

Multitalented Bluesman Offers Insight Into New Album

If you've ever carried on a conversation with Walter Jr., you would have noticed the easy pace of his soft gravelly voice and how it intermixes with strong, soulful insight that lingers on the spiritual side of life.

If not for a guitar in his arms, you might conclude the musician is a philosopher of sorts. Then again, if you've heard Walter Jr. rockin' and rollin', or wailing away on the blues, you could conclude that he's a rockin' and rollin' bluesman. And so it come as no surprise that Walter Jr., like a lot of people, is a little of all of the above.

Born Walter Pousson, Jr. he moved to Lafayette from Mermentau in 1966. And like people who are more than aware of their surroundings than some, he took in what Acadiana put out and found inspiration from Nathan Abshire, to Clifton Chenier to Sonny Landreth and Bobby Charles. Throw in the Allman Brothers, Gatemouth Brown, Roy Buchanan and James Johnson, as well as Otis Rush and Albert Collins and you'll have a good idea where Walter Jr. is coming from. Go to iMonelli's on Friday evenings - except tonight - in Lafayette and you can hear where he's coming from.

Walter Jr. released his latest recording, "A Long Way From Lafayette," in the fall. An electronic news release from Walter Jr. reads: "A Long Way From Lafayette,' an acoustic odyssey of life and love in sultry South Louisiana featuring 14 new songs - all original composition. It features Walter jr. vocals /acoustic guitar; Robert Nash/upright bass." There's also Ivan Klisanin who recorded it, and nash on unconventional percussion. Anyway, what follows is a little Q & A with Walter Jr. about "A Long Way From Lafayette."

What's in a title? (As in the CD)

The title song "A Long Way From Lafayette" reflects back upon all the experiences that lead to here. This lyric is a bit different for me, as it looks back. Usually the words flow in a faithful stream from within the present. This one however, sounds and looks like the cover photo (from 1996) which is overcast in melancholy grey, the image of my reality; a blending of the bright, warm sunshine and the dark, cold rain. Why Acoustic?

This song cycle was written entirely in 2003 on a beautiful gift, a small Gurian acoustic guitar. The songs were written in the same sequence as the album, with the exception of 'Silhouette.'

For some unknown reason I could not place a five minute song that early in the rotation. The songs were composed in one session each. For emotional integrity, I did not invoke any re-visitations.

By its nature, an acoustic guitar can express a depth of vulnerability, of intimacy in voices that are more elusive on electronic instruments. Not long after the final composition, 'Holding On To My Heart,' I began performing with Robert Nash, an exquisite upright bassist, so it was organically ordained to record in this fashion.

Is the release a journey in itself?

The release is a journey and the journey is a release. What do you want listeners to get from the CD?

"The words of the mouth flow out of what fills the heart."
-Luke 6:45

What is it about life, love in sultry La. that inspired you to put it to music and song?

My songs are my life and my life is about love or the lack thereof. 'I live here and here is a very special place, with its own pace and its own grace.' Ask Tennessee Williams.

In your opinion, what makes a songwriter write?

The Spirit moves. For me, songwriting is a vocation, a calling. It is not a choice. It is not about doing something, it is about becoming something. It is about being. Ask Van Morrison.