

Dave Berry

In the words of Bob Segar: "Rock and roll never forgets." What it doesn't forget, I've forgotten now: but in these days of transient pop idols, it's refreshing to find an artist who has remained faithful to his art. Roy Carr, who was a journalist on the NME, described Dave Berry as the most original stage performer in British rock."

Who are we to disagree?

Over the past few years, Dave has been the special guest on prestigious shows with the cream of British musicians - including Van Morrison, Mike and The Mechanics, and Roger Taylor (Queen) leading, last year, to the release of Dave's fine album 'Memphis In The Meantime', a return to his r/b roots, available from www.cryinggame.co.uk.

But Dave's heart has always remained with the 1960s, when his four major Top10 singles - 'The Crying Game', 'Memphis', 'Mama', 'Little Things' - led to highly successful concert appearances at some of the most elite venues in Great Britain. Among them are The London Palladium, Royal Albert Hall, Symphony Hall, Birmingham, and St David's Hall, Cardiff. Dave's long career also brought him the distinction of having the biggest-selling single of all time in Holland and Belgium with 'This Strange Effect', written for him by another 60s icon, Ray Davies of The Kinks.

During the past three years, his role in ReelinandaRockin has taken him to territories such as Australia, Scandinavia, Hong Kong, and Singapore where, when a 60s star, he had never set foot.

I can tell you that Dave was overjoyed at the reception he received in these countries - "amazing, wonderful", he said. "ReelinandaRockin has been a very special time for all involved in the show, bearing in mind that all of us have known each other for more than 40 years now, since the very first tour we did in autumn 1963. Backstage, all the artists, musicians, and tour crew get on very well together, which makes the show very special and worthwhile socially. I am sure this atmosphere comes across to you, the audience, by your own reaction to our efforts to recreate the 60s for you", he added.

PRESS RELEASE:

At last, from the LEGENDARY

Dave Berry

The album he's always wanted to make is here ~

"MEMPHIS.....*In The Meantime*"

by Russell Newmark



First class versatility

Dave Berry
'Memphis... In The Meantime'
Blues Matters Records -
BMRC20037

Although pop was the basis for his hit-making Sixties career, Dave Berry has always been a fervent r'n'b enthusiast.

And this new album – his first since "Hostage to the Beat" in 1987 – allows him to indulge his passion in magnificent fashion. The first has him striding straight into a slick, assured groove – and all 11 songs are delivered with the panache of a committed aficionado with the talent to match his devotion.

Longevity speaks for itself and the quality of the distinctive Dave Berry voice tells its own story, even when he's away from his more familiar domain - reprising his stage theatrics on the pop nostalgia circuit.

Here he is joined in his endeavours by a first-class team of musicians whose readily apparent versatility allows them to bring unflinching creative support to a studio set encompassing a variety of moods.

The repertoire – which includes two compositions apiece from J.J. Cale, John Hiatt and Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup – covers rollicking power blues and more laid-back material. Berry's cohorts are the Junkyard Angels, and his genuine affection for the genre is evident throughout an album which is enhanced by a thoroughly contemporary feel.

One real highlight is a rendition of Tony Joe White's "Taking The Midnight Train" which has a poignant stately beauty - and is punctuated by a guitar solo heartbreaking in its intensity. The final track is a version of "My Baby Left Me", harking back to one of the minor Berry hits in 1964 which preceded his dramatic chart emergence with "The Crying Game".

Further details: Blues Matters! PO Box 18, Bridgend, CF33 6YW

...in the meantime

I first met Dave Berry on Friday September 27 1963 at the Floral Hall Ballroom in Morecombe, Lancashire. Dave Berry and the Cruisers were third on the bill that included the Rolling Stones, and The Merseybeats. I noted in my diary for that day "Dave Berry did wonderful hand movements with the mike as he sang." When Dave started out he was just like the Stones and countless other bands from that era in that he covered Chuck Berry's songs. Morecombe was just a week after Dave's recording of Memphis, Tennessee entered the chart. Two days later we began our first package tour with the Everly Brothers, Bo Diddley and Little Richard, and on some nights we played Memphis, Tennessee. That's what it was like back then ...we were in touch with our roots.

For this album Dave has gone back to the blues, music that has influenced all of us.

Dave's love for the Blues and R&B is nothing new because his follow up to Memphis, Tennessee was a cover of Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup's My Baby Left Me on which Jimmy Page played guitar.

Dave toured with the Stones on package tours in 1964, along with the Ronettes, and again the following year with The Hollies and Goldie and The Gingerbreads. I was always impressed with his stage act. Dressed in black, one hand coming round the curtain, followed by the leg; it all made for a really mysterious show. Dave inspired many later performers including Alvin Stardust and a number of punk bands acknowledge his importance. Dave Berry is a true original, but one who has not forgotten that the Blues matter.

Bill Wyman

MEMPHIS - IN THE MEANTIME -

on Blues Matters Records
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