

**Joyann Parker** believes music helps people carry on through troubled times. With that in mind, the Minneapolis-based singer-songwriter is released *Out Of The Dark* (Hopeless Romantic Records) on February 12, 2021, the rootsy, genre-blending sequel to her acclaimed debut release, *Hard to Love*. "It's a great time to release the album," Parker says. "People need music right now."

Stylistically diverse and roots-connected, *Out of the Dark* expands on *Hard to Love's* success with 11 new songs composed by Parker and guitarist Mark Lamoine. Parker co-produced the album with Lamoine and Kevin Bowe, the Minneapolis-based producer, songwriter and guitarist whose myriad credits include Etta James, Jonny Lang, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, the Replacements, Joe Cocker, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Lucinda Williams and Bruce Springsteen.

Production for the album began in January 2020. The coronavirus pandemic stopped the project in March, when just the basic tracks for five songs completed. Sessions restarted in June, but only a small number of musicians entered the studio at one time, a pandemic precaution that pushed production into August.

On the positive side of a tough situation, the four-month break from the studio helped Parker clear her mind and reaffirm her purpose. "When you're so busy, you get caught up in the competitiveness of things," she said. "So, it was good to stop and examine why I'm doing this and where I'm going."

During her contemplative downtime, Parker wrote the inspiring title track, "Out of the Dark." "I love that song," she said. "It's about the way I've been feeling and changing over the past year, figuring out who I am. I was coming out of my own darkness."

Envisioning the post-pandemic world, Parker is determined to overcome 2020's challenges. "I'm an artist who shares everything with my audiences," Parker said. "Because I think they can help people, I want them to know the meaning of these songs. I have this message in a song about how we're all coming out of the dark. Let's look at how we can better, how we can heal. Let's look to the light."

"I always use that Winston Churchill quote," Parker said of her ability to carry on. "If you're going through hell, keep going.' And that's where we are now, right? Pick yourself up. Keep walking. There's always something to be grateful for, always a reason to get up in the morning."

## Tuesday Night Blues 2021

All shows begin at 6:30

July 6: Stefan Geisinger w/  
The Flaming Doublewides

July 13: Mark Cameron Band

July 20: Howard 'Guitar' Luedtke  
& Blue Max

July 27: Brian Naughton

August 3: Sue Orfield Band

August 10: Mojo Lemon

August 17: Tommy Bentz Band

August 24: Dee Miller Band  
featuring Craig Clark

August 31: Joyann Parker

Find out more about the bands and listen to samples at [TuesdayNightBlues.com](http://TuesdayNightBlues.com)

## Tuesday Night Bluesletter

August 31, 2021 at Owen Park

**Joyann Parker**



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(Beverly Watkins continued) ... Ms. Watkins told Living Blues. "I'd be right with my granddaddy, with my little guitar, and I'd sit up beside him."

Her grandfather's death left her in the care of her Aunt Margaret and then her Aunt Bee, in Atlanta. In high school, she played guitar and trumpet. After graduation she joined Billy West Stone and the Downbeat Combo, then moved on to Piano Red and the Meter-Tones, where she played rhythm guitar. That band (which later became Dr. Feelgood and the Interns) toured as the opening act for James Brown, Aretha Franklin and Ray Charles. "Piano Red was just like a daddy to us," she told She Shreds magazine in 2016. "If we go anywhere, like to a club, he would tell them, 'Y'all watch out for Beverly there.'"

Decades later, she was still largely unheralded. But in the mid-1990s, while playing at Underground Atlanta, she was introduced to Tim Duffy, a folklorist who with his wife, Denise, had started the Music Maker Relief Foundation to help Southern musicians in need.

With Mr. Duffy's help, she got more bookings and went on tours with other musicians affiliated with Music Maker, among them Taj Mahal. The connection also provided Ms. Watkins with an outlet to record her first album, "Back in Business" (1999), which included several songs she wrote or co-wrote. When the album was nominated for a W.C. Handy Blues Award in 2001, the category was "best new artist debut." She was 62.

In an interview with The New Yorker in 2014, Taj Mahal called Ms. Watkins "a flat-out musician who can duke it out onstage with the best there is — man, woman or child prodigy." She subsequently released two other albums, "The Feelings of Beverly 'Guitar' Watkins" (2005) and "The Spiritual Expression of Beverly 'Guitar' Watkins" (2009).

Ms. Watkins was very different in private than she was onstage, Mr. Duffy said. "She was like your sweet Southern grandma, unassuming and demure," he said. "But onstage, where she takes down the house, she's a born entertainer, who made people scream and shout. She was just an unsung hero of the blues." - By Richard Sandomir, New York Times Magazine.

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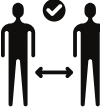
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shows happen, stop at the  
membership tent**

**Next Week (May 31, 2022)  
T.B.A.**

Most years, we'd say "We'll see you on May 31, 2022 for the first Tuesday Night Blues of 2022. The pandemic taught us a lesson. This time, we HOPE to see you for our regular starting night. We hope that the variants of the pandemic get under control, and we hope that you all have a safe and healthy fall, winter & spring.

"They say a person needs just three things to be truly happy in this world: someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for." — Tom Bodett

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## A Little About the Blues

**B**everly Watkins was a rare woman among blues guitarists, who did not record her first solo album until she was 60. Ms. Watkins called her music lowdown, stomping blues and complemented it with crowd-pleasing antics into her 70s — playing her electric guitar on her back and behind her head, sliding across the stage. When she sang, it was often with a growl.

She was often billed as Beverly "Guitar" Watkins. In an interview with Living Blues in 2017, she recalled how some men reacted to her playing. "I'd been on shows, back then, I was young and mens would come up and say, 'Hmm, I ain't never seen no woman play like you,'" she said. "And I had a lot of them say, 'Where did you learn to play like that?' and I'd say, 'Jesus.'" Men also told her: "Put that guitar down. You don't need to be playing no guitar."

She was undeterred, playing guitars that she named Red Mama, Sugar Baby and the like as if she were on a mission, even when the gigs paid little. In the 1980s, while performing nights and on weekends, she cleaned houses & offices and worked at carwashes. Late in the decade, she began playing in the entertainment district Underground Atlanta. Sometimes she worked with other musicians, sometimes solo accompanied by a drum machine. She made as little as \$30 a day, as much as \$600 on Christmas Eve.

She often thought of playing the blues as a way of healing people. "When I get onstage, it's like electrifying, you know," she told The Post and Courier of Charleston, S.C. in 2009. "I light up and just get into the crowd." She said people would come up to her after a performance and say, "You know, when I came to your show, hey, I was down and out, but now I feel so uplifted and good."

Ms. Watkins was born on April 6, 1939, in Atlanta. When she was 3 months old, her mother died and she went to live with her maternal grandparents, Luke and Phyllis Terrell, sharecroppers in Commerce, Ga., about 70 miles northeast of Atlanta.

She was surrounded by music: Mr. Terrell played banjo and harmonica, and her aunts were performers. One of them, Margaret, gave her a small acoustic guitar when she was about 9. "Sometimes, my granddaddy would go to a friend's house and they would get together and play the harmonica and jam," (continued)

## THANK YOU

TNB would like to thank our 2021 and past volunteers from the CVBS for providing the people power for our weekly shows. Also, thanks to our amazing audience!

You make the effort to get down to Owen Park and donate generously to make sure our shows can continue! Thank you to our sponsors, both the old ones that have stuck with us year after year and the new ones! And thank you to the indispensable Duane Keschull for his production, sound and publishing work.



See you next summer!