

Hailing Lindenhurst, New York, we find rocking solo artist **JOHNNY PIERRE**, who has an excellent new thirteen track CD out now called 'A Little Rock & Roll' which runs in at just under forty minutes long and is the artists fourth release. The music throughout the album performs precisely as the title implies.



Joining him on the album are: Jeff Goldstein - bass, Chris James - lead guitar #1, Dave Filloramo - lead guitar#2, and Rudy Schnee - drums/percussion. Pierre was once a member back in the day of the well-respected Freelance Vandals, YouTube them. In 1965, Johnny was an US Army brat living in Verdun, France because his Dad had gotten stationed over there. "I have a vivid memory of the first night when I arrived in France. I was watching that old TV show Gunsmoke on television and it was disconcerting to see Matt Dillon speaking French and exclaiming, 'Zut Alors!' I quickly changed the channel and stumbled upon Beat Club, a teen music show that broadcast out of Germany. Suddenly the explosive sound of The Who was blasting out of the television set as the band roared through 'My Generation'. Zowie! I was hooked," he marvels. He got even more excited when, during the song's finale, Pete Townshend (guitar) and Keith

Moon (drums) destroyed their instruments. "Shortly after this big event in my life, I managed to convince my parents that I desperately needed an electric guitar in order to survive living in Europe. Much to their credit, they saw the wisdom of this request and soon enough I was playing in various garage bands." As a songwriter, Pierre has always enjoyed writing in a wide variety of musical genres, but the rock and roll genre has always been his favourite. More often than not, rock and roll music has always been there to help him regain an optimistic outlook on things. So, it was in the middle of having to deal with ongoing medical issues in the early part of 2019 that Johnny decided that the only thing that would help him regain his sanity was to write and record a genuine lo-fi rock & roll album. "Of course, as soon as I started working on the album, my imagination drifted back to how big a role rock & roll music has played in my life. Every once and awhile during the recording sessions, I would suddenly get lost in the memories of all of the countless bands that I had played in when I was growing up," he utters. 'A Little Rock & Roll' is actually the first full-blown rock music project that Pierre has done since his ten-year stint, 1974 to 1984, in the legendary Long Island band called the Freelance Vandals. "The band was what I would describe as a 'meat and potatoes' rock band; the music was very basic and filled with raw energy. Pierre ended up writing a lot of the original songs for that group so, when he began recording the 'Rock & Roll is a State of Mind' album, he found himself channelling the same type of energy that he brought to his years with the Freelance Vandals in terms

of the songwriting and performance on the recordings. "I have to say the recording process for this album had less to do with any kind of Freelance Vandals nostalgia and more to do with the immediacy that rock music brings out in me whenever I perform that type of music. It's all about being in the moment," he says with spirit. The likes of Chester Burnett aka Howlin' Wolf, will always be a touchstone to the exact moment that Johnny discovered just how important a role music played in his life. As time went on. He spent endless afternoons in school daydreaming about Wolf's music which ultimately led to how he ended up getting up onstage to play music in the first place.



Other artists who inspired his songwriting and general approach to music comprise of the Rolling Stones, Rockpile, Allen Toussaint, Lowell George and Randy Newman. "My inspiration behind the album's songs was the basic rock ethic which is all about bringing something real and vital to the person who's listening to the music. Throughout the album sessions, whenever I took a break from recording, I would blast rock music as loud as possible," he explains to me. "That usually would provide the impetus to get myself moving and to turn on my imagination." When he is not

writing or performing Johnny has always loved cooking. "As a matter of fact, for a few years I took a break from my musical adventures and became a chef that specialized in the Cajun/Creole cuisine of Louisiana. My time in the kitchen actually improved my songwriting," he grins. "When you create and develop a new recipe, you learn that less is more; the same can be applied to songwriting. During the sessions for the "Rock & Roll is a State of Mind" album, I would make some New Orleans gumbo or Creole Jambalaya for the musicians who came over to lay down their parts on the various tracks." As a solo artist, Pierre has always followed his muse which in turn often finds him working in various musical genres as he tries to bring an immediacy to the emotions of the songs that he writes. "I'm definitely a DIY type of artist but my career hasn't exactly followed a concise plan of sorts. I guess the best way to describe me is that I'm a prisoner of my imagination," he expresses. Pierre's highlight from the album is the opening track, 'A Little Rock & Roll' which was the first song that was written for the album. The song sums up his life philosophy with regards to rock & roll music and the huge impact it has had on his life. It is an upbeat catchy led ditty with a blues tinted guitar vibe that brings to mind a mix of his influences. You can evidently hear The Rolling Stones coming through and also maybe even John Cougar Mellencamp, old school rock 'n'roll but with a fresh stint. "I think the chorus says it all: 'Never too you, never too old, all you really need is a little rock & roll; so, put a little spit shine on your soul 'cause all you really need is a little rock & roll'. There's a certain

universality in those lyrics," he smiles. 'A Little Rock & Roll' is getting a solid response and the songs seem to go over well in a live setting. "I've always enjoyed performing live. Over the past several decades, I've opened shows for such folks as NRBQ, Albert King, Dr. John, John Hiatt, Rick Danko, Paul Butterfield and Terrance Simien," he conveys.



The album was recorded between January and March 2019 at Mind Smoke Studios, which are two small studios located at his home, Mind Smoke Manor. Johnny built the studio five years ago when he decided to go totally DIY, when it came to recording his music. "I produced the album, and it was mastered by a fellow who goes by the nickname, The Mad Turk. No, I don't know his real name; he won't tell me," he chuckles. Pierre is currently doing some production work for some friends of his who are in a great blues band called The Hideaways. "After that, I'm producing a new album by a conceptual pop band called Haiku Monday. Then, in late summer, I plan to start recording a new Johnny Pierre album that will either be a laid-back folk music album or another rock album; only time will tell! I suspect that the rock and roll demon in my soul is going to win that battle," concludes Johnny, bringing an end to our conversation. 'A Little Rock & Roll' is available for downloading, streaming and on the Mind Smoke Records website, and you can order a

physical compact disc version of the album at the Mind Smoke CD Store. One to watch. Check Johnny Pierre out at <https://www.facebook.com/johnnypierremusic/> <https://twitter.com/johnnypierrere7/> www.linkedin.com/in/johnnypierrere/ www.msmokemusic.com/johnny-pierre-store/ <https://msmokemusic.com/cd-store/> <https://johnny pierre1.bandcamp.com/album/rock-roll-is-a-state-of-mind>