

The **Craig Clark Band** roots from Minnesota and they are true "Minnesota Nice". They deliver a performance and sound that is both emotionally-rich and inviting. Catch them before or after a show or during a set break and you will find these accomplished musicians are all around swell guys. From their powerful rhythm section to masterful guitar skills to authoritative, soulful vocals, this band is nothing if not cohesive. CCB is rich in personality delivering a dynamic, righteous entertaining experience.

Born in Harrisburg Pennsylvania, Craig Clark started singing Gospel music at the young age of five. Listening to the sounds of The Mighty Clouds of Joy and The Gospel Keynotes, Craig started his musical journey singing at churches around his hometown area. Since moving from Pennsylvania to Minnesota in the late eighties, Craig has been spreading his soulful sound throughout the state and beyond. Adding his self-taught compelling guitar style to his already dynamic vocals; Craig has constructed a style of his own. Performing with Big Brother and The Holding Company, The Mississippi Mass Choir with Reverend James Cleveland, Jimmie Van Zant, Big John Dickerson, and playing at the Broken Spoke in Sturgis, South Dakota, are a few of Craig's fondest music memories. Influenced by the likes of Sam Cook, Bobby Bland, Robert Cray and Buddy Guy, Craig Clark has proven to be a strong force in the musical community, leaving audiences talking long after hearing him perform.

Eric Meyer's musical skills and talents were nurtured by a musical family from a very young age. He credit's his desire to be a bass player to his uncle Maynard Meyer. He was given his first bass at age 11 and the journey began. His reputation as a twin cities bass player started with "The Dog Pound Blues Band" when he was just fifteen years old. At the age of 18, Eric began his professional career heading out on the road with the David Collin Bryant Band right after he graduated from high school. In his 30 year musical career, Eric has shared the stage with such greats as: Lady Blues, Claudette King, and Jimi "Primetime" Smith as well as many other great musicians. The Pete Kavanaugh Group, the Daily Grind, and the Kurt Jorgensen Band are among the many previous bands he has played with. Eric Meyer's bass playing has been described as awesome and creative and his nickname is "The Machine". Projects: Eric Meyer and the Great Northern Rhythm Section, the Dee Miller Band, the Pete K group, and Phil Kitz

# Tuesday Night Blues 2023

All shows begin at 6:30

May 30: Paul Tweed Band

June 6: Kyle Renfro

June 13: Jay Stulo

June 20: Bridget Kelly Band

June 27: Joyann Parker

July 4: Lamont Cranston w Nick Foytik

July 11: Sue Orfield Band

July 18: Howard 'Guitar' Luedtke & Blue Max

July 25: Tommy Bentz Band

August 1: Stefan Geisinger Band

August 8: Mark Cameron Band

August 15: Left Wing Bourbon

August 22: \*Craig Clark Band

August 29: Mojo Lemon

Find out more about the bands at:

**TuesdayNightBlues.com**

\*Last minute pinch hitter for Avey Grouws Band

# Tuesday Night Bluesletter

August 22, 2023

## Craig Clark Band



Photo: Teddy Snider



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# CHIPPEWA VALLEY blues SOCIETY



## A Little About the Blues

Why The Blues is STILL Important (and what we can do to keep it alive) Editorial by Mark Zanoni

Recently, a range of music historians, critics, artists and others have begun discussions on the state of music today, elements that may be missing and what music lovers and artists alike can do about it. One primary topic in many of these discussions is the historical and cultural impacts of blues, and how this art form has influenced--some would even say created--American music as we know it. In a nutshell, as Muddy Waters so clearly stated, "The Blues had a baby, and they named it rock and roll." The same could also be said for soul, funk, R&B, much of country music and many other similar music forms.

Music historian Ted Gioia goes into this in depth in several YouTube discussions. He examines the elements of blues music--the historical origins, and harmonic structure that varies significantly from most previous western music--and how those elements and sounds, combined with the improvisational nature of the art form, influenced most everything that came after. There is a gritty, earthy and visceral power in the music, and it is no small wonder that (as just one example), as it spread from American shores and found fertile ground with working class teens in UK cities, that entirely new music forms began to grow. "The British Invasion" brought those sounds back home to receptive American audiences and a literal cultural firestorm ensued.

Gioia, and others, argue that today, those blues influenced music forms--forms that often don't fit neat formulas, packages and "grid lines," are ebbing away from the sounds we hear in much of today's music "products." In his opinion, there an impact there that is immeasurable and it is essential that we find a way back.

As we, both music fans and artists, consider all of this, many of us have started to look around at the state of the art form today. We are aware that, when "the blues" and impacted genres, are heard, people take notice. In addition, there are several, mostly underground, blues influenced music forms in existence that are growing and having impacts. How can we expand awareness of this kind of thing? Maybe it is time for a new "Invasion" of sorts. Many believe the time is right.

With all of that said, several questions arise:

- How do we expand awareness of "the blues"--it's power and influence--to younger generations?

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- The blues, by its very nature, is collaborative. How do we set up collaborative relationships with artists, schools, clubs and societies, music venues, non-profits, etc. to educate and create new pathways, and even technologies, for music dissemination and production that bypass some of the current "gatekeepers?"

- What other new ideas, connections and other resources may be out there in our respective communities that may help in this work?

Clearly creativity on many levels is essential. What can YOU do?

In Part 1 we examined the value of blues in the formation of American music of all genres and what happened in the last several years in our culture and music "industry that has, in many ways, "sanitized" the music we hear. This is admittedly a complex process with many forces and interests involved. I am going to address several key revelations, areas of focus and solutions that I think are valuable for all of us that believe in this music--its power, influence and legacy.

First, I think it is important to have a definition. I go into greater detail in other articles that can be found at the address below, but I think this is an important starting point, and one many musicologists look at as they look at music history and how it evolved: The blues is a modal musical art form that has a distinct harmonic structure that differs in many ways from standard western music in that it relies on specific sounds and intervals that would be considered "dissonant" or even "unresolved" in a western classical sense. It often involves "call and response," "tension and release" and other unique attributes, that are rooted in the distinct history and cultural origins of the music.

A definition is critical I think, because as we look for ways to perpetuate and sustain the art form, we need to look in unlikely places and see beyond stereotypes and assumptions.

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### Next Week (August 29, 2023) Mojo Lemon

Formed in 1999, **Mojo Lemon Blues Band** set out to introduce Blues music to a younger audience. Over the course of the last 19 years, the core of the band still delivers a tasty mix of rockin' Blues and traditional Blues music to all ages. The two founding members, **Terry Demars** and **Josh Entzminger**, along with Josh's dad, keyboardist **George Entzminger**, and veteran drummer **Dave Schrader**, return to their roots to ensure a searing performance.

The blues is much, much more than "pentatonic" solos over "12 bars," and being able to see beyond these assumptions expands the discussion.

It is also important to know the history of this art form, where the original sounds and forms came from, and more importantly, how they came to North America, what happened here, how they evolved and all of the forces and realities that shaped what we have come to know as "the blues." This can't be sugar coated either. The pain and rawness is part of the sound and energy. With all of that in mind, here is a list of suggestions and ideas that I think are important in building sustaining "blues scenes," and awareness of this art form for future generations

- \* Know the history, the artists, "language" and "vocabulary," that make up the art form and inspired much of what has become American music: For players this means learning those old songs and all aspects of the songs--"riffs," "rhythms and rhythm figures," "themes" and "heads," and the aspects that make this genre unique. For all of us, it is also important to find the true, real history of this music, how and why it influenced so many and why it remains powerful today. Learn about those early influencers and artists from Son House to T-Bone Walker and why they remain important, and how the music evolved as it migrated and gained additional influences and "tools."
- \* Based on the definition above, search out current players, or other unique music communities and artists carrying the legacy, or pieces of it, forward: I recently ran sound for a small festival in central Wisconsin where most of the players and bands played what could only be described as a raw "blues-based," form of blues rock. However, to a person, they shied away from "blues" as a definition of what they were doing. They used words like "stomp rock," or "swamp" to describe their music. I would describe it as sort of "Slipknot meets Robert Johnson" with lots of heavy riffs, rock grooves and slide guitar, often in open tunings. The audience was younger than the average blues audiences too--mostly in their 20s and 30s, and very dedicated to what they were hearing.

Continued next week. You can read Mark's entire editorial by visiting: [chippewavalleyblues.com/markz](http://chippewavalleyblues.com/markz)



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