

Bobby Lee Rodgers & The CodeTalkers

Rock & roll needs fresh blood to thrive, and it's rarely had a more exuberant, beautifully crafted infusion than Bobby Lee Rodgers & The CodeTalkers, a fiery trio that taps into the primal mojo of '50s pioneers embellished with the captivating twists & turns of hard electric blues, Muscle Shoals soul, fleet fingered acoustic picking, and huge scale epic rock. Founded in 1999, they make a joyous, dizzyingly engaged roar anchored to truly lethal musicianship.

Bobby Lee Rodgers & The CodeTalkers' music exhibits a passionate commitment to fundamentals that makes every note solid & sweet, constantly reminding the listener of rock's bedrock pleasures. "You have to know what's been done before you. Why not start with the wheel and build from that," says bandleader Bobby Lee Rodgers. The stellar songwriter, vocalist and guitarist possesses the kind of individuality that pop artists had between 1965-1975: a golden decade where musicians played with classic forms and made them sound brand new. "It's 'Mary Had A Little Lamb' and what version of that you have in your head," continues Rodgers. "All pop music comes back to a basic folk tune. That's what makes music transcend and touch people."

Rodgers is aided & abetted by bassist Ted Pecchio and drummer Tyler Greenwell. Together they generate an improbably full sound worthy of The Police or The James Gang, where the cumulative effect is far deeper than just three people. They went through a number of line-up changes before settling into this magical collaboration three years ago. "The great thing about Ted & Tyler is that you never know what you're gonna get," says Rodgers. "They bring their cauldron full of voodoo and give us a sickening swing or greasy groove."

Their high level of playing has attracted luminaries like guitarist Jimmy Herring (Phil Lesh, The Dead) and Hubert Sumlin (Howlin' Wolf), who have toured with them. Other guests include The Allman Brothers, Derek Trucks, Warren Haynes, Phish's Mike Gordon, Susan Tedeschi, jazz pianist Art Lande, Joe Craven (Psychograss/David Grisman Quintet) and violin giant Vassar Clements, who played one of his last shows with Bobby Lee Rodgers & The CodeTalkers backing him.

Their latest release, an eclectic, instantly engaging set simply titled *Now*, was released in the Summer of 2006. Inside you discover a muscular, gently tweaked, melodically gifted band coming into full bloom. *Now's* eleven tracks, mostly written by Rodgers, run a wild gamut,

from the chugging blues of "Saved By The Same Thing" to the Zappa-like "Victor The Snakeman". At every turn, the band puts their shoulders into it. Nothing is held back, and sometimes their cumulative power explodes in pieces like "Worlds Apart," a deeper relative to Oasis and other Brit Pop. There's a bumping tribute to B-3 legend & frequent collaborator "Ike Stubblefield," which gives way to "Blow My Brains," a dark night of the soul distilled into notes. There's an incredible balance and nuance to *Now* that draws deeply from the past but also speaks to a bright future. Loud & soft, direct & elusive, the record flows in an organic, unforced manner that's positively engaging. As Radiohead once put it, everything's in its right place.

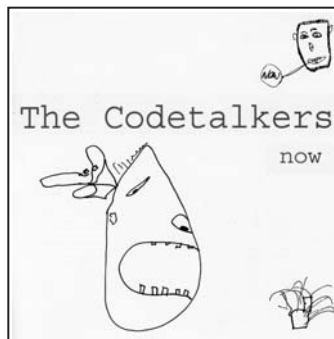
Frontman Bobby Lee moved from Boston to Atlanta in 1999 to follow the music in his head after five years as an instructor at Boston's prestigious Berklee School of Music. From the time he was only 7 years old, he learned as much as he could from the bluegrass (think Bill Monroe) and rock worlds (think James Brown and AC/DC). He eventually focused on playing jazz, learning standards and listening to Jimmy Smith-Wes Montgomery records. His potent, instantly recognizable guitar style grew out of these Hammond organ & the electric guitar colors to create a new hue that pulls in the best of both instruments.

For all the chops on display - including their habit of warming up with John Coltrane tunes at sound checks - the group is careful to keep things from ever being a technical exercise that talks over an audience. "If somebody is just blowing notes it's like me picking up a fancy dictionary and just putting together sentences without any coherency. I want to hear what somebody has to say," Rodgers comments.

The trio has been hunkering down in the studio working on their follow-up to *Now*, but has taken time for headlining gigs from coast to coast, as well as with fellow Southern rockers MOFRO and a well received headlining spot at Widespread Panic singer John Bell's Hannah's Buddies Charity Classic. Their mountain of positive press includes a recent interview with Rodgers on NPR's "Morning Edition."

What the world will hear, both on the splendid *Now* and in concert, is a group totally enthralled by music, producing sounds that burst with positive energy, flowing vibrantly & freely.

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