

Ray Bonneville

Acclaimed raconteur Ray Bonneville strips his bluesy Americana down to its essentials and steeps it in the humid grooves of the South, creating a compelling poetry of hard living and deep feeling. His ninth release, *At King Electric*, delivers more than his trademark grit and groove. Songs such as “The Next Card to Fall” and “Codeine” gleam with intimate narratives of characters reaching for hope and wrestling with despair. Rich guitar and harmonica lines resonate over spare but spunky rhythms, while Bonneville’s deep, evocative voice confesses life’s harsh realities.

Jim Withers (Montreal Gazette) describes his sound as “folk-roots gumbo... a languid Mississippi Delta groove, seasoned with smooth, weathered vocals and a propulsive harmonica wheeze.” Whether performing solo or fronting a band, playing electric or acoustic guitar, Bonneville allows space between notes that adds potency to every chord, lick, and lyric. Thom Jurek (Allmusic.com) remarks, “With darkness and light fighting for dominance... he’s stripped away every musical excess to let the songs speak for themselves.”

Often called a “song and groove man,” Bonneville has lived the life of the itinerant artist. From his native Quebec, he moved to Boston at age twelve, where he learned English and picked up piano and guitar. Later, he served in Vietnam and earned a pilot’s license in Colorado before living in Alaska, Seattle, and Paris. Six years in New Orleans infused his musical sensibilities with the region’s culture and rhythms. And then, a close call while piloting a seaplane proved pivotal: After two decades working as a studio musician, playing rowdy rooms with blues bands, and living hard, Bonneville’s lifetime of hard-won experience coalesced into an urge to write his own music.

Ray recorded his first album, *On the Main*, in 1992. He’s since released nine albums, earned wide critical and popular acclaim, and won an enthusiastic following in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. His awards include a prestigious Juno, the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy, for his 1999 album, *Gust of Wind*. In 2012, Ray won the solo/duet category in the Blues Foundation’s International Blues Challenge. His post-Katrina ode, “I Am the Big Easy,” earned the

International Folk Alliance's 2009 Song of the Year Award, placed number one on Folk Radio's list of most-played songs of 2008, and was recently covered by Jennifer Warnes for the BMG label.

Other notable artists who have recorded his songs include Ronnie Hawkins ("Foolish") and Slaid Cleaves ("Run Jolee Run"). Ray has shared the bill with blues heavyweights Muddy Waters, B.B. King, Dr. John, J.J. Cale, and Robert Cray, and has guested on albums by Mary Gauthier, Gurf Morlix, Eliza Gilkyson, Ray Wylie Hubbard, and other prominent musicians. He has performed at renowned venues around the world, including South by Southwest, Folk Alliance, and Montreal International Jazz Festival, and plays over 100 shows per year across the U.S., Canada, and Europe. When not on the road, he resides in Austin, Texas.

Visit www.RayBonneville.com to listen and learn more.