

BOROUGH BLUES

February 2014 Page 1

This Month at the BBC – 1st March **“Brothers Groove”**



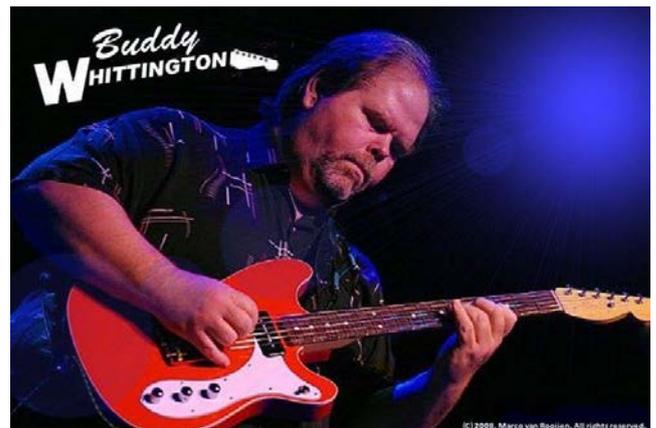
This Birmingham-based band are winning the hearts and minds of the UK blues scene with their characterful groove, superior tones, seriously catchy songs and genuine Brummie friendliness, and the word is spreading fast.

With the love of funk and blues dominating the band's sound, and years spent soaking up the likes of The Average White Band, The Crusaders, James Taylor Quartet, Little Feat, Clapton, Robben Ford, SRV, Robert Cray and Albert Collins, in the respective funk and blues departments, Brothers Groove set out to make real music, music that they love and cherish. Their goal firmly intact, they have uniquely fused all these influences into a sound all of their own. Classic songs, riffs a-plenty, big grooves, heavy, delicate and always funky. Taking this sound to the stage is where you see the Brothers excel, with performance after performance of awe-inspiring delivery, class, touch and emotion all playing their part in equal measure.

Their Debut Album “Play The Game” is an expert exploration of all things blues and groove, each song crafted to make your head nod, your body shake and your lips whistle the tune. The twin guitars of Shaun Hill and Nigel Mellor beautifully working together, never in competition, to forge crafty, hook-laden rhythms with deep sonic landscapes. The Brothers are keen to point out that it isn't an album of self-indulgent egos battling for space, it's not about playing a million notes a second, this band sit in the pocket of the groove, play with taste and feeling, and love every single minute of it. Their enthusiasm is as infectious on record as it is in a packed club, a fact every audience who has seen them perform will testify to.

COMING SOON **“Buddy Whittington”** **19th April at The Race Club**

He's back! One of our favourite guests returns to the Borough, not at New Panteg as, due to licensing issues, we are restricted as to the number of gigs we can stage there so, for this special gig, we are going on the road in the hope of attracting a few new members, and spreading the blues gospel throughout the entire borough. The Race Club is a slightly larger venue so we are hoping all of our regulars will make the short trip up the valley for the incredible Buddy Whittington.



Buddy was formerly, like Eric Clapton, Coco Montoya and Walter Trout before him, a member of John Mayall's Blues Breakers. Tickets as usual are selling fast and the gig will feature the support of the Borough Blues Workshop Band.

FORTHCOMING GIGs

1 st March	<i>Brothers Groove</i>
5 th April	<i>Lawrence Jones</i>
19 th April	<i>Buddy Whittington</i>
10 th May	<i>Chantel McGregor</i>
7 th June	<i>Billy Walton</i>
5 th July	<i>Idle Hands</i>
2 nd August	<i>Black Top Deluxe</i>
6 th September	<i>Dawson Smith</i>
October	<i>Grainne Duffy</i>
1 st November	<i>Built for Comfort</i>
13 th December	<i>Wille & the Bandits</i>

Next Month at the BBC –5th April
“Laurence Jones”

Laurence Jones is back! After his debut performance at the Borough Blues Club he was very well received and this his inevitable return. Since Laurence's



last appearance at the Borough Blues Club I have seen him at Upton and he captivated his audience, entertaining for well over 2 hours nonstop. He must have impressed the organisers too as this year he is back at Upton again but on the main stage this time... Catch him first at the Borough Blues Club!

Gig Review: 8th February 2014
“Zoë Schwarz”

Review Adrian Bold, Photography John Edwards

We don't get many lady vocalists at Borough Blues and, OK, Wales lost and it was another filthy night, but those who didn't turn up to see Zoë Schwarz Blue Commotion missed one of the best evening's entertainment we have ever had at the club.



It would be hard to overstate the brilliance of this band; a group of seasoned professional

musicians laying down creative, exciting, entertaining and rootsy numbers with great skill and enthusiasm.

Led by a superb vocalist in Zoë Schwarz who moved with ease across a range of styles from plaintive and sultry torch-singing to sassy and aggressive blues shouting, Blue Commotion performed mostly original material written by guitarist Rob Koral in collaboration with Zoë - think Billie Holiday; Janis Joplin or a young Maggie Bell delivering cool, subtle, sometimes jazzy, often funky but always well-crafted material. This was a superb performance.

And it wasn't just Zoë. The zany and eccentric Si Genaro produced backing vocals and the clearest and most inventive harmonica solos. Si was a recent competitor on The Voice UK – where he wowed the panel and audience with his track “Chicken Train”. His quirky antics made sure there was plenty of visual entertainment – sometimes distracting from the imposing and impressive lady singer – but often humorous.

Rob Koral wove melodic accompaniment and smooth solos on his left-handed guitar and provided driving riffs and hard-edged lines when needed. He was complemented by superb keyboard skills from the Hammond of Peter Whittaker and together they created a superb, tightly knit and creative musical platform – totally engaging in its own right yet adding mightily to the vocal skills of Zoë Schwarz. And then there was the percussion! Paul Robinson is the most expressive drummer. Hugely experienced (read the bio on his website – 19 years with Nina Simone and worked with a list of people like a Who's Who of world music) he provided the perfect rhythmic integration of the band. Never dominating, never overcomplicating but always intricate and interesting. Just to watch and listen to him play was worth the entrance fee alone.

Zoë Schwarz Blue Commotion were superb – perhaps not to the taste of those who like louder or more rocky blues – but even then, must be applauded for their performance and inventiveness. Genuine and entertaining musical creativity has to be admired and this band should be a growing force in the British Blues scene.



Look out for them – or see them the next time they appear at the Borough Blues Club.

That's all Folks...

Borough Blues Club: Tickets - 01633 483238
 More info at: www.boroughblues.com