Bout Me Stalkin' You," an ultra fast number with a danceable groove. Her delivery of Mississippi Fred McDowell's "You Gotta Move" was just about as bluesy as she got all night and it beautifully demonstrated her textured phrasing. The audience danced to the funky beat of "Cookin' with Grease" as she answered the call for an encore.

Her superb band was composed of Danny "B" Beconcini on keyboards and organ, Donnie Caruth on guitar, David Tucker on drums, Chris Akin on bass,



Gary Regina on tenor sax, and background vocalist Tammi Brown.



Beconcini is Parker's longtime cohort and musical director and he peeled off one powerful, sizzling solo after another with gospel-charged enthusiasm. The entire band was crisp with imaginative fills and authoritative solos.

Sista Monica Parker melded gospel, blues, and soul in a show filled with audience participation and witty confessions. Her ability to seamlessly weave original tunes with spirit and personal vulnerability made for a memorable performance this evening. But I think I forgot to mention that you will not likely see a more powerful vocalist who digs deep into the lyrics with such rich phrasing and inflection.

Check out Sista Monica at [www.sistamonica.com](http://www.sistamonica.com).



## Straight Shooters: Cathy Lemons and Johnny Ace

*Interview by Joseph Jordan; photos by Victoria Smith*

December 3, 2009

Perched high above the streets of San Francisco, in their cozy apartment filled with musical memorabilia, photographs, plants, and an accommodating cat, I sat down with the musical and personal team of bass player, vocalist Johnny Ace and vocalist Cathy Lemons, two stalwarts of the greater Bay Area blues scene. They've just finished an excellent CD, "Shoot to Kill" and are currently shopping for a label.

*TGGBS: How did the two of you come together?*

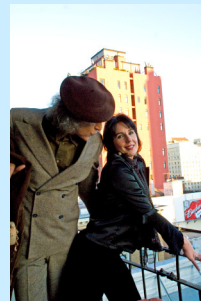
CL: I've known John since 1987, that's about the time I came out here. At the time he was [playing bass] with Johnny Nitro. I don't remember the first meeting, he does. But soon after, when I would run into him, I would find him to be one of the most hilarious people I've ever met in my life.

JA: What? Do I amuse you? (grins)

CL: Yes, still to this day. He was a maniac. He was drinking heavily and I was scared of him... scared because I had my own set of problems. I would say I knew John a good 7 or 8 years before we got together. But every time I saw him, we'd have this immediate connection musically and energetically and intellectually and everything just fit.

JA: And physically.

CL: (laughs) Let's not go there. We finally got together around 1995 and he had really made a huge change in his life. I think mostly for his kids. He had four kids he was raising and I think he wanted to set a solid example that was healthy. So he quit drinking, he quit doing everything. [He] got into meditation. He didn't even drink coffee. Nothing. So that was really inspiring to me too. And we just hit it off after that. We started to first slowly bring our music together as a team. And then, we started to do some rehearsing and writing, which was really wonderful. The thing I love about John was



that he introduced me to great singers that were unknown... the list is pretty big, but he also found these amazing songs that nobody knows, that were just buried. And so that was a huge, wonderful experience to broaden blues ideas. That was really cool. I would say John is a major musical influence, as well as personal. And one thing about John is he'll tell it to you straight. No beatin' around the bush, man... if he likes it, he's going to tell you, but you don't [have to] guess. It's probably why we've been together for 14 years. We do say what we think when we think it and say what we feel when we feel it and we've kept it honest, which is great.

JA: And it does get us in trouble.

CL: It gets you in trouble more than it gets me.

JA: I came out [to SF] in October of 1986 and I know I met Cathy at a Monday night jam at The Saloon [North Beach's venerable blues bar.] No one would hire me 'cause I was drinking a lot and I did scare people. I go [to Johnny] "Nitro,



there's this beautiful lady singing" on stage with this black long hair and she sounded really good too. It was dark, but her eyes looked soulful and heartfelt. It was kind of love at first sight. Now at that time, I was going with a stripper. I asked Nitro, "is she [Cathy] available?" and he goes, "no." Cathy had a boyfriend at the time. In

1990, Cathy was singing with Dave Workman's band; then she would get me gigs with Workman and I eventually joined the band for 3 years... Cathy was [in the band] with him for 7 years. This gave me the opportunity to get to know Cathy. I really liked her

boyfriend. So I had to wait, I don't know how many years until she split up with him, and I made my moves and we got along real good. After a while, 'cause I was still with the stripper, Cathy said, "Johnny, it's either me or her." So I had to get rid of the stripper. That's when we got together musically and from then to now we've been developing that sound and writing songs a lot, and the new CD. It's great to play music, but it's even greater, as an artist, to get your own vocal voice and own sound and to write songs so they become you.

CL: Yes.

JA: Now the cover songs you do, take them and do them in your own style, and try to make them become you, and I learned that real young. I guess I taught that to Cathy, maybe?



CL: Yeah you did, but I also believed that too.

JA: So she knew that already.

CL: I always knew I had to develop my own sound, and I knew it instinctively always. I never tried to sound like another singer after the age of about 23. What Johnny also taught me is that it is important to write.

JA: She always had her own vocal style, that's what I liked. She wasn't imitating anybody and that goes a long way with me.

CL: I didn't get that about writing before Johnny stressed it.

JA: She was always educated enough to write. She has great brain power. I knew she could write easily. And actually, when we first met I told her she "should be writing short stories and long stories. You should be writing." She is an artist too.

*TGGBS: Where are you guys from and why did you get out?*

CL: Oh boy, I had to get out. I was being chased by the cops. Literally. I was in Dallas. Basically, I moved 15 times before I graduated high school. We lived in East Africa, Jamaica, Dallas, the Midwest, Upstate New York, Wisconsin. My mother would do zigzags. That's hard on a kid. Lots and lots of moving.



JA: That's unhealthy psychologically on someone so young. But her mom's a good soul at heart.

JA: I grew up in New York. In Queens, right on the Brooklyn line. It was a great place to grow up. I was born in 1949, so I actually got to hear rock and roll when it came out. I had this cousin who turned me on to it in 1955. So I was brought up on rock and roll and boy, did I love it, ever. And still, now, I love rock and roll. And the vocal groups, what they call doo-wop now, I still love with all my heart. I left New York because I wanted to see the world. I left the neighborhood young and I went to the City all the time, to see all these great groups and that just enhanced my cranium. I just wanted to experiment and see America. And I'm so happy I did.

*TGGBS: Tell me about your respective beginnings in music. What kind of music did you listen to when you were kids? How about now?*

CL: I used to be into female folk music, then swing and jazz, and then one day, I was listening to a commercial on TV, and I was about 22 and I heard Aretha Franklin. Now I know Aretha is a soul singer, but she's also one hell of a profound blues singer. I said, "Oh my God, who is that?" So I started bugging some of the musicians I knew and told them, "get me some of that." I was in a swing band and our bass player

was also in a blues band. And I said to him, “well, I’ve got to go hear you play.” So I heard them and it was “Oh my God, this is it. This is the shit, this is what I want, this is what’s going to work.” And everybody told me, “Your voice is too sweet. You can never do this. This is not you.” So that made me even more determined. So I would go to these gigs and I would sit in, and I just sang from here (points to heart) and I started blowing them away and people would go, “where did that come from?” When I first started singing, I was shouting too much. I had so much in me and so much angst that I didn’t know how to cap it. It was kind of like an explosion in the early years. People were really moved, but it was really hard to maintain vocally. I was pretty strong, but I had to learn to bring that “chest voice” in more openly so I wouldn’t scream my voice out. I was hitting it pretty hard in the beginning. That was what I was feeling too. I’ll make a confession, [now] if I’m alone and hear great blues, I get really upset. It’s a very strange thing. I don’t feel I’m where I need to be musically in my career, and I hear that shit and it moves me so much and I feel this sense of frustration. I listen to the old stuff. I love Chicago blues the best.

*TGGBS: What is it like to be a woman in the business?*

CL: It’s hella hard. Since I was in my early 20s, the first thing I noticed about male musicians is how they help each other and how they bond. There’s a buddy thing that goes on with men and it’s really beautiful and I really love to see that dance. There’s also a network thing among men. Women are often a little bit feared sometimes. There is an underplay of the sex thing. One of the things I loved about John is that he saw me as a person. He always treated me as a person. But it’s very hard and also it’s like a balance. There’s a fear of women from the guys. There’s a lot of power in being an attractive woman and there are currents of desire (from men). So there’s that networking thing that men use and develop that women get cut out of sometimes. It’s different for women; you have to learn to hold your own and not get entangled. I always believed that blues were made for women. It’s a great sexy music—there’s a figure



eight in the blues beat—like a woman’s walk—blues drums are like high heels walking down the street. It’s really interesting how it all pans out. As I am maturing as a singer, I now feel I’d like to mentor

younger women. It’s all about the material. If you’re a young singer, the first rule is that you have got to live life, and second rule is material, material, material. If you don’t write, find some songs that nobody else is doing. But don’t do “Chain of Fools” all night long. Eventually, if you want to become a serious artist, you have to differentiate, dig into

the material and not just do the rote. It’s so easy to fall into that.

*TGGBS: Johnny, is this a particularly exciting time for you musically?*

JA: That’s why I wrote the song (on the new CD) “Sink or Swim” because it’s really the time to sink or swim, ‘cause it’s



not easy now for artists. So we made the record and had a lot of fun making it, although the overdubs and all the mixing were as not as much fun. But yes, I’m very happy, and can’t wait to get it out and

see what happens in the next year or two. I am pretty excited. Local artists like us are not known as much all over the world, and I think we deserve to be up there a little more. Not famous, but at least more respected. I was never like that when I was a kid, I just wanted to have fun... drink wine, get high, and be with women. But now I want to make really good music and I want to be respected as an artist and musician. That’s what I really want. But I am very excited about the new record and the future. It will be fun to see what happens.

*TGGBS: You’ve just debuted a new website and have a new CD called “Shoot to Kill” coming out. When will the CD become available?*

CL: We’re not sure yet. We’re shopping for a label. I’m hoping between 3 to 6 months, but it depends on the business situation.

*TGGBS: So you won’t put it out first to the public and hope a label buys it later?*

CL: No, we won’t.

*TGGBS: Cathy, what have you learned since your last CD was released, the critically acclaimed “Dark Road,” in regard to what you’ve done with the new record?*

CL: Oh wow. What I’ve learned, which is part and parcel in developing as a singer, is the notes, for example, don’t matter so much as to how high or how low you go. It’s the feeling, and the phrasing. But primarily it’s the placement of those notes. And writing is definitely where it’s at. You can tell your own story. I’ve also learned that you can weave the songs in a way so that they fit like a series of short stories into a whole, which is really cool. I’ve also learned not to nitpick it to death. (Here, Johnny claps repeatedly.) Once you get close enough to the ballpark, move forward. I’ve learned to compromise a lot this time.



Johnny, [coproducer] Kid Andersen, and I had to do that. [In the process of] mixing things, you have to compromise.

JA: It's so hard working with another artist, especially when you live with them. It's very hard.

CL: On "Shoot to Kill," the notes I picked were right, they worked. You've got a huge range of notes where you've got to decide what works in telling the story, which is the most important thing, but you've got to pick a note, and each word is carried through by that note, which creates a composition and, in turn, too many notes or the wrong note can make or break a song. And the notes that I'm picking are dead on now. That's a big deal. That's a big thing. That takes years.

JA: You did too many vocal gymnastics in "Dark Road" and you've learned.

CL: That's it, John. It was too much. Less is more.

JA: One thing I learned is how technology blows my mind now. I just can't believe how they can do things now. And I didn't learn it, I just experienced it. It's almost shocking to me that a human being could sing flat and they can go in there, and they set it somehow with the computer for a bad singer to sing on key. That's amazing. It's like cheating. It's also amazing where you can have a musician in New York City and you could send him [the song] and he can play his part via computer. That blows my mind too. To me, that's great, but I also miss being with people in the studio doing that. It's great, it's great, but if we had the money, we could fly people in.

CL: There's more magic when they're playing with you.

JA: Of course. And I'm learning to compromise. You grow as a person. I'm learning to compromise. And it's not easy for someone like me. If you want to keep your own identity, that's the bitch being with a partner. You've got to work together and it's so tricky. It's not easy, but when it works right, it's so good. But when it don't work... ahhhhk-squawk!



CL: We're two stubborn people

JA: Yes we are.

*TGGBS: In addition to Johnny on bass, you've got some stellar players on the recording, like Tommy Castro, Ron Thompson, Pierre Le Corre, David Maxwell [from Boston], Paul Oscher, Artie "Stix" Chavez, and the playing and coproduction talents of the amazing Kid Andersen. How did you go about gathering these players?*

CL: We asked them (laughs).

JA: They're our friends. We just wanted to make a good record and Cathy and I discussed it. What do we want to do? Do we want to make this record all ourselves? Do we want to have guest artists? So we talked about it, and we discussed the sound, and what would be fun.

*TGGBS: How could the local Bay Area blues scene improve economically or otherwise, and do you see the genesis of that happening?*

CL: We have got to work together, all these different artists. And we love each other. A lot of each of us really dig each other. We have to create shows together more, support each other more. We need to give, be generous. Help each other. The California way is the "tit for tat, smile on your face, stab you in the back" type thing. But it doesn't work. And so what we need to do is help each other, mentor young people too. Get them interested and pull them in. Help 'em, teach 'em, show 'em material and shit, and show them what's going on. I'm really excited when I see things that are going on. Like E. C. Scott's show [EC's Jook Joint, shown locally on KOFY, TV 20]. I love that. And I just have a feeling in my gut that the wheel's turning around again. I do. It's a good time actually. Blues always goes in waves. It goes way down and it comes back around. And I think it's about to come back around.

JA: I try to be positive, and I do agree with what Cathy said, but we need more venues. San Francisco especially is a very rich city and you could get anything you want in this city musically and, to me, it's a little spoiled. There's too much talent here. You could do whatever you want, go see whatever you want. But, unfortunately, there are only three blues clubs [Biscuits & Blues, The Saloon, and Lou's Pier 47] and maybe a couple of other ones that don't pay at all hardly and there's not enough clubs to support all these bands. That's why, in the golden days of music, there was so much work, because they didn't have video games and computers, and that's why musicians got along so well together because there was so much work. When there ain't a lot of work, it's dog eat dog. There's still fellowship among musicians, but it ain't like it was. If you know any millionaires that want to open up a nightclub, please have them do it. We need more venues. I hope it gets better, that's all I can say. It's a tough thing.

*TGGBS: What would you two like to see happen within a locally oriented blues society? What do you think a role should be, what would be most helpful?*

JA: A blues society should give work to the musicians and educate people that don't know about blues. You put on a show and get people to come and you educate people with videos in these shows, as well as the live performances. You get like a club, you get people that don't know anything about blues, and turn them on to it. You've got to do it

once a month, at least. Have 'em make a big happening of it, in a big hall where people could make money who perform. You could sell t-shirts and membership cards. It could be done. You could also put a record label together. My first idea though is to put on shows that promote blues. Now the bitch is there's 20 or 30 bands that will want to play the shows. How many groups are you going to have? I would do it once a month. You need brains, money, and to spread the word. And it can be done, but you've got to do it with love. I think if you could develop your society [the GGBS], it would help a lot. And also education in the schools would be great.

CL: It's a huge thing. Communication and love for the music is the whole thing. Set up a game plan. A few small steps first, and you can't get overwhelmed. I really want to see your society continue. It's really needed.

JA: You have something here that can be really good, if not great; that's what I'm talking about.

TGGBS: *Are you excited about the state of the world?*



CL: Even though things might seem bleak, we have the power and we have the choice. [We have it] every second of our lives. If we can just work together, especially the blues community... there's a lot of great people, a lot of great talent here and people I really love deeply. If we could all pull together, we could pull this

thing off the ground. The wheel is turning and you've got to have faith. I really believe that everything is possible, anything at all.

JA: I'm tryin' to be positive. If everyone could help one another and the world by doing something positive, even picking up a piece of trash on the ground, or helping a person who has no money by giving them a quarter or a dollar bill... that's a little help. I wake up in the morning and I thank whoever's above there for letting me breathe and for giving me the gifts. It's such a great, beautiful world. I just wish man would be able to get along.

CL: Yes and it's a holy miracle that we're alive.

JA: Yes. There's lots of hope. The last 10 years, I've been trying to inspire young people to be artists or to be who they are. It's not over, I tell them. If you can do stuff, it's really important to do what you want to do with your life. Everyone is given a gift, and it's really important to nurture that gift, and if you don't, you'll be miserable. I think love is the answer.

TGGBS: *Anything else you'd like to talk about?*

JA: I tell you one thing. I am so happy with what I'm doing. I never regret playing bass or blues and it's a great thing. To be an artist is just a great privilege. I really love it.

CL: I love live performance. I love studio shit too. But live performance, when it's on, there's nothing like it in the world for me. And the love you feel with the people you're playing with is like a high. It's really great. If you're on. There's nothing like it.

JA: And the other extreme is when it ain't, there's nothing like that neither. (They both laugh.)

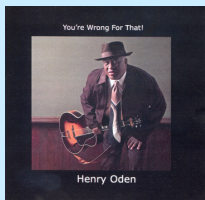
*Check out Cathy and Johnny's new website at:*  
<http://www.lemonace.com>

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## CD REVIEWS

### Henry Oden, *You're Wrong for That*

*by Joel Fritz*



Bay Area bassist, songwriter, and singer Henry Oden has a new CD out titled *You're Wrong for That*. Eight of the 10 tracks on the CD are originals. One tune, *Haywire*, is an instrumental. The remainder features vocals by Oden.

My favorite tracks are:

- *Stressful Situation*, a song about a bad relationship with lyrics built around some interesting internal rhymes.

Oden's vocal has a warm laid back quality that fits the material well. Michael Robinson plays a good keyboard solo.

- *Trying to Get to You* has a country music flavor. Oden sings about his difficulties in reaching his destination. The spoken cell phone conversation that introduces the piece adds some humor. The late Norton Buffalo plays countrified harp on this track and helps to unify the sound. Kenny Marchese plays some nice guitar.

- *Please Come Home* is my favorite song on the CD. It's an electrified country blues with Oden on vocal, Kenny Marchese on guitar, and Norton Buffalo on harp. Marchese's guitar is reminiscent of Jimmy Rogers and Lightnin' Hopkins without copying either. Norton Buffalo switches to Sonny Boy Williamson II mode and nails it.
- *Your Time is Gonna Come* has a soul music beat propelled by Robi Bean's percussion and Oden's bass. This is the only track on which Bean plays. His playing has his characteristic snap. He and Oden provide the strong yet subtle rhythm this kind of song needs.

The CD as a whole is very well produced. All of the instruments come through clearly in the mix. The vocals were at a level that made it easy to understand the lyrics. It sounded equally good through speakers and headphones. Two of the tracks were recorded separately from the others. *Who Is He and What Is He to You*, a Bill Withers tune, was

recorded live in 2001 at the Boom Boom Room in San Francisco. The instrumental *Haywire* is a studio recording from 1990, previously released on a CD titled *eclectic blue*.

Oden is a marvelous bass player. His tone, attack, and timing are flawless. His bass lines enhance every song on the CD. Many musicians contributed to this recording. Some of the best known are: Norton Buffalo, as mentioned above, who played harp on two tracks; Lady Bianca, who sang backup vocals on two tracks; and Ron Thompson, who played guitar on the genre-busting track, David Essex's *Rock On*, the 1974 classic rock favorite. In the interesting possible pseudonym category, drummer and engineer Filbert Desenix has a name that alludes to Gilbert Shelton's Wonder Warthog.

cptimemusic – 2009 (<http://www.cptimemusic.com/credit>)  
Also check out: <http://www.henryoden.com/>

## Bluestate, *Duracool*

by Joseph Jordan

Clocking in at around 55 minutes, *Duracool*, the first studio album by Bay Area band Bluestate, is a solid effort with enough variety to please most any blues or jazz-blues fan. The production values are strong and the mixing pro; however, with a few exceptions, there is little drive to

the proceedings. The album lacks intensity, although it's a pleasant listen.

There are no original songs on the CD, which might explain why the band's unable to completely dominate or at least fully inhabit the material, but their nonstandard song choices are perfect for their overall sound—a little serious ("Early in the Morning"), a little playful ("Kleptomaniac"), and, on one of their strongest cuts (the blues-ballad "Salt In My Wounds"), particularly effective. "Wishing Well," another standout cut, is a rocker, with guitarist Vince Caminiti at his rhythm-playing best, and Greg Heumann's vocal is dead-on for this lament of unrequited love.

At first listen, you might think vocalist (and harmonicist and saxophonist) Heumann is the whole Bluestate show, as he sings lead on every track and provides solos on several of them as well. He's a good, but not sensational, singer; however, he never overdoes it and, more often than not, his phrasing and vocal prowess are just right for the 12 songs on the album. Often though, listeners may wish for some more variety of expression than Heumann's able to produce. What he can do is bring a complete package of

musicianship to the album and his harp playing is outstanding. Guitarist Caminiti never plays beyond his ability and is, at times, inspired. He's a fine soloist, and a great rhythm player, grounding most every tune with tasteful and solid musical backing. His fills are sure and impressive, and his dual interplay with Heumann provides the arrangements with other-than-ordinary bounce.

Bluestate's tracks are anchored by the rhythm section of Tom DiFiglio on drums and Pat Tinling on bass. Perhaps with more pop in their part of the mix, the songs might have blues-rocked a bit more, as the bottom tends to have a spare sound. Keyboardist George Landreth rounds out the band, although one would hope to hear more of his keyboard work (as in his bouncy solo during "Wishing Well").

It's not that Bluestate's tunes lack musical cohesion or fluidity, it's just that a driving "oomph" factor is missing. The CD sound is consistent throughout though, and that's more than most new ensembles are able to capture.

Long a favorite live-performance band in the Bay Area, Bluestate's *Duracool* is an enjoyable first studio effort and one looks forward to hearing the quintet progress as they continue down the road apiece.

(Disclaimer: Bluestate guitarist Vince Caminiti is President of The Golden Gate Blues Society.)

No Dues Blues – 2009

Check out: <http://www.bluestateband.net>



## Performance Art—Blues Sidemen/Sidewomen in Action

*by Phil Kampel*



*Danny Caron (Tom Rigney and Flambeau; formerly with Charles Brown)*



*Carolyn Dahl (Tom Rigney and Flambeau)*



*Tom Poole and Keith Crossan (Tommy Castro Band; Tom also plays with several other bands)*



*Mike Emerson (Elvin Bishop and many others)*



*Scot Sutherland (Tommy Castro Band)*



*Ronnie Smith (Tommy Castro Band; formerly with Ron Hacker)*



*Tony Stead (Tommy Castro Band and many others)*



*Performance Art by Phil Kampel  
(continued)*



*SE Willis (Elvin Bishop)*



*SE Willis (doing double duty in Elvin Bishop's band)*



*T Moran (Daniel Castro Band)*



*Paul Revelli (Carlene Carter, Earl Thomas, Frank Bey, and many others)*



*Ian Lamson (Beaufunk, Natasha James band; formerly with Elvin Bishop)*



*Nancy Wright (freelance first call saxophonist for many bands)*



*Mike Schermer (formerly of the SF Bay Area; now living in Austin and playing with Marcia Ball) and Ed Earley (Elvin Bishop)*

*Check out more of Phil Kampel's performance art photos at:  
[www.philkampel.smugmug.com](http://www.philkampel.smugmug.com)*

*A number of Phil's architectural and band photographs have been published and Phil is now working with the Sacramento area film-making community to provide still photography services.*



## Music Is Your Business

by Brad Robertson

In the last issue of *Golden Gate Grooves*, I provided some overall tax tips for musicians. The greater focus of that article was on helping you see that you, as an artist, are also trying to make a profit and that you should operate in a businesslike manner. If, in fact, you are not making a profit and have many expenses or losses instead, you are allowed to deduct those losses on your tax return, but only if you are supporting your art for attempted profit and not treating it as a hobby. For many artists, making money isn't the central goal and running a business is not even a concern. However, success in creating and disseminating your work requires certain businesslike decisions. The first decision is to treat your art as a for-profit business.

Any business can make money or lose money. The key in taking advantage of legitimate tax deductions is your intention or attempt to make money and be profitable. The best way to do this is to be organized. Keep track of your income and expenses and keep records – a very small effort on your part will pay off in tax savings.

Taking the time to establish the proper business entity for your art is an easy way to show your determination as a for-profit business. Doing so shows that you are serious about being successful (and yes, you still need to keep good records). There are different types of business entities (or legal structures) that each have different income tax filing requirements. In considering the proper legal structure for your business, you will learn how to best view your art, understand and simplify its business aspects, and minimize your taxes. The following is a short overview of the most common legal business structures for your consideration

### Sole Proprietorship

A Sole Proprietorship is an unincorporated single-owner business. It is not separate from the individual. If you don't set up another business type, then by default, you as an artist are a sole proprietor. This is the simplest form of business to run. Your income and expenses are filed as a part of your personal taxes on a Schedule C form.

The main disadvantage of a Sole Proprietorship relates to legal liability. Your personal assets (home, car, equipment, etc.) are at risk for your business liabilities. If, for example, you are sued for copyright infringement or advances (large business loans), you may be personally responsible for payment later if the judgment goes against you. If you want a business entity that affords you certain liability protection, then consider a Limited Liability Company (LLC) or a corporation.

### Partnership

A Partnership is similar to a Sole Proprietorship, except that it involves two or more owners. Band members might want to form a Partnership and earn income and track expenses as a group or at least put one person in charge of tracking band expenses. A Partnership files a separate Form 1065 Partnership tax return and, at the end of each year, the profit or loss "flows through" the organization to each partner's personal tax return. It is highly advisable to have a written Partnership agreement documenting the percentage of ownership and profit or loss for each partner.

A Partnership also faces the same dangers of personal liability as a Sole Proprietorship. Recently, many people have preferred to form an LLC instead.

### Limited Liability Company

An LLC is a newer type of business entity allowed by state law. LLCs are popular because they combine the simpler reporting requirements of a Sole Proprietorship or Partnership with limited personal liability for the debts and actions of the business (similar to a corporation).

A single-owner LLC reports income and expenses on a Schedule C form, similar to a Sole Proprietorship. A multiple-member LLC files a Form 1065 Partnership tax return.

### Corporation

The traditional corporation is called a C Corporation. It is a completely separate entity from its owners. It files AND pays its own taxes. Owners of the corporation hold shares in the company, a.k.a. stock. You would become an employee of your corporation and be paid through payroll for work performed. Any profits taken from the corporation would then be taxed again to you personally as dividends. Reporting and record-keeping requirements are stricter for corporations than for other business entities. A corporate structure is advisable for very large, very profitable ventures, especially where startup capital is required and investors are brought onboard.

### S Corporation

An S Corporation avoids the double taxation of the C Corporation. Income and expenses are reported similar to a C Corporation, but an S Corporation does not pay its own taxes. Instead, the profit or loss "flows through" to the owners' personal returns, similar to a Partnership. There are requirements to pay wages to the owners (if work is



being done and the company is profitable), making the reporting requirements more difficult than that of a Partnership or LLC; however, there are certain tax advantages to an S Corporation, especially one that is profitable.

#### Summary

This is a very limited overview of business entity types. I suggest you do further research and talk with a tax or legal professional prior to forming any of these various business types. Each situation is different and each business entity has its own advantages and disadvantages. The individual artist has the most freedom to choose from the simplest to the most complex business type, depending on his/her situation, profits/losses, and potential liabilities.

#### A Quick Note

For 2009 tax purposes, you should determine to whom you have paid \$600 or more during the year for services provided by non-employees. Include only payments made

in the course of your trade or business; personal payments are not included. Obtain and prepare IRS Form 1099-MISC entitled "Miscellaneous Income for 2009." Give the worker a copy and file the original with the IRS. The worker will need to pay federal self-employment tax on these amounts in addition to regular income tax. The reporting of these independent worker payments is required by the IRS. If you don't file Form 1099s for these payment types, the IRS can deny you tax deductions for them.

Soon it will be a new year, with your 2009 personal tax return being due April 15. Financially speaking, think about where you have been, where you are now, and where you hope to be next year. Replace 'hope' with planning and you will have the best opportunity to achieve your goals.

Happy New Year!

*Brad Robertson is a C.P.A. and the Treasurer of the Golden Gate Blues Society.*

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## GGBS Blues in the Libraries Program

*by Joseph Jordan, Education Committee Chair*

The Golden Gate Blues Society Education Committee continues to book engagements of the popular "Blues in the Library" performance presentations. Instructor/musician **Henry Oden** has masterfully compiled several hour-long sessions designed to give young people an awareness of and appreciation for the blues. All engagements will be held in branch libraries of the San Francisco Public Library system and all are free and open to the public. If you have any questions or comments about the program, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact us at: [education@tggbs.org](mailto:education@tggbs.org).

Please stop by one or more of the following upcoming presentations in San Francisco:

January 15 at 3:00 p.m.  
Mission Branch  
300 Bartlett Street  
(at 24th Street between Mission and Valencia streets)

Tuesday, February 9, 2010 at 3:00 p.m.  
Richmond Branch  
351 - 9th Avenue  
(Children's/Program Room entrance is located on 10th Avenue between Clement and Geary)

Thursday, February 11, 2010 at 10:30 a.m.  
Sunset Branch  
1305 18th Avenue  
(at Irving Street between Lincoln Way and Judah Street)

Friday, February 12th at 4:00 p.m.  
Bernal Heights Branch  
500 Cortland Avenue  
(between Andover near Moultrie streets)

Tuesday March 2nd at 10:30 a.m.  
Chinatown Branch  
1135 Powell Street  
(between Jackson and Washington streets)





### Upcoming 2010 Blues Events that Caught the Editor's Eye (SF Bay Area and Slightly Beyond)

Although we're very sad about the loss of the Little Fox and Fox Theater to foreclosure, as you can see below, we're fortunate to still have so many venues at which to hear live Blues! Support these venues so that they will survive!

- January 1: Terry Hanck Band, Biscuits & Blues, San Francisco
- January 2: Party with Kid Andersen, Bob Welsh, and AC Myles, Poor House Bistro, San Jose
- January 2: Bobby Murray Blues Revue, Verve Lounge, Aptos
- January 3: Bobby Murray's All-Star Revue, Boom Boom Room, San Francisco
- January 6: The Meters Experience, featuring Leo Nocentelli and Michael Warren, Yoshi's, San Francisco
- January 8: Joe Louis Walker, Biscuits & Blues
- January 8: Tip of the Top, JJ's Blues, San Jose
- January 9: David "Honeyboy" Edwards, Biscuits & Blues
- January 9: Daniel Castro, followed by the Jackie Payne/ Steve Edmonson Band, Lou's Pier 47, San Francisco
- January 14: Janiva Magness, Biscuits & Blues

- January 14: Candye Kane, Verve Lounge
- January 15: Candye Kane, Biscuits & Blues
- January 15: Ed Earley Band, Rancho Nicasio, Nicasio
- January 20: Chris Cain, Yoshi's, Oakland
- January 21: Robert Cray Band, Yoshi's, San Francisco
- January 22: EC Scott, Biscuits & Blues
- January 22: Chris Cain, JJ's Blues
- January 22: RJ Mischo and Kid Andersen, Mojo Lounge, Fremont
- January 28: Mark Hummel's Harmonica Blowout featuring James Cotton, Paul Oscher, Mojo Buford, and Johnny Dyer, Moe's Alley, Santa Cruz
- January 29-31: Mark Hummel's Harmonica Blowout, Yoshi's, Oakland
- January 29: Chris Cain, Biscuits & Blues
- January 30: Earl Thomas, Biscuits & Blues
- February 13: Maria Muldaur, 142 Throckmorton, Mill Valley
- February 14: Otis Clay, Johnny Rawls, and Earl Thomas, Horsemen's Club, Sacramento
- March 26: Roy Rogers and Ray Manzarek, Freight & Salvage, Berkeley

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The Golden Gate Blues Society is a nonprofit affiliate of The Blues Foundation, based in Memphis, Tennessee. The purpose of the Golden Gate Blues Society is to enhance the appreciation and understanding of the Blues in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area through:

- sponsorship and promotion of Blues performances;
- education programs and publications on the performance, interpretation, preservation and growth of the Blues as an American art form; and
- the financial as well as moral support of the San Francisco Bay Area Blues community.

