

R O B E R T R O S S

Sleight of Hand





Website: www.RobertRossBand.com

Calendar: www.RobertRossBand.com/calendarnow.htm

Sound Clips: www.RobertRossBand.com/soundclips.htm

The Robert Ross Band features:

Mark Dann (bass) played with Otis Rush, Shawn Colvin, Garth Hudson (The Band), Tom Paxton, Eric Anderson, John Gorka, Richard Shindell, & Christine Lavin.

Steve Holley (drums) played with Elton John, Paul McCartney, Junior Brown, & Joe Cocker etc,

Jon Loyd (keyboards) played with Chris Barron (Spin Doctors), Sandra Bernhard, G.E. Smith (Saturday Nite Live), Deni Bonet (Cyndi Lauper), Jimmy Vivino (Conan O'Brien Show), & Tommy Byrnes (Billy Joel).

Robert Ross (vocals/guitar/harmonica) played with John Lee Hooker, Lightnin' Hopkins, Brownie McGhee, Mama Thornton, Otis Rush, and Big Joe Turner.



ROBERT ROSS BAND

Robert Ross is an award winning blues artist, a nasty guitarist, a soulful vocalist and an imaginative songwriter. He and his band play hard driving boogie, hip grinding soul, burning rock 'n' roll, and low down & dirty blues. David Hinckley of the NY Daily News once wrote, "Robert Ross is one of the most impressive young bluesmen around."

Robert's new political protest CD "What Are We Fighting For?" was released in September, 2004 on Fountainbleu Records. The four song protest CD examines the 2000 election, freedom, corporate greed, nationalism, and the War in Iraq. As an artist, Ross felt compelled to speak out against some unjust and reckless government policies.

In March of 2002, Fountainbleu Records released "Sleight of Hand" which showcased the best material from two previous Ross recordings. The CD was re-mastered by Dennis Ferrante (Elvis, Aerosmith, John Lennon). Guitar World called Sleight of Hand, "an excellent new CD." Radio stations in a few dozen cities around the country loved it. This CD led to quite a few appearances at blues festivals and blues society events.

In 1999, Brambus released a live CD entitled, "Lightness... to Dark". It was also released in the USA on Blue Planet Records as, "It's Alive". The band did six European tours from 1996 to 2000.

In 1996, Brambus Records released "Darkness... to Light" in Europe. The band began touring Europe extensively to packed houses. Reviews have been numerous and impressive. The CD received lots of airplay too.

In 1994 Johnny Winter's version of Ross' "Sittin' In The Jailhouse" was re-released on Legacy Records, a subsidiary of Sony, on a "best of" CD entitled "A Rock 'n' Roll Collection". Winter's version of the song was originally released on Blue Sky Records (CBS) in February, 1980, on an LP entitled "Raisin' Cain". Other artists who have recorded my music include The City Boys with "Blue" Lou Marini & Tom "Bones" Malone from the Blues Brothers, rockabilly singer Johnny Seaton, and the late great guitarist Danny Gatton.

In 1991, Ross' own Blue Planet Records released "Rockin' the Rails". Jim Coen of Guitar World wrote, "Ross sings convincingly, and is an exceptional slide player deserving a much larger audience, 3 1/2 stars!" Robert Makin of the Aquarian wrote, "If you closed your eyes you'd swear Ray Charles was playing Buddy Guy's guitar... one of the East Coast's best and most inventive blues men." Rafael Alvarez wrote in the Baltimore Sun, "Ross could make 'God Bless America' stand on its head and rock... Ross fares well against Stevie Ray Vaughan."

Winning the NY Music Award as Best Blues Artist in 1989 resulted in some long overdue hometown recognition. Ross has been nominated a total of six times over the years alongside such stars as Johnny Copeland, Taj Mahal, John Hammond Jr., and

Roscoe Gordon. Robert has also won an East Coast Rocker Award for Best Blues Artist and came in a very close second in the Brooklyn Brewery Blues Contest to gracious winner Michael Hill. The soon to be well known Popa Chubby came in fourth.

An LP called "It's Rough 'n' Tough" was released in Europe on Victoria Records, a subsidiary of RCA in 1984. A Guitar World review by Rafael Alvarez read, "Robert Ross is an imaginative writer with files of Twilight Zone tales accumulated in his wanderings... soulful, vigorous guitar playing... agile cat quick licks." That contract was the culmination of a lot of hard work while living and performing in France for a year.

Robert's very first record, "Introducing Robert Ross" (Baron Records) placed 7th nationally in the 1981 Baltimore Sun Record of the Year. The 4 song disc got a lot of airplay in Europe and Africa, as well as in the USA. It also received some rave reviews.

Robert has appeared on numerous radio and TV shows in Europe as well as the USA including ABC's "Alive at Five" and WB's "Good Morning America". Robert's songs "69 Chevy" and "Tonight's The Night" appeared on ABC's daytime drama "All My Children". Ross performed at the 2002 Chicago Blues Festival and the Montreal International Jazz Festival where they blew away 10,000 fans. Altogether, Robert appears on 8 internationally distributed recordings including the 1976 Big Joe Turner classic on Spivey Records entitled, "I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter". That was the label of classic blues singer Victoria Spivey.

In addition to working with Big Joe Turner for Spivey Records & Doc Pomus, Ross also worked with Lightnin' Hopkins, John Lee Hooker, Big Mama Thornton, Brownie McGhee, Memphis Slim, Sunnyland Slim, Otis Rush, Dr. John, J.B. Hutto, Victoria Spivey, Louisiana Red, Eddie Kirkland, Floyd Jones, Homesick James, Bobby Lewis, Charles Ward (Ink Spots), Pinetop Perkins, Charles & Cyrille Neville, David "Honey Boy" Edwards, Charles "Honey Boy" Otis, S.P. Leary, Washboard Doc, Bill Dicey, Curtis Steigers, Curtis Knight, Charles Walker, Linda Hopkins, Bobby Lewis, Wilbert Harrison, & Champion Jack Dupree. Ross has also shared the bill with: Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Winter, Edgar Winter, Albert Collins, Albert King, Freddie King, Gatemouth Brown, Willie Dixon, Rick Danko & Richard Manuel (The Band), Roomful of Blues, Dickie Betts (Allman Brothers), Rick Derringer, Leon Russell, Bo Diddley, Ron Wood, Papa John Creach, James Cotton, Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, Guy Clark (The Byrds), Ronnie Earl, Lonnie Mack, John Hammond, Johnny Copeland, Jethro Tull, Fiddler On The Roof, Laverne Baker, Clifton Chenier, Son Seals, Spencer Davis, Duke Robillard, Lonnie Brooks, A.C. Reed, Rory Block, Paul Oscher, Bobby Radcliffe, Lazy Lester, Bobby Rush, Eddy Clearwater, Roscoe Gordon, Mose Allison,

ROBERT ROSS BAND

Jorma Kaukonen, Aretha Franklin, & John Lennon. Robert has also jammed with the likes of Muddy Waters, Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Albert King, Johnny Winter, Richie Havens, Blind John Davis, Luther Guitar Johnson, Popsy Dixon (Holmes Brothers), Sonny Rhodes, Freddie Below (Little Walter), Jay McShann, Junior Wells, and Art Blakey.

Robert Ross is a very distinctive and soulful singer who knows how to sell a song. He is a killer guitarist whose spine-tingling solos tell a story mere words alone cannot express. Albert King added, "He's so fast, lightning would have to get on roller skates to catch him." He also plays some very wicked slide guitar and some perty dern good harmonica too. Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page used one word to describe this group, "HOT!!!"

Robert Ross is the total package. Bill Carlton of the NY Daily News expressed it best when he wrote, "Robert Ross is a fine singer, a snappy lyricist, and an even better blues rock guitarist... cut from the same cloth as B.B. King, Muddy Waters, and Johnny Winter... Time after time Ross delivers the goods".



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Venues Played

Major North American Music Festivals: Montreal International Jazz Festival, Chicago Blues Festival, Benson & Hedges Blues Festival, Woodstock Revisited, Riverhead Blues Festival, NY Folk Festival, Blues 2000 Festival, Absolute Sounds of the City

Regional Festivals: Riverhead Blues Festival, NY Folk Festival, Brews Blues & BBQ, Stanhope Blues Festival, Rockland County Blues & Jazz Society Festival, Bucks County Blues Society Festival, Wedgestock, Cedar Beach Blues Festival, Staten Island Freedom & Peace Festival, SoNo Arts Festival (S. Norwalk CT), September Concerts, Nyack First Night, Vermont Summer Sound Festival, DUMBO Arts Festival

Selected NY Area Venues: B.B. King's, Bottom Line, Tramps (on 15th St.), Tramps (on 21st St.), Lone Star Cafe, Lone Star Roadhouse, The Apollo, Village Vanguard, Bodles, Folk City, Elysian Cafe, Chicago Blues, Dan Lynch's, The Ritz, Max's Kansas City, CBGB's, Squat Theater, Dr. Generosity, Mondo Cane, China Club, Bells Of Hell, Terra Blues, Manny's Car Wash, Bitter End, Kenny's Castaways, Stephen's Talkhouse, My Father's Place, Stanhope House, Turning Point, Crossroads, Bodles, Player's Tavern, Coney Island Museum, St. Mark's Church, Washington Square Church, NJ Performing Arts Center, Vail-Levitt Theater.

Foreign Countries Toured: Canada, France, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Lichtenstein, Norway

States Toured:

Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Ohio, Illinois, Texas, Kansas, District of Columbia

Radio & TV Appearances:

National Public Radio Blues (a syndicated network of 100 stations), Deluxe (a network of over 200 stations), Power Play TV, WBAI, WFMU, WFDU, WKCR, WDHA, KNBA, WNYE, WBGO, WSIA, WNTI, QPTV, WZJS, WATA, WNCW, WPCS, WPKN, WFCS, WCCC, White Plains Cable TV

Robert Ross

Birth of the Blues Songs

ROBERT ROSS IS AN AWARD WINNING BLUES ARTIST, A NASTY GUITARIST, A SOULFUL VOCALIST AND AN imaginative songwriter. He and his band play hard driving boogie, hip grinding soul, burning rock 'n' roll, and low down & dirty blues. Bill Carlton of the *New York Daily News* expressed it best when he wrote, "Robert Ross is a fine singer, a snappy lyricist, and an even better blues rock guitarist ... cut from the same cloth as B.B. King, Muddy Waters and Johnny Winter. Time after time Ross delivers the goods." Every song has a story. Robert's original songs have more – kind of real "mini-novels" on how they came to be and what they are about, little insights into what the inspiration was. Here go some of them. – P. B.

The Ring

I was crossing the street and looked down and saw something glitter in the noonday sun. I reached down and picked up a ring. My first thought was, "Hey, maybe it has some gold in it," and I stuffed it into my pocket, thinking how I would spend the money.

Later that day I came home and was talking to my wife, when I remembered the ring in my pocket. I said, "Look what I found."

She looks it over for about three seconds and says, "You know what this is, don't you?"

"Yeah, it's a ring," says I matter of factly.

She says, "Duh, of course it's a ring ... but what kind of a ring?"

"It's a gold ring?" I said, not quite getting her drift.

"That's not what I mean, Robert. I mean it's a wedding ring. You wouldn't know about that 'cause you never got me one ... Did you read the inscription?"

"Uh, no, I didn't know it had an inscription."

"Well, it does. Read the inscription," she said, handing me back the ring. "Well?" she says.

"It says, 'June 15th, 1993.' Wow, that's the same date as today, but a different year," says I.

"You know what this means?" says my wife with a gleam in her eye.

"Uh, yeah, it's an incredible coincidence," says I, proudly.

"Noooo, it means that the couple had a fight on their anniversary. She took off her ring and threw it into the street, you walked by and picked it up and showed it to me."

She starts to put the ring on her finger. "You never did give me a wedding ring if you remember. This one will do just fine, thanks."

Mr. Jelly Roll

All blues singers seem to have at least one really bawdy, low down and dirty blues song. I didn't to have one so I set about to write one. I worked on it for three or four days, finally finishing the tune early in the morning.

I had a gig that afternoon at a women's community residence in East New York, Brooklyn. Having just finished writing the song, I didn't have the lyrics memorized, so I wrote them out on a big index card, grabbed my acoustic guitar and drove off to the gig.

In case you don't know East New York, Brooklyn ... it is without a doubt one of the roughest and most dangerous places in America. Loaded with burned out or oth-

Robert Ross.

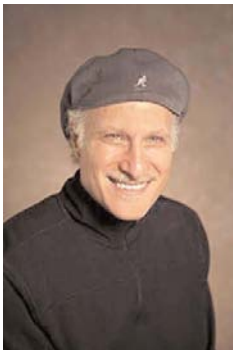


PHOTO COURTESY OF FONTAINBLEU REC.

erwise abandoned buildings and vacant lots. The area was crawling with prostitutes, drug addicts and street hustlers. A women's community residence is where ex-drug addicts, ex-convicts and the mentally ill live until they are deemed fit to re-enter society. Some of these women hadn't seen a man in a long, long time, let alone heard one sing a song like "Mr. Jelly Roll." I didn't know what kind of a place my agent (Freddie Orange of Hospital Audiences, Inc.) was sending me to, I just gladly accepted the gig as always, and called the facility for directions. I've performed in hundreds of mental institutions, nursing homes and rehab places of all kinds, but I wasn't prepared at all for a women's community residence... Uh, uh...

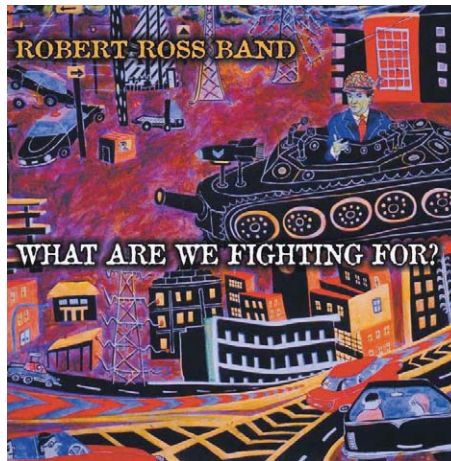
I took out my guitar and started to sing the tune reading the lyrics right off the card. Immediately the women started laughing and hooting and hollering and getting all excited. Some of them began jumping up and down and lifting their skirts up over their heads. I'm thinking, "Wow, what a reaction, this song must be a hit!"

I mean, it was only natural for me to think this because, after all, I had never seen a reaction like this, except in film clips of the Beatles or Elvis.

When I got home, I called the guys in my band to tell them about this fantastic new song I wrote and the reaction it illicited in these women, still not quite grasping the situation there in East New York.

I practiced the hell out of that tune and memorized the lyrics, and then a few days later we had a gig with the whole band in an Upper East Side club in Manhattan. We did a few tunes to warm the crowd up and then, when I thought the time was right, I launched into "Mr. Jelly Roll," giving it everything I had.

People were walking by totally oblivious of the band and the song. They talked with each other or sat glued to the television sets watching a basketball game. No reaction at all. I mean, zilch. Nada. Zippo.



The Robert Ross Band's 2004 release, *What Are We Fighting For?* (FountainBleu Records). Cover by Ed Rath ("Economic Stimulus Package").

I began to get a bit depressed, when it occurred to me: well, maybe the women at the facility were a little ... "lonely"...

Broken Hearted Man

When I was still living with my wife, she had a friend who was having problems with her boyfriend. She came over to talk to my wife one night, and they spent a couple of hours in the kitchen talking. I heard a lot of crying and stuff, but everytime I came into the kitchen to supposedly get something to eat from the fridge, they would just clam up like a couple of oysters. Later, after her distraught friend left, I asked my wife what was going on. She told me the poor woman was having problems with her boyfriend. He's been taking her for granted, stepping out on her and mistreating her. And I'm thinking like, "Wow, that would make a great song." I'm so sensitive sometimes ... it's scary. Anyhooo, a few days later, I finish writing the song, and play it for my wife, and she says it's really good. So I say, "Hey, what about if we have the woman sing it?" My wife says, "Are you stark raving nuts? You're not even supposed to know about her problems, what she said to me was private. Now you want to write a song about it and have her sing it? What the hell is with you?" Re-



The Robert Ross Band are:

Jon Loyd (keyboards),
Mark Dann (bass),
Steve Holley (drums,
 formerly with:
 Paul McCartney & Wings,
 Joe Cocker, Rod Stewart,
 Elton John, etc.)



PHOTO BY RIBBO PIN

Photograph of Robert Ross performing in Herald Square, New York, on 11 September 2003. The photo also appears on Robert Ross Band's CD *What Are We Fighting For?*

alizing she might be right, I went back and rewrote the song so that I could sing it. The song has yet to appear on one of our CDs, but it will someday. Hopefully soon.

The Record Biz

When Irving Berlin wrote “There’s No Business Like Show Business,” it was a heartfelt tribute to the profession he dearly loved. “The Record Biz,” on the other hand, is a liver venting, bile spewing roast of the profession I sometimes hate. I love the music very deeply, of course, but the business end can be unfuckingbelievable at times. The greed, the lies, the back biting, the pettiness, the egos, the disappointments ... the agents, the managers, the bar owners, the lawyers, the record companies... Don’t get me wrong, I wouldn’t trade places with anybody, but a little money and some health insurance wouldn’t hurt. It’s a tough way to make a living. People didn’t think I should record “The Record Biz” because it might offend some big wig. Yeah, maybe, but I doubt it, big wigs don’t listen to unsolicited material, right? Besides, I think it’s too funny to get steamed up about... Hey, what am I laughing at, this is my life??

If I Had Known

A song about partying too hardy, and too often for way too long. The whole phrase, “If I had known that I would live this long, I would have taken better care of myself,” has been attributed to both Mickey Mantle and Eubie Blake.

Mantle thought he would die young, like all the other men in his family, from one dread disease or another. Injuries and alcohol and late night parties kept him from a Ruthian career. Had he only taken better care of himself, he might have broken Ruth’s home run record in 1961, along with Roger Maris, but he got injured and finished with “only” 54 that year. Still, he managed to live

a pretty long life, a lot longer than he had reasons to expect considering his lifestyle and his gene pool.

Eubie Blake, who lived to be 100, was a great piano player and successful composer who wrote the song “I’m Just Wild About Harry” and other old classics from the early days of the 20th century. One night, on *The Tonight Show*, he was asked by Johnny Carson how it feels to be 100 years old, and he answered, “If I had known that I would live this long, I would have taken better care of myself.”

I thought it would make a great song title.

69 Chevy

I had a car that no mechanic on Earth could fix. It was only seven years old when I got it, but it was breaking down all the time. A car should last longer than that, that’s a rip-off. And the mechanics I tried didn’t seem to know their business either. The same damn problems over and over and... The beast



PHOTO BY GARY STULES

Robert Ross with Roger Z, the host of the *Working Musicians Show* on White Plains Cable TV.

“South Park Dad”
by Naomie Ross.



was draining me dry. It was a gas guzzling, oil burning, water boiling, smoke belching, money sucking, gut wrenching, corroded heap of rusty nuts and bolts. It was obsolete in its own time. It was oversized (who could park a boat in Manhattan?). It was overpriced (when it was new). And it was a perfect example of overrated American engineering. Do the words “lemon” or “junkyard” mean anything at all to ya??

Why did I keep it? Well, maybe it could not go far, but at least it was a place I could go with my girlfriend after a movie.

Bronco Busting Blues Boys

I ran into an old friend, bass player Billy Troiani, at a NYC club in 1978, where he was playing with bluesman Eddie Kirkland.

I hadn't seen Billy since we both were going to Campbell Junior High School in Flushing, Queens in the mid-60s. Billy was already a musician by then. I remember him playing bass in the school auditorium with a band he was in, called the Double O Souls. They were good too.

Eddie Kirkland is a very powerful black man of about 5' 8" and about 190 lbs. He is from Georgia and has a muscular and soulful voice. He plays very good guitar and harp too. He has written some great songs, one of which was recorded by John Mayall. He can dance too. When he performs, he jumps up and down, rolls around on the floor, does cartwheels and hand springs and puts on one hell of a show.

They were looking for a guitarist to fill out the sound, and I got the job. The band was based in New Paltz, NY, which is about two hours north of NYC. I moved into Billy's house and started playing with the band.

Our first gig was at Dr. Generosity's, on 73rd St. and 2nd Ave. in Manhattan. They had a low ceiling over the stage there that was only about 8 feet high. They also had a bunch of water pipes, PA wires and conduit cables up there. Eddie was jumping up


and down and doing some dance steps and the crowd was getting into it. Then he turned to me in the middle of a song and said, “I'm gonna get down on my knees, and I want you to jump up on my shoulders.”

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. I asked him for a confirmation, which I got.

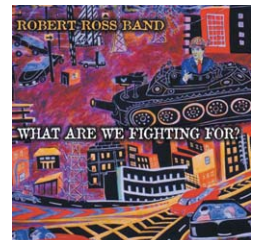
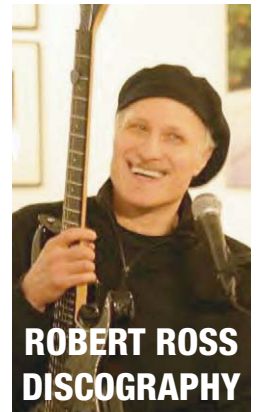
I turned to Billy, still mid-song, and said, “Eddie says I should jump up on his shoulders. What do you think?” Billy had been working with Eddie for ten years already, he'd know if he was having a stroke or not. “If he said it, then do it, he's the boss,” Billy deadpanned.

Eddie got down on his knees and looked over at me. I hesitated. He looked again. Eddie is a big man. I jumped up on his shoulders. Eddie rose to his feet and started playing a solo with his guitar behind his head. I figured, okay, I'll do the same thing. Now we both were soloing with the guitars behind our heads, like a two-headed blues totem pole. Somehow I managed to stay on top of Eddie's shoulders while he was jumping around and doing his thing. Eddie is strong as a horse. I've seen him lift a huge PA cabinet that weighed about 200 pounds and carry it out on his shoulder with one hand holding it in place like it was a basket of Easter eggs.

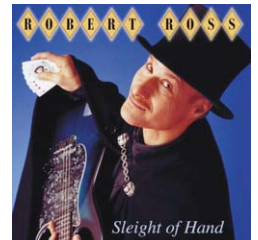
Eddie started to spin while he was jumping. I had to duck the pipes on the ceiling, and I was missing notes on the guitar. I was holding on for dear life. He spun faster. I fell off and landed on my back, some ungodly chord blaring from my guitar in the process. My head missed the bass drum by only about two inches. I would have been brain dead had my head crashed into the drum from that height, but by some miracle I was unhurt. I got up and kept right on playing much to Eddie's relief and amusement.

Eddie never asked me to do that again, but I would have obliged him, given enough head room, on top and on bottom... 

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What Are We Fighting For?
(EP, 2004, FountainBleu).



Sleight of Hand
(2002, FountainBleu).

Lightness ... to Dark
(1999, Brambus, Europe only); in the U.S. released as *It's Alive!* (1999, Blue Planet).

Darkness ... to Light
(1996, Brambus).

Rockin' the Rails
(1991, Blue Planet).

It's Rough 'n' Tough
(1984, Victoria/RCA).

Introducing Robert Ross
(EP, 1981, Baron).

Robert Ross Band

Review Excerpts

1. "He's so fast, lightning would have to get on roller skates to catch him." Albert King, reported by Hank Reineke, East Coast Rocker 1988
2. "If you closed your eyes you'd swear Ray Charles was playing Buddy Guy's guitar ... one of the East Coast's best and most inventive blues men." Robert Makin, Aquarian
3. "Robert Ross is one of the most impressive young blues men around." David Hinckley, NY Daily News
4. "Robert Ross is an imaginative writer with files of Twilight Zone tales accumulated in his wanderings ... soulful, vigorous guitar playing ... agile cat quick licks." Rafael Alvarez, Guitar World
5. "Ross sings convincingly, and is an exceptional slide player deserving a much larger audience ... 3 1/2 stars!" Jim Coen, Guitar World
6. "HOT!!" Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page, as reported by Pablo Guzman in the NY Daily News, 1987
7. "Ross could make 'God Bless America' stand on its head and rock ... Ross fares well against Stevie Ray Vaughan." Rafael Alvarez, Baltimore Sun
8. "Darkness ... To Light" is ... low down and dirty passionate, intense, gritty ... smooth, soulful, melodic voice witty, clever, thought-provoking lyrics ... unique, eerie, imaginative writing ... an upbeat, high energy, get out of your seat groove ... haunting, nasty, soulful guitar ... exceptional slide guitar dynamic and explosive rhythm section ... thrilling and chilling." Stephanie Brandt, Blues Views (NY Blues Society Newsletter), Winter, 2000
9. "(Ross) has long been one of New York City's premier guitarists ... an arsenal of attacks, a wide vocabulary of voicings and a full bag of styles ... a one of a kind voice ... ("Darkness ... To Light" features) great tunes ... "Born With These Blues" has hit written over every bar ... It's not often you get a project that scores as highly as this one. Great songs, amazing musicians and first class production get this CD nothing lower than the highest recommendation. Put it at the top of your list." Joe Grandwilliams, Good Times, March 23, 2000
10. "Robert Ross is NY blues ... a great technical player who can bend and wail with a lot of feeling." Blues Today
11. "Ross' Stevie Ray Vaughan-like playing and Southside Johnny-ish sense of fun ... make his long awaited "Sleight Of Hand" disc soulful fun excellent playing On such fiery tunes as Ross' "She's Fine as Fine Will Ever Be," you can hear a sense of studio restraint just waiting to bust out live." Bob Makin, Courier News 4/13/03.
12. "If that guy was black, I could make him a star." Bruce Iglauer, Alligator Records as told to Kent Cooper, Blue Labor Records at Tramps, NYC, 1980.
13. "Sleight Of Hand is ... an excellent new cd." Alan Paul, Guitar World 12/5/02.
14. ("Lightness ... to Dark" aka "It's Alive!") is a raucous rave ... excellent blues guitar ... sings like he grew up in Memphis ... masterful renditions of some of the best blues tunes of our time. This is blues at its best - live and gutsy. Hats in the air and let's all cheer!" Generator 21, 2003.
15. " ... one of New York City's best-kept musical secrets. ... his slide-guitar work ... grinds & bites in a manner that does justice to these late legends. ... this modern fretmaster ... (is) equally at ease with softer & subtler nuance as he is tearing into harder-edged 12-bar blues. ... rich-sounding vocal phrasing & crisp soloing. 'Sleight of Hand' is one musical trick worth experiencing. Rating: 9 (out of 10)." Manny Fernandez, Island Ear / Long Island Press 2003

16. "Nice stuff! You're doing the right stuff. You're the new Bob Dylan! I really like that! It's ("What Are We Fighting For?") really great!" Tom "Bones" Malone of the CBS Orchestra, Late Show With David Letterman, Saturday Night Live, and The Blues Brothers, August 1, 2004

17. "Robert! Good work! When can I get a copy of that? ("What Are We Fighting For?")" Dredd Scott Keyes, news director & recording engineer, WBAI Pacifica Radio, August 1, 2004.

18. "Robert Ross is a blues icon, one of the great blues spirits." Bob Fass, Radio Un-nameable, WBAI Pacifica Radio, NYC, 8/12/04

19. "The Robert Ross Blues Band ... has just recorded a repudiation of the Iraq war laced with dark humor ("What Are We Fighting For?")." David Hinckley, NY Daily News, August 18, 2004.

20. "On 'What Are We Fighting For?' award-winning singer, writer, and guitarist Robert Ross and his band tastefully blend rock 'n' roll, folk, jazz, blues, and gospel to serve up a collection of politically charged songs meant to stir and expand the debate of current American foreign policy." Topplesh.com, 2004

21. "What Are We Fighting For?" packs plenty of thoughtful lyricism into a compact package ... rollicking ... uplifting ... Ross sprinkles enough Clapton-like riffs ... to remind us of his considerable talents while letting his conscience be his guide." Manny Fernandez, Long Island Press, Oct. 14, 2004.

22. "The Robert Ross Band makes a defiant political statement ... "What Are We Fighting For?" represents freedom of speech and democracy in action." Al Campbell, All Music Guide, December 2004

23. "Robert Ross sings with great authority ... and is a brilliant guitar player whether on the acoustic, electric or slide guitar ... Robert Ross – you better remember the name." Bjorn Wiksaas, Blues-Stikka Magazine (Norway) 2003.

24. "Great Night & Great Songs - You are the Best!!" Jim Fassel (National Football League coach).

25. "It was a nice evening. Everyone enjoyed your playing. You have such a beautiful, lush voice ... (i'm a singer, so I know)." Kristine Massari, owner of Trumpets in Montclair, New Jersey

26. "A master bluesman ... a hard-charging, accomplished blues guitarist, harmonica player, and singer .. His work often has cutting social overtones ... seems to hit a nerve." John Bostrom, Unitarian Church Social Concerns Committee, 4/17/06

27. "Robert Ross is a fine singer, a snappy lyricist, and an even better blues rock guitarist ... cut from the same cloth as B.B. King, Muddy Waters, and Johnny Winter ... Time after time Ross delivers the goods". Bill Carlton, NY Daily News, 1981.

28. Robert is a gifted songwriter, guitarist and vocalist ... one is immediately impressed. ... guitar solos are outstanding ... a pitch perfect voice. The songs therefore sound complete as if they almost wrote themselves. Robert's guitar playing is a crazy mixture of rock, blues and jazz, while still remaining mysterious. Richard Ludmerer, Director, New York Blues & Jazz Society 4/1/07.

"Robert Ross is an award winning blues artist, a nasty guitarist, a soulful vocalist and an imaginative songwriter. He and his band play hard driving boogie, hip grinding soul, burning rock 'n' roll, and low down & dirty blues. Every song has a story. Robert's original songs have more – kind of real "mini-novels." Paul Bondovski, Blues Rocks The World, 2007.

"Killer guitarist, singer and songwriter. Robert Ross is a triple threat!" Lenny Kundstadt, Spivey Records.

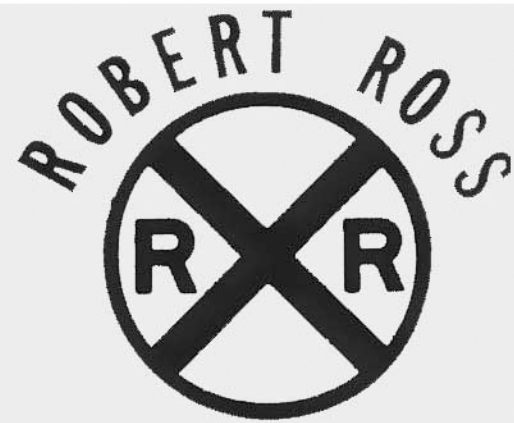
CALL: 718-380-6664 **EMAIL:** ROBERTROSSBAND@AOL.COM **WEB:** WWW.ROBERTROSSBAND.COM



1989 New York Music Award



Best Blues Artist



New York Music Award winners

DAILY NEWS

THE following is a complete list of winners from the 1989 SKC New York Music Awards:

ARTIST OF THE YEAR: Debbie Gibson
GROUP OF THE YEAR: Public Enemy
DEBUT ARTIST OF THE YEAR: Taylor Dayne
DEBUT GROUP OF THE YEAR: Living Colour
BEST ROCK BAND: Living Colour
BEST METAL BAND: White Lion
BEST ROCK ALBUM (Major Label): Smithereens — Green Thoughts
BEST DEBUT ALBUM (Major Label) — Sole Artist: Taylor Dayne — Tell It To My Heart
BEST DEBUT ALBUM (Major Label) — Group: Living Colour — Vivid
SINGLE OF THE YEAR: I'll Always Love You — Taylor Dayne
SONG OF THE YEAR — (Writer): Foolish Beat — Debbie Gibson
SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR: (10,000 Maniacs) — Jerome Augustyniak, Robert Buck, Dennis Drew, Natalie Merchant
BEST FEMALE ROCK VOCALIST: Taylor Dayne
BEST DEBUT FEMALE ROCK VOCALIST: Lisa Herman (Longhouse)
BEST MALE ROCK VOCALIST: Mike Tramp (White Lion)
BEST DEBUT MALE ROCK VOCALIST: Corey Glover (Living Colour)
BEST POP ALBUM: Al B. Sure! — In Effect Mode
BEST FEMALE POP VOCALIST: Debbie Gibson
BEST MALE POP VOCALIST: Al B. Sure!
RIISING STAR AWARD: Vanessa Williams
BEST ROCK BAND: Indie — They Might Be Giants
BEST INDEPENDENT ALBUM: Del-Lords — Based on a True Story



Nick Elgar/London Features

TAYLOR DAYNE Five-time triumph.

BEST INDEPENDENT DEBUT ALBUM: Rob Base & D.J. E-Z Rock — It Takes Two
BEST VOCALIST — INDEPENDENT LABEL: Noel
BEST R&B ALBUM: Al B. Sure! — In Effect Mode
BEST R & B SINGLE: I Still Believe — Brenda K. Starr

BEST R & B GROUP: Full Force
BEST FEMALE R&B VOCALIST: Taylor Dayne
BEST MALE R&B VOCALIST: Al B. Sure!
BEST NEW R&B ARTIST: Sa-Fire
BEST DANCE RECORD: Get On The Dance Floor — Rob Base & D.J. E-Z Rock
BEST DANCE MUSIC ARTIST: Denise Lopez
BEST RAP ALBUM: Public Enemy — It Takes a Nation of Millions ...
BEST RAP SONG: Unity — Shinehead
BEST RAP ARTIST: Public Enemy
BEST NEW RAP ARTIST: Rob Base & D.J. E-Z Rock
BEST JAZZ ALBUM: Patti Austin — The Real Me
BEST JAZZ GROUP: Manhattan Transfer
BEST JAZZ VOCALIST: Patti Austin
BEST JAZZ INSTRUMENTALIST: David Sanborn
BEST INSTRUMENTAL GROUP: Paul Shaffer & The Late Nite Band
BEST ROCK INSTRUMENTALIST: Joe Satriani
BEST FOLK ARTIST: Odetta
BEST LATIN MUSIC ARTIST: Ruben Blades
BEST COUNTRY ARTIST: Eddie Rabbitt
BEST FOLK ALBUM: Good Thing He Can't Read My Mind — Christine Lavin
BEST BLUES ARTIST: Robert Ross
BEST CABARET ARTIST: Susannah McCorkle
BEST VIDEO: Like The Weather (10,000 Maniacs)
PRODUCER OF THE YEAR: Ric Wake
BMI NEW SONGWRITER: Gerry Devine
SKC BEST UNSIGNED ARTIST: Lili Anel
SKC BEST UNSIGNED ROCK BAND: The Horse You Rode In On
SKC BEST UNSIGNED METAL BAND: Damn Chee-tah
WPLJ RADIO ARTIST OF THE YEAR: Debbie Gibson



Debbie leads N.Y. Awards

By **DAVID BROWNE**
Daily News Staff Writer

DEBBIE GIBSON, Taylor Dayne, Public Enemy, Al B. Sure! and Living Colour came up the big winners in the fourth annual SKC New York Music Awards Saturday night at the Beacon Theatre.

Gibson won four awards, including Artist of the Year, Song of the Year ("Foolish Beat") and Female Pop Vocalist. Dayne was awarded Debut

Artist of the Year, Single of the Year ("I'll Always Love You") and Female Rock Vocalist. Living Colour were awarded Best Rock Band and Debut Group of the Year, while hyperactive lead singer Corey Glover won for Debut Male Rock Vocalist.



Debbie Gibson

Band on an Independent Label), Noel (Best Vocalist on an Independent Label), Longhouse's Lisa Herman (Best Debut Female Rock Vocalist), the Del-Lords (Best Album on an Independent Label), David Sanborn (Best Jazz Instrumentalist), Joe Satriani (Best Rock Instrumentalist), Paul Shaffer and the World's Most Dangerous Band (Best Instrumental Group), Rubén Blades (Best Latin Artist), Robert Ross (Best Blues Artist) and Lavin (Best Folk Album).

Hilly Kristal, founder of CBGB, was inducted into the Hall of Fame by Blondie's Debbie Harry and Chris Stein, although the award's fumbled presentation left those in the balconies wondering exactly who Hilly Kristal was.



DAILY NEWS



The Robert Ross Band

"Darkness to Light"

Brambus Records

By Joe Grandwilliams

Being a professional musician is one of the greatest jobs you may ever imagine. It is also unbelievably difficult. Play the blues, and you complicate the equation substantially, however you never run out of material. In this collection Ross, who has long been one of New York City's premier guitarists, shows just how he earned that status. Ross is an all around guitarist. Playing conventionally or slide, he has an arsenal of attacks, a wide vocabulary of voicings and a full bag of styles. He is also a keen observer able to translate what he sees into lyrics. Combine these with a one of a kind voice, and you've got a chest full of tools to fashion some great tunes. Most of these songs are original. Ross puts as much into his composition as he does his presentation. One standout is the bonus track "Red Handed," actually a re-recording from a previous release. The opener "Tonight's the Night" showcases Ross's voice as well as his fretboard facility. In my opinion, and this took a lot of consideration, "Born With These Blues" has hit written over every bar. It's not often you get a project that scores as highly as this one. Great songs, amazing musicians and first class production get this CD nothing lower than the highest recommendation. Put it at the top of your list. Ross appears frequently in this area, and will be bringing it all to the stage at the Second Annual Riverhead Blues Festival in July. To get more information, or to book the band or to order this CD call 718-380-6664, or e-mail at : RobertRossBand@aol.com.

Visit the website at: www.RobertRossBand.com.

March 23, 2000

News Review



Blues in Many Colors

If the guitar above seems to be on fire, don't adjust your screen. The weekend's second annual Riverhead Blues Festival was incendiary and then some. Above, that's Robert Ross of the Robert Ross Band turning up the heat Friday night along the Peconic riverfront.

News-Review photo by Barbaraellen Koch

July 27, 2000

Riverhead Blues Festival Rocks

ROOM WITH A VIEW
of the blues.....

Robert Ross
"Sleight Of Hand"
Fountainbleu Records

In 1978 The Bill Dicey–Robert Ross Band backed Big Joe Turner on an album for Spivey Records. In 1980 Robert Ross's "Sittin' In The Jailhouse" was recorded by Johnny Winter. Robert has worked with everyone including Big Mama Thornton, John Lee Hooker and Dr John. He continues to win awards and was a NY State Arts Council re–grant recipient in 2005. Robert Ross has devoted his life to making music.

This is Robert's seventh album, this time for Fountainbleu Records. Robert is a gifted songwriter, guitarist and vocalist and he shows us just how good he really is. Opening with "Tonight's The Night" the first of ten originals, one is immediately impressed. Both "All Dressed Up, No Place To Go", and "69 Chevy" are more rockabilly styled tunes. "Born With These Blues" is autobiographical. Robert's guitar solos are outstanding. Robert is also a vocalist possessed of a pitch perfect voice. The songs therefore sound complete as if they almost wrote themselves.

In a world where we often look for the "next big thing" we tend to overlook our most dependable talents. On "Harlem Nocturne", a classic instrumental, Robert's guitar playing is a crazy mixture of rock, blues and jazz, while still remaining mysterious. On "King Bee" Robert plays tribute to Slim Harpo. Robert also covers Elmore James "It Hurts Me Too" and he shows us he can still "slide".

In a career that spans almost forty years there will be ups and downs. Robert Ross still enjoys performing whether it be with his full band, in a duo, or as a solo performer. Robert writes "If I Had Known" "that I would have lived this long I would have taken better care of myself". In a celebration of life Robert closes the album with the New Orleans styled "Come On Let's Rock". Catch up with Robert, visit his website at www.robertrossband.com

Richard Ludmerer
Director, The New York Blues & Jazz Society
ricdale2@yahoo.com
<http://nybluesandjazz.org/reviews/rrosscd.htm>

Classic pairing at Bottom Line

IT'S THE CLASSIC mix: the old veteran, the gunslinger, the talent everyone knows, joining the new guy, the one who's still trying to get his talent out there. Thus Bo Diddley, a rock 'n' roll legend who was writing serious-and-funny songs about himself 30 years before rap, joins Brooklyn bluesman Robert Ross Wednesday night at the Bottom Line, 15 W. Fourth St.

Diddley, whose best known song is titled by his name, will then go to Nassau Community College Thursday night, City Gardens in Trenton, N.J., Friday night, and the Sidewalk Cafe in Huntington Saturday. But the Bottom Line

show will be particularly intriguing, because Ross is one of the most impressive young blues players around—more traditional, actually, than Bo himself.

In fact, Ross is on the show at Diddley's invitation, because the old master liked the young guy's stuff. It's nice to see the system work the way it should. For information, call (212) 228-6300.

—David Hinckley



Diddley



**ROBERT ROSS IS A
NEW YORK MUSIC AWARD
WINNER!**

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DAILY @ NEWS



Rick Danko, left, and Richard Manuel: the latest Band teamup.

Strike up 2/5th of The Band

Richard Manuel and Richard Danko of The Band will headline tonight's show at Folk City, 130 W. Third St., at 8:30 and 11:30. Now it's quite true that except for Robbie Robertson, The Band's old members seem to tour endlessly in an imaginative assortment of configurations, but it's also true that no matter how it pops together, they sound great. If there was a better American band, it would be

hard to find, and these guys sound as good as ever.

It's also worth noting that the show will be opened by Robert Ross, a Brooklyn bluesman who's lately played with Bo Diddley and is picking up a well-deserved following of his own. It's good value for your money tonight at Folk City, in other words. For information, call (212) 254-8449.



**ROBERT ROSS IS A
NEW YORK MUSIC AWARD
WINNER!**

MAHOGANY HALL

PROGRAMM JANUAR / FEBRUAR '99

Blues

Guitar Blues

Freitag, 5. Feb. 99

21.00 Uhr

Robert Ross Blues Trio (USA)



Auch die Millionenstadt New York kennt einige hervorragende Blues-Exponenten. Einer davon ist **Robert Ross** (guit/voc); 1989 als «Best Blues Artist» ausgezeichnet und sechs Mal für diesen Titel nominiert. Im März 1997 erstmals in Europa und nach grossem Erfolg, gastiert er jetzt, mit **Mark Dann**, bass, und einem N.Y-Studiodrummer, nochmals für ein paar Konzerte in der Schweiz. Eine Prise Rock'n'Roll etwas Soul, ein Teelöffel Boogie und viel, viel tiefen Blues, das ist die Mischung für seine Fans. Ross, als genialer Bluesgitarrist, teilte die Bühne schon fast mit allen Blueslegenden, u.a. mit Albert King, Albert Collins, Willie Dixon oder Memphis Slim. Aber er überzeugt auch als markanter Sänger, der genau weiss, wie er den Blues zum Publikum hinübertragen muss... jtr



EG ROCKER



Fourth Annual Makin' Waves Awards

by Robert Makin

Well, folks, it's that time again, when your humble dirthead surf reporter dons his pretentious cap and bestows a year's worth of awards upon the best unsigned and independent regional acts. To qualify, acts must be 1) based on the East Coast, 2) unsigned or signed to a label that doesn't have a relationship with MTV. All considerations were made between March '91 and '92.

As in previous years, a special Tsunami award is given to any area signed or unsigned artist, or nonperformer who contributed the most to the regional music scene. The prizes, which are merely to be listed within these pages, are my way of saying thanks. Please don't take offense if you don't see your name. There's simply too many good musicians from which to choose. Here's to Makin' Waves with all of you again next year. The winners are:

Best Group: Whirling Dervishes. Well, hello, fellas. Yes, hello, fellas. It's so nice to have you back where you belong. You're soundin' swell, fellas. I can tell, fellas. You're still growin', you're still glowin', you're still goin' strong.

Best Male Artist: Norman Nardini. This ol' guy just keeps a-rollin'. You gotta love him.

Best Female Artist: Kembra Phaller (Karen Black). Kinky, self-styled psychobitch sound from Alphabet City with plenty of wicked tales to tell, each more mind-exploding than the next.

Best Album: Rat At Rat R (self-titled). N.Y.C.'s greatest do-it-yourself punks get the nod, thanks mainly to their intense take on politics.

Best Record: Gigantic, "Not 18 b/w Short On Ideas." This potential college radio smash is about coming of age within an all-ages crowd. The flipside is a smack fuckin' delicious sonic bludgeoning of pop. Check this one.

Best Song: "Married To a Memory," Every Damn Day and "Ghosts on a Landscape," Soul Engines (tie). Okay, call me a wuss, but both these songs have what it takes in my book: sincerity, intelligence and intensity. I can't choose between them.

Best Songwriter: Christine Kelly. Forget Madonna. Tap into Christine Kelly's "Virgin Mother," kids, and your head will spin like Linda Blair in *The Exorcist*.

Best Demo: The Grip Weeds. The Posies had better watch it, because this band's Byrds-from-BedStuy guitars and crisper-than-Kelloggs drums will bonk them on the gulliver.

Best Compilation: My Companion. Who would have thought such cool stuff could come out of preppy Connecticut?

Best New Artist: God Speed. This mischievous post-hardcore unit are real horrorshow, oh my droggies.

Best Live Act: Bouncing Souls. New Brunswick-based funky punks who make Living Colour sound like Dead Washout.

Best Hardcore/Punk Act: The Wretched Ones. This should make up for the fact that last year's "Goin' Down the Bar" was so inexcusably ignored. The Dead Boys would be proud.

Best Hard Rock Act: Bad Biscuit. Get in the ring, Guns N' Roses. These guys'll kick your collective ass.

Best Heavy Metal Act: Revenant. This makes two years in a row.

Best Folk Artist: Green Burning. Listen to them more than or and will be glad you did.

Best Country Act: Ranges. These urban cowpokes make "ev... is new" again seem so easy.

Best Blues Artist: Robert Ross. This white boy is definitely lost in the blues, but he turns up aces high here.

Best Jazz Artist: Jay Cortez. Uppity postess from N.Y.C. set to r... teous toaster.

Best World Beat: Bim. Speaking of toasting, this ska r... that it really doesn't matter if you're bla...

Best Producer: Butterfield Studios, Red Bank. This conscientious studio whiz gets the best out of such hard rock bands as B.B. & the Stingers, Prophet, T.T. Quick, Mercy Circle, Bad Biscuit, not to mention, Skid Row.

Best Guitarist: Dave Pietro (T.T. Quick). Don't take my word for it, ask Zakk Wylde or Dave "Snake" Sabo.

Best Drummer: Ray Kubian (Motel Shootout). A killer drummer in a criminally ignored band.

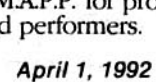
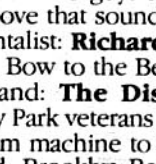
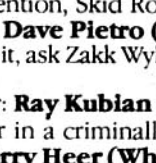
Best Bassist: Jerry Heer (Whirling Dervishes). See below.

Best Keyboardist: Billy Siegle (Whirling Dervishes). These two guys are at the heart of a mesmerizing groove that sounds like nothing else.

Best Instrumentalist: Richard Graham (Green Lion Burning). Bow to the Bear, y'all.

Best Cover Band: The Disco Rejects. Four Sounds of Asbury Park veterans who prove that you don't need a drum machine to dance.

Tsunami Award: Brooklyn Beat, East Coast Band Coalition, The Black Rock Coalition, The Staten Island Rock Coalition, The Society of Associated Performers, and M.A.P.P. for protecting the rights of regional unsigned performers.



East Coast EG ROCKER



Robert Ross Band.

ROBERT ROSS BAND

Some say the best cowboy songs are written by nice Jewish guys from Brooklyn. Robert Ross does the same for the blues and Staten Island.

If you closed your eyes while listening to Ross' new self-produced effort *Rockin' the Rails*, you'd swear Ray Charles was playing Johnny Copeland and/or Buddy Guy's guitar! Fusing Texas twist ala Stevie Ray Vaughan and Chicago shuffle ala Mike Bloomfield, Ross proves himself one of the East Coast's best and most inventive bluesmen.

Yet, despite working with the same band—bassists Mark Dann or Charlie Torres (depending on who's available) and drummer George Morales—for the past 16 years, as well as winning one and being nominated for five New York Music Awards, Ross only has put out three albums. After providing Johnny Winters with the tune "Sittin' in the Jailhouse" in 1980, *Introducing Robert Ross* was released on the blues indie Baron Records. In '84, a rock 'n' rolly venture, *It's Rough 'n' Tough*, was put out by RCA. It's not surprising the record didn't go anywhere, because Ross' heart wasn't in it.

"I just love the blues," he says. "There's something about it. I like the rhythms. It's like a heartbeat. There's something irresistible about it. There's just something about a slow blues that gets inside me. It's just that jazzy, lowdown, down-in-the-alley blues thing, there's something eerie about it."

Ross' music career comes down to one song, "White Boy Lost in the Blues," a tune inspired by the Brownie McGee/Sonny Terry classic, but written from a player's perspective rather than a listener's. Ross' piece de resistance, introduced 10 years ago on vinyl, resurfaces on *Rockin' the Rails*. Many packs of cigarettes and why'd-we-even-bother-to-take-it? gigs later, the urban fretman's encore is more sincere and, therefore, more gutwrenching.

Says Ross, "To some of the public and certainly to some of the club owners and record people, I am a white guy playing black music. They have a very narrow mind about what will sell. They want what they consider to be the real thing and to them, that means that you have to be black to have these kinds of feelings. Now, Albert King says everybody has the blues. When he does 'Blues Power,' he talks about a little baby who hasn't been fed yet. He's hungry, he's cryin', he's got the blues. Anybody who's lonely or out of a job...there's a lot of good reasons to have the blues today.

"So there is the mentality that if you're not black, you're not a blues singer, but the reality of the situation is that young black guys, they're not playing the blues for the last 25 years. It's mostly white guys. Black guys are playing funk, R&B, now they're playing rap music. They're not coming up so much playing the blues."

Another *Introducing* encore is "'69 Chevy," a relic, which, like the blues, Ross refuses to scrap. Ironically, the tune borders on rock and probably could net airplay next to a Fabulous Thunderbirds shuffle.

The rest of *Rockin' the Rails*, which is available on Ross' own Blue Planet Records, alternates between tongue-in-cheek showmanship and scorchin' soul searches. Twelve tracks in all, the LP finds The Robert Ross Band back in the thick of the burgeoning N.Y.C. blues scene.

"When we go out of town," says Ross, "people come up to us and say, 'Robert, man, you guys were really smokin'. Where are you guys from, Chicago?' I say no. 'Then you must be from Texas.' I say no. 'Well, Mississippi?' I say, 'No, we're from New York.' And they say, 'New York? Where'd you learn to play blues then?' I say, 'Hey, if you can't get the blues in New York, then you're immune.'

"So we've been working pretty steady, but there's always room for improvement. I think the New York clubs and media could be a lot more supportive of local players. But it is slowly changing for the better. Some people are even starting to get noticed by major labels."

Should Ross not be picked up by a larger label, he will put another record out on Blue Planet sometime next year with the help of his many invaluable investors, such as *Rockin' the Rails* producer Lou Holtzman of East Side Sound.

As far as gigs go, The Robert Ross Band will be at such N.Y.C. venues as Foxtrot Oscars, Finian's Rainbow, Capitol Bar, and Dan Lynch's this month. They'll also be at The Cafe Elysian and Redheads, both Hoboken; Orphan Annie's, Stirling; Stanhope House, Stanhope, and The Turning Point, Piermont, N.Y., where Ross will return in December for a solo set opening for harp legend James Cotton. Next month also marks Ross' first Philadelphia area appearance in 10 years at The Evansburg Inn, Collegeville, PA. Another solo date can be seen next week at The River Club, Nyack, N.Y.

Ironically Morales has joined Johnny Copeland on the road, so Ross currently is working with Rolling Thunder Revue drummer Howie Wyeth.

"I was very fortunate to get him," says Ross. "He's one of the premiere drummers around and just a joy to work with."

Next month, Ross' R&B side project, Red, Hot & Blue will be at Dan Lynch's. Plans for them include making a demo.

For more info about Ross, contact Blue Planet Records at 79-25 150 St., #E18, Flushing, N.Y. 11367 or 718-380-4571.

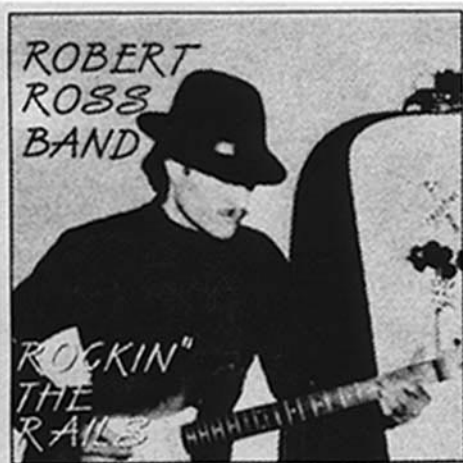
Nov. 6, 1991 by Robert Makin

GUITAR WORLD

JULY 1992

VOL. 13, NO. 7

REVIEWS



★ ★ ★ 1/2

THE ROBERT ROSS BAND

Rockin' The Rails

BLUE PLANET RECORDS

A LONGTIME FAVORITE on the New York City blues scene, Robert Ross is a guitarist deserving of a much larger audience. *Rockin' The Rails* showcases his playing, both with and without a slide, and songwriting, and it's a fine show, sustaining a live-like rawness throughout. Ross is an exceptional slide player, whether he is playing melodic licks or slashing wildly through Elmore James covers. And though Ross sings convincingly about being a "White Boy Lost In The Blues," his playing suggests, rather, a man who is very much at home. *Cassettes available for \$8, plus \$2 postage, from the Robert Ross Band, 79-25 150th St., Apt. E-18, Flushing, NY, 11367*

—JIM COEN



ROBERT ROSS

NYC guitarist Robert Ross sounds more like legendary Chicago bluesman Mike Bloomfield (Paul Butterfield, Bob Dylan, Electric Flag) than any of his fellow urban fretmen.

Ross, winner of the New York Music Award for Best Blues Artist in 1989, recently released his third album, *Rockin' on the Rails*. Having once recorded for RCA Records, Ross offers some fine slide playing as well as rich vocals on the self-produced effort, currently receiving a steady amount of airplay on the Newark jazz station WBGO.

In addition to Johnny Winter, who recorded Ross' "Sittin' in the Jailhouse" in 1980, Ross, a city headliner in his own right, has supported the likes of Edgar Winter, Albert King, Jerry Lee Lewis, Lonnie Mack, Albert Collins, Phoebe Snow, Roomful of Blues, Bo Diddley, Ron Wood, Dickey Betts, Leon Russell, John Hammond Jr., and James Cotton.

Ross and his band—drummer George Morales and bassist Mark Dann—have served as the backing unit for such blues legends as John Lee Hooker, Lightnin' Hopkins, Big Joe Turner, Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, Big Mama Thornton, Otis Rush, Memphis Slim, Dr. John, Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters, and Queen Victoria Spivey.

The hot trio, as they've been described by Jimmy Page, will be at The Elysian Cafe, Hoboken; True Blue, NYC; Stanhope House, Stanhope; The Exchange, Bridgewater, and Bendover's, Pelham, NY, this month. September will find them rockin' at True Blue once again, as well as Orphan Annie's, Stirling, and The Turning Point, Piermont, NY.

For more info about The Robert Ross Band contact Mimi Management at 212-226-0744.

R.M.



Robert Ross Band

East Coast
ROCKER

Aug. 7, 1991

GUITAR WORLD

VOL. 6, NO. 3 MAY 1985

A WHITE BOY LOST IN THE BLUES

Robert Ross, New York City's self-styled "white boy lost in the blues" has been building his career brick by brick for the past ten years.

Now and again a friendly club owner (are there any?), small-time but sympathetic record-biz types and understanding journalists pitch in to help the thirty-five-year-old gain respect and recognition for his considerable guitar and song-writing skills, but most of the time it's just Ross, trudging forward with the support of his family.

Traveling to the fabled blues trail from Manhattan to Paris and back again Ross forged his credential by gigging with a holy host of Real McCoy bluesmen: late greats like Lightnin' Hopkins and J.B. Hutto, surviving history books like John Lee Hooker and Brownie McGhee and bluesmen in exile such as Memphis Slim, the piano man who has called France home for nearly a quarter-century.

Now, after a decade of hustling the streets, subways, small clubs—even hospitals and homes—with his agile, cat-quick licks, Ross believes there just might

be some daylight up ahead.

The cause for such optimism is the recent release of his first full-length album, pressed on France's new Victoria label. European distribution is through RCA. A single is expected. A deal for distribution in America has not been reached.

Titled *It's Rough and Tough*, the clean disc bristles with originals inspired by traditional rock and roll; blues that shimmy, shuffle and slide, and a pair of standards by Willie Dixon ("That Same Thing") and Sonny Boy Williamson ("Help Me") that Ross has initiated with his vigorous style.

"I stuck with what I do best," said Ross, explaining that he was hanging out with a lot of rockabilly artists while living in France in 1981 and '82, when he wrote most of the songs. "There's nothing iffy on this record. They wanted up, rock out blues and rock and roll and that's what they got."

An imaginative writer with files of musical Twilight Zone tales accumulated in his wanderings, Ross scores big on side one with a roll-over rocker titled, "Who You Trying Fool?" It's about a fast-talking door-to-door salesman selling a mythical product every red-blooded American must have to be fulfilled—a slice-dicer type of gizmo hawked on late night TV.

"The whole damn thing is remote control," sings Ross in his fluid growl.

Side Two opens up with a saucy slide blues titled, "Make Up For Lost Time," that sums up Ross' current professional outlook.

"When I was younger I was awful shy, let lots of good stuff just pass by me," he sings. "Now I am older but I'm still in my prime. I've got to make up for lost time."

The father of two who supports his wife and kids on Staten Island with his



music, and part-time jobs working the sound at Folk City in the Village and driving a YMCA schoolbus, Ross said he hopes the album will "get me to the point where I can have a band on the road all the time."

His current band has longtime friends George Morales and Danny Counce on drums and bass respectively. Ross is supported on the album by Morales and Ray Agcaoili on drums, and Mark Dann on bass.

(*It's Rough and Tough* is available through Jacky Chalard at 193 Rue St. Honore, 75001, Paris, France.)

If you're looking for fresh guitar passion in white boy roots music, this is it.

—Rafael Alvarez



DAILY @ NEWS

RECORD REVIEWS

After 10 years, Ross finally introduces himself

By BILL CARLTON

ROBERT ROSS
Introducing Robert Ross
 (Baron)

Greenwich Village is teeming with talented, dedicated musicians like Robert Ross. You can hear them every night at places like Tramps, Folk City, Annie Oakley's, Gildersleeves, the Other End. For years—10 years in Ross' case—they play their music night



Robert Ross

after night, but because it doesn't fit into the pigeonholes of pop radio and assorted hypes of the moment they don't get much exposure. For every Bob Dylan who makes it from Bleecker St. to Malibu there are a thousand like him who never will.

Robert Ross, from Brooklyn, could be another exception and he certainly deserves whatever success his first record may earn him. He is a fine singer, a snappy lyricist and an even better bluesrock guitar player cut from the same cloth as B.B. King, Muddy Waters or Johnny Winters. Ross has recorded with many top-notch blues artists, and Johnny Winters included a Ross composition on his "Raisin' Cain" album.

Ross offers four self-penned songs on his solo debut. "69 Chevy" is a car song roaring out of Southside Chicago. We're talking electric boogie here, full tilt. Ross' concise vocals and guitar are backed hand-in-glove by Spencer Jarrett on harmonica, Mark Dann on bass and George Morales on drums. The rain-drenched pain of "White Boy Lost in the Blues," makes it a tour de Ross all around and his dazzling guitar intro is one of the best I ever heard. Don't take the song too seriously, folks; Ross likes to camp it up a bit.

He saves some sizzle for the slide guitar roast, "Sittin' in the Jailhouse." Move over, George Thorogood and let Ross show you how to play that thing! A mean-woman, slow blues tune, "You Poured Out My Heart and Mopped the Floor with Me" neatly sums up the main idea. Ross' guitar solos are a joy to hear, technically inventive and packed with tortured feeling. Time after time, Robert Ross delivers the goods.

SOPHISTICATED LADIES
Cast Album
 (RCA)

Look out! The soundtrack is loose from the smashing Broadway musical based on Duke Elling-

ton's brilliant, stylized to the tip of its swinging. The best since Jamison,

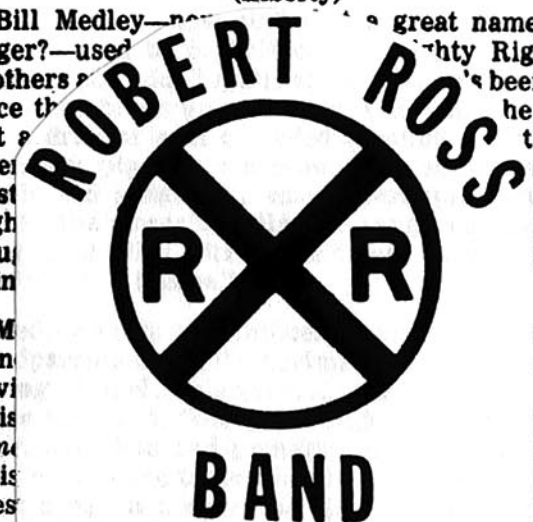
There best and Train," "It Bad," "Note and Don't Mea band, led "Sophistic always lea



BILL MEDLEY
Sweet Thunder
 (Liberty)

Bill Medley—great name for a singer?—used Righteous Brothers since the lost a legel most Nigh a ru "Ain

M gran movi prais along Elvis fines Over," mearey muses on one song. It certainly isn't, not with talent like that.



from the top of its hat and set never stops man is clearly led by Judith ines.

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been up to he hasn't t to his sum of til the ed like sion of

sed-on " In a lyrics ! waits t even t's the 's Not



Sounds

We're Just So Happy All This Fuss Is Settled

THE GEORGE MICHAEL "I WANT YOUR Sex" video struggle? It's resolved. Thanks for asking. Last we looked, you'll remember, MTV said the video was too steamy, even though that's George's real-life girl friend he's getting sweaty with. So George edited. MTV still had qualms. George offered to film an intro in which he explains the song really endorses safe sex, because it's about monogamy. MTV said okay. Look for it soon.

VISITING: Jimmy Page, in town to see Les Paul's birthday show at Fat Tuesday's, also dropped in at Uptown Rascals to see the Robert Ross Band, top local blues outfit. Ross says Page "looks great, has lost a lot of weight" and talked about progress on his long-awaited solo LP.



Sounds

I Know! Why Don't We Put On a Musical Show?

By PABLO GUZMÁN

Daily News Columnist

GUY CALLS ME UP AT WORK. NAME OF Robert Ross. Don't know the guy. Says he's got a band called the Robert Ross Band, natch, and sez he and the band played at Rascals and who shows up but Jimmy Page? Himself digs the combo an' stops to rap with 'em an' tells 'em, among other things, that they're hot, stay with it, someday we'll jam, an' I'm in town workin' on my album and Tuesday is Les Paul's birthday so I wanna jam with *him*. An' yours truly is goin' (in the immortal words of Melvin Van Peebles) "Yeah, sure" . . . as in: Are you pullin' my leg, dude?

Make a long story short: Robert Ross and his Band check out. They *are* good. And the Page story is on the money. This according to Nick Loiacano, body double for me at both Fat Tuesday's & the Hard Rock . . . meaning I missed the following:

Thanx to Robert Ross' info, I knew Page was in town. I also know Les Paul jams every Monday at Fat Tuesday's. So Nick slides into the 11 p.m. show and, sho' 'nuff, Page jams with Les! Accompanied by Rick Derringer, who *burned*. Next night, it's Les' birthday. Party at the Hard Rock. Pablo of course is working. Nicky takes his place.

"Page was on fire! Dig this jam session: Paul Shafer, keyboards; Anton Fig, drums; the bass player from the Psychedelic Furs; John Sebastian—that's right—on harmonica; and Jimmy Page and Nile Rodgers on guitars!! Can you imagine! Man, they were hot!





A MEMORIAL TO
JAMES GORDON BENNETT (1795-1872)
FOUNDER OF THE NEW YORK HERALD IN 1835

AND TO HIS SON
JAMES GORDON BENNETT (1847-1918)

THE BRONZE FIGURES OF MINERVA AND THE BELL
RINGERS ARE THE WORK OF ANTONIO JEAN CARLES.
THEY STOOD FROM 1875 TO 1918 ABOVE THE CORNICE
OF JAMES GORDON BENNETT'S NEW YORK HERALD
BUILDING ON THE NORTH SIDE OF HERALD SQUARE,
WHO TOLLED THE ACTIVE HOUR TO THE MILLIONS
WHEN THEY WERE GIVEN BY WILLIAM T. DEWANEY,
FOUNDER OF THE NEW YORK SUN TO NEW YORK
UNIVERSITY THROUGH WHOSE CENEROSITY

IN 1915 THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS OF
THE CITY THAT THEY MAY BE HERE
PLACE IN THE HEARTS OF
THEIR REEDERATION
DIPTION OF BUSINESS
ARE DEEP-ROOTED
OF HERALD SQUARE

