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“I didn’t choose the blues, the blues chose me.”

Mentored by the Kings; today Andrew Jr. Boy Jones finds himself legendary and admired.

By Jan Sikes

TEXAS ORIGINAL BLUES LEGEND ANDREW Jr. Boy Jones has played all over the world. This Dallas native is unequalled, as his fans well know. It’s no surprise though. He was and continues to be inspired by the best.

He tells a story about how he got started with Freddie King’s backing band, The Thunderbirds.

“I was sixteen years old when this man came to the house and we were practicing. After he heard me play, he asked my mom to take me to hear a man that night and that turned out to be Freddie King.

“So, I was hired to play in Freddie King’s backing band, The Thunderbirds, and I played with them until he died.”

After Freddie King’s death, Andrew Jr. Boy went on to tour the world with many of the biggest names in the blues genre including a long association with Charlie Musselwhite. In 1997, he released his first debut album and hasn’t slowed down. They always say the cream rises to the top and this has proven to be the case.

Andrew Jr. Boy’s mother, Gladys, was a big band singer so the music gene came through strong in his DNA. She bought him his first guitar when he turned seven. As his biggest fan, she told a reporter with an East Texas publication many years ago, “Jr. Boy didn’t choose the blues. The blues chose him.” And Andrew Jr. Boy Jones agrees with that still today.

The calling

SOME PEOPLE GET A CALLING to preach or teach, but Andrew Jr. Boy’s calling came early and in the form of the blues.

And, he’s just released a new album; the first since 2012, entitled *It’s Me Again*.

Jr. Boy says the title of this album has a two-fold meaning. “It’s some material that I’ve done before, but have redone and introduced again. My songs are me. I wouldn’t say these are my favorite, but these songs to me are meaningful.”

Jr. Boy’s son, Christole, plays bass on this album and Andrew couldn’t be more proud of him saying, “That’s another meaning to the title, because Chris is a lot like me, so it’s me again through him.”

It’s Me Again, released on GalexC, Jr. Boy’s indie label, consists of ten tracks, all written by him.

Andrew says, “I write best under pressure...when I have a deadline or commitment to meet. I like to get away by myself where there are no distractions. Some of the songs I write may be true and some of them may not. It has been said throughout my life that I have a vivid imagination. So, even though some of the songs are about experiences I’ve had or someone I’ve known has had, some are pure fiction. I leave it up to my audience to figure it out.” The album begins with “Negative Talking.”

About that, he said, “It’s pretty self-explanatory and can apply to almost any situation whether it be a relationship or the evening news on TV.

It’s just about being sick and



His new *It’s Me Again*, was released on his own GalexC Records: Andrew Jr. Boy Jones

tired of negative talking from whatever direction it comes.”

These lines from “I Get No Respect,” are the perfect example of what makes up the blues. “I got up this morning/moving on the next town/I ain’t got no money/Can’t let these blues get me down/I called my baby/to tell her that I’m coming home/She said she got somebody new/’cause I’ve been gone away too long/I get no respect...”

About “Lonely Times,” Jr. Boy said, “I was in a motel room, you know, out on the road. I was by myself. I wouldn’t say I was having a pity party exactly but I was in between relationships and the song just poured out.”

Another song on this CD that caught my attention is “Mr. Domestic.” Jr. Boy’s signature guitar style leads into the lyrics like water flowing downstream—effortlessly. Then his big voice carries it farther. “Early in the morning/I’m barely on my feet/I go straight to the kitchen/To fix you something to eat/I’ve got the coffee pot on/Sausage and eggs in the pan/Biscuits in the oven, babe/And a box of grits in my

hand/I might as well confess it/ Y’all just call me Mr. Domestic.”

Now, that one must have a story behind it. So, I asked. Jr. Boy replied with a deep chuckle. “Somebody told me that it sounded like a musician out of work. You know when you’re not traveling and not working, you tend to do whatever needs to be done.” I had to laugh at that explanation.

You won’t find any song on this album more definitive of what makes up this genre than “Blues Joint.” Andrew Jr. Boy gets down and dirty on his Les Paul guitar and pulls the listener in with him.

You can almost see the neon light flashing “Blues Joint” and smell the cigar and cigarette smoke.

There is nothing to compare the guitar work on “Midnight” to. It is phenomenal. Jr. Boy takes this instrumental to a level that is anything but ordinary. It highlights his superb talent and leaves you in a “blues” daze.

“I Need Time” is a plea from the heart. Andrew says, “It’s about being pushed into a relationship.

I need time to know you and you need time to know me. It’s about slowing it down and getting real.”

One song on this album gets down with a rocking beat. “Blues Belly” is the humor on the album. “I’m tired of you telling me to go to the gym/’Cause the guy next door is looking real slim/Making fun of me calling me this and that/He calls me big double sundae ’cause my stomach’s too fat...”

“Just Playing the Blues,” tells the timeworn story about long, long trips, broken relationships and playing the blues.

“Baby I’m Sorry” ends out this compilation from Andrew Jr. Boy Jones with an upbeat shuffle and sincere apology.

The Kings

WHEN JR. BOY WAS TRAVELING with Freddie King, he found himself on a show with the great B.B. King. “I was just a kid still green behind the ears and there I was in the green room with B.B. King. So, him and Freddie were talking and B.B. asked Freddie if he was still playing the chitlin’ circuit.”

Andrew paused here to ask me if I knew what the chitlin’ circuit was and I had to say I didn’t. He went on.

“It’s when you play the black blues bars. So, B.B. told Freddie, you need to quit that and come on over to the other side. It’s nice over here on the other side.”

A man who has done it all, seen it all and still here, Jr. Boy brings his best work to this new album. He’s often said that he’s found himself on the fringes; on the outside looking in more than once. But, this time, he’s on the inside. He is a legend and admired by many. And with good reason.

His wife, Kerrie Lepai, is an amazing artist in her own right and she also has a new album out that Jr. Boy produced entitled *Organic Blues*. The pride he has in Kerrie is evident by the way his eyes light up when he talks about her songwriting and singing.

These days finds Andrew Jr. Boy Jones still playing all around the world. He’s a favorite at many blues festivals everywhere.

It’s difficult to pigeonhole Jr. Boy’s music.

And that’s just how he likes it.

“My style may be a bit unusual, but I’ve had lots of musicians around me that had degrees and that teach and I keep up with them. The more you know about music, the better off you are if it doesn’t diminish the heart and soul of it.”

Well said. After all, isn’t that what “Blues” is all about?

What’s ahead?

WHAT’S AHEAD FOR ANDREW JR. BOY JONES?

“Well, you know, it’s been a long time since I haven’t been under a contract and so it feels good to be going my own way, doing things the way I want to instead of how somebody else wants me to. So, this is new for me, but I’m excited.”

With the new album in hand, he is traveling and promoting. Having just returned from a booking in San Francisco, he’s lining up his calendar with local Dallas area venues, Blues Festivals across Texas and beyond including a European tour. And, he’ll soon deliver “It’s Me Again” to radio stations. Dallas has every right to be proud of their native son. Andrew Jr. Boy Jones isn’t done yet!

To keep up with Andrew Jr. Boy Jones and his appearances, visit [facebook.com/AndrewJrBoyJones](https://www.facebook.com/AndrewJrBoyJones).

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—JR. BOY JONES