

BROOKS BLUES BAR LISTINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2010

FEBRUARY	
Friday5	THE WIYOS (USA) UK TOUR – BBB EXCLUSIVE
Friday12	STEVE MORRISON TRIO
Friday 19	THE LAST GASP SPASM BAND (Macmillan fund raising evening)
Friday26	SONNY BLACK & CHRIS BELSHAW

FRIDAY 5 FEBRUARY – THE WIYOS (USA) – A BROOKS BLUES BAR EXCLUSIVE.

Brooks Blues Bar have waited eagerly for the Wiyos' return to the UK since we first booked this unknown band four years ago. Since then they have gained fame, (if not fortune), most recently topping the bill at a BBC concert and film documentary of American music at the Barbican last year, and opened a music festival tour starring Bob Dylan, John Mellencamp and Willie Nelson.

Michael Farkas, Parrish Ellis, Joseph "Joeboss" DeJarnette and Terry Weber draw from a vast spectrum of traditional American and urban roots music the internationally acclaimed Brooklyn-based quartet craft a fresh yet familiar sound. They began as street performers in New York and New Orleans, they have spend six years touring Europe, honing their virtuosic musical chops, the UK and the US - fusing their tireless curiosity of American music with contemporary sounds. Their repertoire covers standards from tin-pan alley to Texas to original compositions, songs from the 30s and 40s to modern originals.

The Wiyos have traveled a very long distance, both geographically and figuratively, during their five-year lifespan. There are the statistics - they have driven over 400,000 miles in seven different countries and played over 1,000 shows; but there is also the creative journey, which has been just as epic and equally adventurous.

Both the second album *Hat Trick* and the most recent *The Wiyos* derive inspiration from the great dance bands and house party music of 80-90 years ago; the early swing syncopations, the grit and intensity of rural blues, the bouncing rhythms of piedmont fingerpickers, the vocal antics, mannerisms and physical comedy of vaudeville-era performers. The difference inherent in *The Wiyos* is the notable proliferation of songs written by Farkas and Ellis, the results being some very interesting and singular original music. Their songs exist in multiple styles and eras simultaneously without sounding forced or affected.

www.thewiyos.com

Admission £15

FRIDAY 12 FEBRUARY - STEVE MORRISON TRIO

*Steve Morrison is one of the most purely musical guitarists I know, using his bluesy slide to weave together rockabilly rhythms, jazzy melodies and folksy chords. Every note is there for a reason – there are no extensive solos here, no hi-fi guitar processors and earth-shattering volume levels, no fast-finger noodling for the sake of showing off. Of course, Steve doesn't need to show off – the Malmsteens and the Bonamassas can't touch him, and he knows it. **ANDRES ROOTS - For Blues In Finland***

Confident and varied and accomplished set of songs ranging from virtuoso spanish guitar to train whistle blues, dipping into reggae, music hall, good old fashioned pop and whatever else the store-

cupboard had to offer. Breathy vocals suggest Tom Waits... In a better world this man would already be a legend. **Musician Magazine**

This is a new line-up. Steve has developed the ability to blend bass-lines, chords and melodies into a seamless guitar style. He has long explored the potential of alternative guitar tunings and the use of the bottle-neck in the pursuit of original sounds. His remarkable technique enables him to play two or three musical parts on the one instrument. His repertoire includes many original songs full of wit and social commentary and the lyrics are delivered by a warm, passionate voice that combines with the guitar to give a powerful performance.

Steve is accompanied by Mark Walker who has played percussion for Rolf Harris since the 1990s, appearing with him around the world, from the Albert Hall to Cape Town, not to mention at his many infamous Glastonbury performances. Originally a kit player - he was one of the initial drummers in the Lion King - he has spent the past few years developing a style and technique that combines kit and percussion, creating an original and distinctive groove that makes him a perfect partner for Steve, adding both driving and subtle rhythms to the music. Also appearing is

Dave Burrluck - Guitar & Bass Guitar

Admission £12

www.artofblues.net

FRIDAY 19 FEBRUARY - THE LAST GASP SPASM BAND — MACMILLAN NURSES FUNDRAISER in tribute to the late Brian Cookman.

“The Hokum Hotshots” joined in force with “Lee Bates and Billy Newton” plus the awesome jug playing of Michael “Fruitlips” Watson to become **The Last Gasp Spasm Band** the only authentic jug band in the UK. Guests include Rob Mason on harmonica and Master of Ceremonies- Simon Prager.

The band are some of finest Blues and Roots performers around, consisting of Jim Murray and Peter Mason, better known as The Hokum Hotshots, alongside Lee Bates and Billy Newton; another excellent Blues duo from the Northeast. Joining them on Jug is the wonderful Michael ‘Fruit-Lips’ Watson.

The array of instruments played by the band is staggering and includes an impressive selection of steel-bodied resonator guitars, resonator mandolin, Banjo mandolin, 6-string banjo, mandola, ukuleles, Tiple, harmonica, washboards, spoons, kazoos, a myriad of whistles and, of course, the ubiquitous Jug.

The Last Gasp Spasm Band have gained a following, with barnstorming performances at London’s Brooks Blues Bar, Glasgow Blues On The River Festival, Appleby Beer and Blues Festival and a headlining appearance at The Great British R’n’B Festival.

Heading South from their Tyneside stronghold they gather in London’s Brooks Blues Bar for the annual gig to raise funds for **Macmillan Nurses** in tribute to the late bluesman Brian Cookman – guitar and harp player who loved the early blues with a passion. He is also remembered with affection for entertaining the early BBB audience with his witty asides.

Anyone who attended the previous Macmillan Fundraising evenings will remember The Last Gasp Spasm Band setting the place alight with high octane entertainment. The musicians and Brook Blues Bar donate their fees to the cause. **If you have anything to donate to the**

raffle or auction, please leave it with The Telegraph bar staff or bring it with you on any Friday.

More information on <http://www.myspace.com/lastgasband>
www.hokumhotshots.co.uk

Admission £12

FRIDAY 26 FEBRUARY - SONNY BACK & CHRIS BELSHAW – A BROOKS BLUES BAR EXCLUSIVE

"He possesses that quality that can only be called blues soul." (Blues in Britain Magazine).

"An outstanding artist." Paul Jones, BBC Radio 2

"Top drawer.....Time Out

Inspired by the rich history of blues guitarists, **Sonny Black** is true to the spirit of the blues and roots tradition. From playing acoustic country blues in the '70s' with British blues pioneer Mike Cooper, through several European tours culminating in two critically acclaimed albums for Pye Records, Sonny Black went on to tour and perform with blues legends such as Lowell Fulson, Phil Guy, and Jimmy Dawkins. Sonny's album *Heart and Soul* was voted album of the year by Blueprint Magazine in the UK.

Sonny and bass player **Chris Belshaw** recapture the sound of traditional acoustic and Chicago blues. A superb duo that never fails to deliver a tight and flawless yet soulful and moving performance.

www.sonnyblack.co.uk

Admission £10