

SIDESHOW NEWS

Vol. I Issue I

News for Tramps and Freaks: those who live on the outskirts of society yet shape society through their philosophy, art, music and culture.

Who is that on Texas License Plates?



If you've driven around Texas for any length of time, you've seen a license plate with the image of a guitar wielding man in a blue suit and glasses with the words "enjoy Texas music" written beneath. Of all the great musicians that have come out of Texas, why was this man was chosen to represent the rich music and cultural heritage of the lone star state?

His name is Blind Lemon Jefferson and he was born near Couthman, Texas in Freestone County, near present-day Wortham. He was chosen, no doubt, because of his far reaching influence which has shaped much of the great music of our time. Blind Lemon Jefferson was one of the most popular blues singers of the 1920s, and has been titled "Father of the Texas Blues. B. B. King names him as a huge influence on his singing and playing as well as Bob Dylan, the White Stripes, Jimmy Page, and countless others who shaped modern rock and roll. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame listed one song by Blind Lemon Jefferson as one of the 500 songs that shaped rock and roll.

His musical style was individualistic, and Jefferson's singing and self-accompaniment were distinctive as a result of his high-pitched voice and originality on the guitar. He sticks to no musical conventions, varying his riffs and rhythm and singing complex and expressive lyrics in a manner exceptional at the time for a "simple country blues singer". He was not influential on some younger blues singers

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FEATURED ARTIST: Two Star Symphony

Years ago in the courtyard of what was then called Helios (now Avant Garden) a meeting took place. Two groups were waiting to play an open mic night. The groups were the Sideshow Tramps (at the time they did not have a name) and Two Star Symphony. A friendship was forged that has lasted through the years. Then unknown, the two groups have gone on to play numerous festivals and shows and win many awards.



The two groups continue to collaborate with Two Star playing on the Sideshow Tramps album "Medicine Show" and Craig Kinsey's solo album "the Burdener" and members of the Tramps playing with Two Star in numerous shows. Two Star Symphony is Houston's most unusual string ensemble performing all original music. Since its inception in 2002, the group has played many venues from small bars to vast auditoriums, collaborated with local theaters and traveled to both coasts to perform. Two Star Symphony is Jo Bird (viola/toy piano), Debra Brown (violin), Margaret Lejeune (cello/harp) and Jerry Ochoa(violin). Their extended band, Two Star Symphony Orchestra includes Chris Bakos (Bass), John Duboise (clarinet), Cathy Power (marimba, bells), and Kirk Suddreath (percussion, drums).

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Sideshow Tramps Performance Dates

Mar 17 2009	8:00P	51st Street Speakeasy	Oklahoma City, OK
Mar 19 2009	8:00P	Deli	Norman, OK
Mar 20 2009	9:00P	Galileo	Oklahoma City, OK
Mar 21 2009	8:00P	New Delhi	Eureka Springs, AR
Mar 22 2009	8:00P	New Delhi	Eureka Springs, AR
Mar 27 2009	8:00P	Helios (Avant Garden)	Houston, TX
Mar 28 2009	TBA	Westheimer Block Party	Houston, TX
May 24 2009	3:00P	Discovery Green	Houston, TX
Jul 2 2009	8:00P	Heritage Place Amphitheater (opening for Joe Ely)	Conroe, TX

Blind Lemon

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of his generation, as they did not seek to imitate him as they did other commercially successful artists. However, later blues and rock and roll musicians attempted to imitate both his songs and his musical style. Jefferson began playing the guitar in his early teens, and soon after he began performing at picnics and parties. He also became a street musician, playing in East Texas towns in front of barbershops and on corners. According to his cousin, Alec Jefferson, quoted in the notes for Blind Lemon Jefferson, *Classic Sides*: "They was rough. Men was hustling women and selling bootleg and Lemon was singing for them all night... he'd start singing about eight and go on until four in the morning... mostly it would be just him sitting there and playing and singing all night."

By the early 1910s, Jefferson began traveling frequently to Dallas, where he met and played with fellow blues musician Leadbelly.

Jefferson had an intricate and fast style of guitar playing and a particularly high-pitched voice. He was a founder of the Texas blues sound and an important influence on other blues singers and guitarists, including Lead Belly

and Lightnin' Hopkins. The white North Carolina performer Arthel "Doc" Watson credited listening to Jefferson's recordings as his first exposure to the blues, which would powerfully influence his own style.

He was the author of many tunes covered by later musicians, including the classic "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean." Another of his tunes, "Matchbox Blues," was recorded more than 30 years later by the Beatles, albeit in a rockabilly version credited to Carl Perkins, who himself did not credit Jefferson on his 1955 recording. Given this influence, it is unfortunate that many of the details of his life remain shrouded in mystery, perhaps forever; even the only known picture of him is heavily retouched, with a fake tie painted in by hand. However, at the time, "race music" and its white cousin, "hillbilly music," were not considered to be worthy of consideration as art, rather as a low-cost product to be sold and soon forgotten.

Jefferson died in Chicago in December 1929. The cause of death is unknown, and though rumors swirled that a jealous lover poisoned his coffee, a more likely scenario is that he died due to a heart attack after being disoriented during a snowstorm (another scenario is that he froze to death). The book "Tolbert's Texas" claims that he was killed while being robbed of a large royalty cash payment by a guide taking him to Union Station to catch a train home to Texas. Paramount Records paid for the return of his body to Texas by train, accompanied by pianist Will Ezell. Jefferson was buried at Wortham Negro Cemetery (now Wortham Black Cemetery). Far from his grave being kept clean, it was unmarked until 1967, when a Texas Historical Marker was erected in the general area of his plot, the precise location being unknown. By 1996, the cemetery and marker were in poor condition, but a new granite headstone was erected in 1997. In 2007 the cemetery's name was changed to Blind Lemon Memorial Cemetery and keeping his wishes his gravesite is being kept clean by a cemetery committee in Wortham Texas.

Trivia?!*#@

Numerous blues songs referred to "rock & roll" (a euphemism for sex) years before the term was applied to a genre of music

Blues is credited to the spirituals back in the time of slaves but it originated when they used the African beats that they new and mixed it with the Christian music taught to them by the white missionaries that were in their land before the slave trade began. Blues music is considered to be one of the first and truest American music forms, deriving itself from code songs, spirituals, African and Caribbean rhythms, and work songs.

Blues artist Big Joe Williams guitar had nine strings. He altered the guitar with a steel bar to give his guitar a unique sound.

Two Star Symphony

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Each member's unique background brings together an eclectic variety of music styles, including gypsy, rock, hip-hop, metal, classical and electronic.

Their hunger to experiment and explore this art form has captured the imaginations of the young and old, despite whatever previously held notions they may have had of musical ensembles. Their love for composing soundtracks brought them to The Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Two Star Symphony Orchestra has performed live to films such as "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" and 24 short films from Unseen Cinema: "Experimental Treasures from the World's Leading Archives". Two Star Symphony continues to make breakthroughs in their collaborations with other artists. Two Star lived and rehearsed in New York City to bring the extended version of their composition "Goblin Attack" to the stages of the American Ballet Theater in the piece "Alchemy", choreographed by Dominic Walsh of The Dominic Walsh Dance Company.

Two Star Symphony Orchestra performed "The Gashlycrumb Tines" at Diverse Works. Music inspired by Edward Gorey's book by the same name and music written by John Dubiose Two Star has also explored the world of theater with Bobbindoctrin Puppet Theater. They have seen their music turned into sophisticated and dark puppetry art in the three-part collaboration, Danse Macabre.

www.twostarsymphony.com



Two Star Symphony Performance Dates

Mar 14 2009	6:30P	Ovations	Houston, TX
Apr 04 2009	10:00P	Avant Garden	Houston, TX
Apr 12 2009	3:00P	Discovery Green	Houston, TX

Listen To The Music

- **Sideshow Tramps: Medicine Show** - Cactus Music, Sig's Lagoon, Soundwaves, Sound Exchange & online @ www.cdbaby.com
- **Two Star Symphony: Danse Macabre** - online @ cdbaby.com
- **Craig Kinsey: The Burdener** - Cactus Music, Sig's Lagoon, Soundwaves, Sound Exchange & online @ www.cdbaby.com
- **COMING SOON!!! i Am Mesmer**

Don't miss i Am Mesmer Gypsy Jazz every Tuesday @ Cafe Brasil Starts @ 9:30. No cover.

Wanna' Play?

Craig Kinsey - The Reverend
Sideshow Tramps

Private Guitar or Harmonica Lessons
email: onedarknight71@gmail.com

CREDITS

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Questions or Comments? Email your local parson

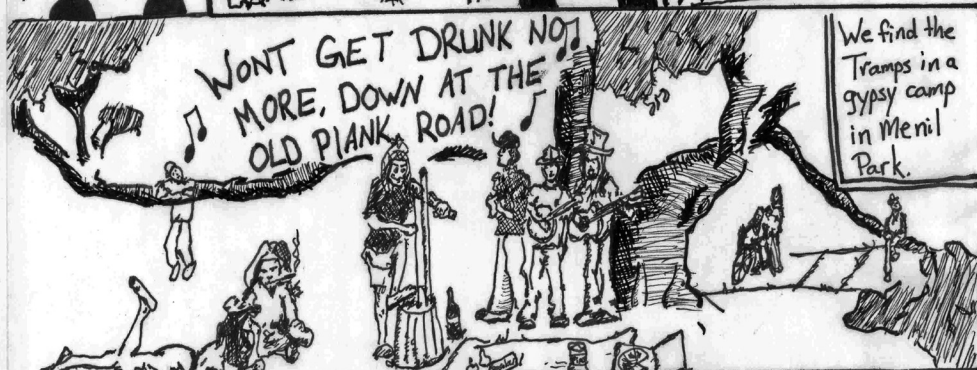
www.sideshowtramps.com

Tramp Logic

by: Blind Boy Tramp



Comic Section
of
Sideshow
News
1st episode...
Austintude!



Well boys, it looks like we got a gig at Austin's Continental Club.



Bad ass!! Hell no!! I ain't playin' there. They have too much Austintude!



Doesn't saying that amount to Austintude? Come on Coach, it's a gig- it'll be fine.



OK but if it turns out bad, don't say I didn't warn you.

So the Tramps head to Austin having no idea how the wheel of fate will spin... Hey, play some Roscoe Holcomb Coats sure TIC!



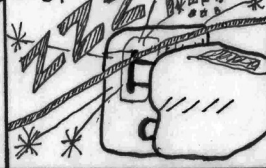
See Coach, this aint so bad. They love it!

Yeahhh!!

Man, I aint seen drumming like that Since Iggy Pop here!



In the fervor of the shows end Coach kicks over a stack of guitars which loosens an amp plug. A broken string falls in the gap...



Sparks, noise, smoke and yells, then all the lights go out!

KABOOM!

Continental Club

See boys, I told ya... Austintude!

Shut up Coach!!!



Get out Tramps and NEVER come back!!

