

Boogie-Woogie, Blues & Jazz Piano

Mr. B, influenced by a number of boogie-woogie piano greats including Little Brother Montgomery, and Bob Seeley, a classical pianist by training and protégé of the late great Meade Lux Lewis, deliver grace, style, lightning, and thunder. In this DVD of their live show, the two play blues and jazz standards back-to-back, in two different styles.

BACK to BACK live

mr b & bob seeley



NOW IN STORES

9 Pianists

Our Town, Our Time

William Bolcom	Waleed Howrani	Al Hill
Glenn Persello-Seefeld	Mr. B	Rick Roe
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A Benefit Album to Support Youth in the Arts and Athletics

Mr. B assembles a group of nine noted Ann Arbor-area pianists for this benefit album to support youth in the arts and athletics. Listeners are also beneficiaries, as the players deliver the goods, whether through their original compositions or fresh takes on piano standards.

This audio CD is the original studio recording, which first captured their back-to-back concept and motivated them to commit to the newly-released DVD of their live show. The disc also contains two bonus tracks, where each contributes an additional favorite, not to be missed.



Mr. B performs a collection of originals inspired by his love for the work of other pianists. He's joined in a trio setting with some of his favorite sidemen, bassist Paul Keller (Bird of Paradise/Paul Keller Orchestra) and drummer Pete Siers (Frank Morgan, Doc Cheetham, Mulgrew Miller, James Moody, Russell Malone).



Hallelujah Train is a collaboration of Mr. B and the Bird of Paradise Orchestra, now known as the Paul Keller Orchestra, where B's compositions and favorites are fleshed out by the big band sound, and the BOPO moves towards a bluesier take on hard swing.



Blues and boogie-woogie pianist Mark Lincoln Braun (Mr. B) learned his craft first-hand from the early masters. On *My Sunday Best*, his fifth album, B is joined by drummer Roy Brooks and bassist Kurt Krahnke.



it 'lump-de-lump' music. And it was such a good rhythm. I tell people now, we can't play it like that. They were born with that."

In earlier conversations, Guy has said that he'd also like to make a gospel album and is considering adding a gospel song, or spiritual, to his recording this spring. It doesn't take much of a stretch to trace how the blues and gospel are historically intertwined, especially in the time and place where Guy was growing up. His friend King began singing gospel on a Mississippi town corner until he realized he got more coins when he sang blues. For Guy, singing the religious songs would be a way of coming full circle, even though he's also aware of the music's universal role.

"The spiritual groups didn't have instruments," Guy said. "You'd hear the Five Blind Boys and it was just five voices and their feet. Pilgrim Travelers, I could go on and on. Brother Joe May, Mahalia Jackson—she finally got a keyboard player, but it was all just beautiful singing back then. There was an old country church that my mother used to take me to. They couldn't afford a piano; you just had to get together and make the voices do like a big band where all the voices had a part. There was tenor, baritone, alto and the lead singer. That's how we learned voicing the horns and things—that kind of singing made music what it is today."

Although Guy became aware of how those different voices corresponded to horn players' roles later on, he says it took him a while to learn how to best adjust his choices of key while playing lead.

"I play mostly natural keys, but when you play with a lot of horns, you get a better horn voice from flat keys. B.B. King, T-Bone Walker and Albert King taught me that. I made a couple big band records at Chess, but I didn't know all that then. I'm in class every time I talk to B.B., anyway."

Guy's signature derives from blending such lessons with his notion of personal limitations. The resulting fragmented sound reverberates throughout his solos—from such mid-'60s Chess gems as "Stone Crazy" to his upper-register pyrotechnics on, and around, the stage at Legends nowadays.

"When enough audience gets between me and the band and I can hardly hear what the band is doing, I'll play a crazy lick and I'll stop—like it's on purpose," Guy said. "But it's not on purpose. It's where I'm at with the band, and you can hear I should be here, or should be there. Because I don't read music, I play by ear and I got to hear what the band is doing. Or, in the early days, a lot of us played by ourselves. A lot of the great old blues players—Son House, Fred McDowell, Johnny Shines—played by themselves with a rhythm with their thumb and their finger pick. So you have to keep your own rhythm, just had an acoustic guitar player playing for the Saturday night fish fry. John Lee Hooker did that. A lot of people couldn't play with him because you had to watch him—he didn't play four bars. He might play four, six, eight, 12 bars before he made a change, and he came in wherever he wanted. So the way I learned how to play was the same way. I didn't know I'd have a drummer or bass player keeping me in time. You had to keep that yourself, and you played half time, full time, four bars or three bars."

Along with the upcoming recording, Guy will tour for the first few months of the year with King. He declares they're both healthy enough to keep their living blues school up and running. Meanwhile, he's promoting pre-adolescent guitarist Quinn Sullivan: Guy said, "I first met him at 8, and the way he can play guitar and sing the blues, you would think he's 80." He's aware of mortality—having lost his friend Koko Taylor and his brother, guitarist Phil Guy, in recent years. But it's also the memory of his mentors that sustains him.

"Every award I get, every one I have ever received should have gone to the people I learned everything I know from," Guy said. "Lightnin' Slim in Baton Rouge was the first one. I saw him for the first time when my dad and I were sharecropping in Lettsworth. Every award I accept should have gone to Big Joe Turner, Gatemouth Brown, Lightnin' Hopkins. All those people playing guitar just for a drink of whiskey and a good looking woman. That was their pay. Every award I ever got should have went to those people. And then if there's anything left, give it to me." **DB**

For audio selections from this interview with Buddy Guy go to downbeat.com