

# Mp3 The Blue Eyed Devils - The Legend Of Shorty Brown



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Original Junkyard Blues, Dark Boogie, Rags Progressive Jazz influences. No Overdubs. 11 MP3 Songs

BLUES: Acoustic Blues, JAZZ: Ragtime Details: \*\*\*\*\*

NOMINATED FOR OUTSTANDING BLUES ALBUM OF 2004 BY !!!!!!!!!!!THE CALIFORNIA MUSIC

AWARDS!!!!!!!!!!!!!! \*\*\*\*\* Shorty Brown is available at your

local record store as well as cdbaby.com. PLEASE CHOOSE INDEPENDENT FIRST!!!!!!!!!! There are a

huge amount of reviews for this album listed here in chronological order from top to bottom. "The Legend

of Shorty Brown" was produced over three days in Rural North Carolina by Jimbo Mathus of the "Squirrel

Nut Zippers" All the songs are original and were recorded live with no overdubs in a barn/studio using

vintage ribbon mikes to give it the "field recording" quality. This album is a very original sound, while

retaining a traditional feel. The Blue Eyed Devils are a San Francisco Bay Area band known for their

marathon (up to 5 hour) live shows and loyal fan base. Their sound is blues / vintage american music

based, but has clear influences from progressive jazz and fusion. The Blue Eyed Devils have been seen

on tour with "The North Mississippi All-Stars" also appering with "Mem Shannon ," "Corey Harris," "Red

Meat," and "Danny Barnes" (formerly of "The Bad Livers"), "Pat Green;" "Yonder Mountain String Band,"

and recently performed at the 2003 San Francisco Blues Festival. Here's some press on the band and the

record since Feb. 2003: Blues on Stage July 2004: "If we're to be honest, most of us have a musical

comfort zone. Whether it's Chicago or Texas, old-time country or uptown swing, there's a certain groove

that's as comfortable and as reliable as favourite old sweater. But every once in a while a disc comes

along that shakes things up, one that proves challenging yet too fascinating to ignore. Welcome to The

Legend of Shorty Brown, the debut disc from California's Blue Eyed Devils . . . The story goes that the

Devil's passed Jimbo Mathus a demo during an informal backstage meeting; two months later the boys

were on their way to North Carolina for the three days in which they wrestled this project into life. Musical magic is a fleeting thing. Yet as the disc's liner notes put it, something special happened when the Devils gathered in Mathus' rough-hewn studios, and with the help of peach brandy and blistering heat worthy of their namesake, came up with a set that borders on brilliance, albeit of a very ragged sort.

Guitarist/vocalist Chris Cotton, bassist Brett Klynn, drummer Justin Markovits (who also contributes washboard) and harmonicist/vocalist Brendan Wheatley take a loose, jam-band approach to the eleven originals on "Shorty Brown." Instrumentation is almost all-acoustic, with Mr. Klynn's bass the only instrument occasionally plugged in; the feel is country blues, but there's something almost post-modern in the Devils' cheerful deconstructions of traditional structures and themes. Still, there's little here to offend purists. It's just that the Devils' insist on creating new blues for modern times, and the results, raucously boozy and righteously loose, are both like and unlike any blues you've ever heard before. Instrumental performances are fine if rarely spectacular, though Mr. Wheatley's harmonica work is worthy of mention; as a rule a little harp goes a long way, but Wheatley manages to provide rhythmic support throughout while remaining unobtrusive. And Markovits has a seemingly instinctive feel for that sort of junkyard drumming that gives this music its irresistible rhythm. Both Cotton and Wheatley are good vocalists who rise to unexpected heights; sure they're tongue-in-cheek, but the rugged harmonies on the disc's closer, "Trouble," rival those of the Holmes Brothers. While a healthy respect for tradition is essential to any roots-based music, it should never become an impediment. What's come before, the music that forms the foundation of the blues, has been done definitively time and again. Thank goodness for bands like The Blue Eyed Devils who are determined to see it grow, as it should, to reflect our times, our lives." Highly recommended! John R Taylor

And another blues on stage review: "The Blue Eyed Devils are a four piece band based in California, but they do not let that influence their style of blues. After passing a demo tape to Jimbo Mathus (producer) after a live gig, they got the call to head east to Mathus's Shorty Brown studio in North Carolina. Three days of live studio recordings later and "The Legend of Shorty Brown" was born in 2002. The band get the show on the road with a back porch number, "Good Times," where comparisons with the likes of Cephas and Wiggins spring to mind. This is classy Piedmont style blues, with some nice picking and unamplified harp, and a nice drawl to the vocals adds to the authenticity. The band then rattle through "Buked' and Scorned" where Chris Cotton switches to resonator. The hallmark of the Blue Eyed Devils' sound is the way that Cotton's guitar combines with Brendan Wheatley's harp in a

manner that is best epitomised by the Piedmont style. The use of bass (Brett Klynn) and drums (Justin Markovits) helps to add an extra dimension to the sound, and works best on the faster numbers where they can set the tempo for the front men. The band do not stick religiously to a single blues style, although the Piedmont style is predominant. There is also a Jimmy Reed style number ("Bare Bones Woman Blues"), and Mississippi gets a look in too, where "3am Blues" tips its hat in the direction of Fred MacDowell. There is also a strong Latin flavor to the excellent "Lone Mountain." "The Legend of Shorty Brown" is a good album. The Blue Eyed Devils come across as a talented bunch of musicians who certainly know their stuff. They also sound like they were enjoying themselves during the recording. Listeners, particularly fans of Piedmont blues, will also get plenty of enjoyment from "The Legend of Shorty Brown." Gordon Baxter [mnblues.com] Jan. 2004 Tom Clarke King Biscuit Time Magazine Helena, AR "With a disregard for cliches and without adomments, this young quartet plays the real blues. Delta and Piedmont styles come together in the hands of slightly jamband-minded guys just finding their way. The results are extraordinarily natural. Totally acoustic-based, but rockin' nonetheless, each and every one of these numbers is a document that holds hope for the future of the blues as a genre. Yeah, I think its THAT good." Jan. 2004 Eric Steiner Cozmik Debris Magazine The Blue Eyed Devils are the real blues deal on The Legend of Shorty Brown. I put the CD in without looking at the package, sat back, and was taken immediately back to the Delta. I imagined T-Model Ford, Peetie Wheatstraw, Sam Carr, Son House, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Mance Lipscomb, or Muddy Waters (in his early days on the Stovall Plantation, courtesy of the late songcatcher Alan Lomax). I opened the record, and boy, was I surprised: how can these four young white cats sound like a Southern country blues session? The Blue-Eyed Devils are a Bay-Area quartet featuring Chris Cotton on guitar and vocals, Brendan Wheatley on harmonica and vocals, and a rhythm section that sounds straight out of the Piedmont hills: Brett Klynn on upright and electric bass with Justin Markovits on drums and washboard. There's a loose, back-porch feel to this disc, and these guys have nailed country blues cold. Produced by Jimbo Mathus (Squirrel Nut Zippers), The Legend of Shorty Brown has all the familiar blues signposts and archetypes -- too bad Jim, back luck and trouble, good times and bad times, wicked women, too little or too much alcohol -- but the devils bring these legends to life nicely on The Legend of Shorty Brown. San Jose Mercury News: Blue Eyed Devils play '40s blues in modern rhythm By Brad Kava Mercury News When you go to a concert by the Blue Eyed Devils, you see something you don't expect at a show by musicians whose sound dates back to

1940s Delta blues. There are people dancing -- mostly in their teens and 20s -- moving and grooving like they were at a hip-hop show or rave. Last weekend at Woodside's Pioneer Saloon, they were going so hard, the wooden floor was shaking and bouncing, a regular occurrence for this Peninsula-born quartet, which has developed a passionate and devoted audience and is threatening to break out nationally. It's an enigma," says singer Brendan Wheatley, 27. We're definitely doing something most people our age aren't doing. But maybe the people who come out to see us are tired of pre-fabricated bubble gum bands. They are looking for real music." The band opens the San Francisco Blues Festival at 11 a.m. Sept. 27 and plays at Redwood City's Save the Music Festival at Redwood Shores at 1:30 p.m. Sept. 28. When you close your eyes at one of their concerts, it takes you to a different place," says Heather Browne, 23, of San Jose. It's like being transported to a porch in the South and listening to 80-year-old black guys." Anyone who attends a lot of blues shows knows that the audiences often are almost as old as the music. There have been exceptions: Stevie Ray Vaughan, who started touring with David Bowie in the '80s and left when his own blues star burned brighter; Hot Tuna in the '70s; Eric Clapton and dozens of Brits in the '60s. For the most part, blues was biggest in the late 1940s and early 1950s, before it had the baby that became rock 'n' roll. After the birth of rock, bluesmen got booed off rock stages. B.B. King said that hearing the boos for the first time in the mid-1950s made me feel black twice." So it's particularly startling to see the response to the Devils, who picked up on music made when King was still playing acoustic and working in the cotton fields, songs by the likes of Big Bill Broonzy, Washboard Sam, Blind Blake, the Rev. Gary Davis and Leadbelly. We're like anti-corporate music," says guitarist Chris Cotton. All four members share writing credits on the band's two discs of original material. Brendan and I are traditionalists, but you throw in a bass and drummer and it adds a more modern element. It makes it more forceful. We're taking the soul and spirit of traditional black music and incorporating modern rhythmic elements." Musically, the members of this quartet are no slouches. They came together on the streets of Palo Alto, at screenings of the Rocky Horror Picture Show" and through jamming with other bands they'd played with. But their roots are diverse. Cotton was indoctrinated to the sound of old vinyl by his stepfather, who took him to concerts by B.B. King and Dizzy Gillespie. Wheatley started singing in a Renaissance choir, has studied Tuvan throat singing and is enrolling in the Ali Akbar Kahn school of music to study Indian vocals. He came to the blues by chance. He bought a Keb' Mo album, because the cover looked cool, but he hated it. When he returned it to the Tower Records in Mountain View, he asked the clerk to recommend some blues with

more soul, and got a disc by Little Walter. That prompted him to pick up the harmonica and study the blues. Bassist Brett Klynn, 26, works in publicity at rock radio station KSJO, but was brought up on jazz, which he studied at the Stanford Jazz Workshop, along with drummer Justin Markovits, 25. Markovits' influences include Buddy Rich and Neil Peart of Rush. People say, 'You don't do anything to keep that drummer under control,' " says Cotton. He just goes off." The rhythm section looks like it could run off and join a metal band, which helps give the Devils some of their power. Its like dropping a grenade in the middle of their traditional up-tempo Delta wails. The music explodes off the walls and is heavy enough to inspire the most hard-core raver to get back to the roots. The band's current album, *The Legend of Shorty Brown* was recorded in North Carolina and produced by James Mathus, a blues-rocker who had some good luck with another retro band, as singer for the Squirrel Nut Zippers. While recording the album, the Devils lived in an abandoned school bus and used an outhouse. "I used to play jazz but got frustrated with how smooth it was," says Klynn, the bass player. "This music has more fire. Guys don't get caught up trying to play a fancy chord progression. They just want to get the emotion and feeling out. And it works. People are realizing you don't need a DJ or synthesizer to dance." All Music Guide: (4 Stars) "On their second album, the Blue Eyed Devils conjure a surprisingly fresh, vibrant set of backwoods blues. It's heavily indebted to the kind of vocal and guitar-harmonica sparring heard on vintage Sonny Terry Brownie McGhee records, yet has a far more full-bodied, electric bounce than most of the Terry-McGhee sessions. That's not to say it's as simple as country blues electrified: there's still plenty of down-home acoustic flavors in the arrangement, with some upright bass and washboard in addition to more electric rhythms. More importantly, this sounds spontaneous (and probably was, given that it was recorded live in three days without overdubs), teetering on the edge of slurred sloppiness, but in the best and most ingratiating way, never falling over the line into carelessness. The songs might not be anything profound, but they're fun ditties about ridin' the train, doin' a rag, movin' on, bare-bones women, and the like. It's all familiar territory to the blues, of course, but it's sung and played with a boisterous grit, like that of moonshiners jamming with an early skiffle group. " -- Richie Unterberger[AMG] *Southland Blues Magazine*: "One of the coolest bands you never heard of, the Bay Area's "The Blue Eyed Devils" have a couple of terrific CDs out on their own label ("*Legend of Shorty Brown*" "*Hard Luck*" Town) and they'll be in SoCal soon on a series of dates. Playing "blues, boogies rags" these conceptually brilliant young musicians have staked out a musical niche not too many of us have heard before. BED plays original

music in the style of that being played over sixty years ago, but it's anything but quaint. Riveting, rollicking and unique is more like it. They're more than worth a listen." Joseph Jordan [Southland Blues] San Francisco Examiner: "For their sophomore album, 2002's "The Legend of Shorty Brown" (Mountainview Records), the members of Bay Area classic blues quartet The Blue Eyed Devils holed themselves up in a backwoods studio somewhere in rural North Carolina with producer James Mathus of Squirrel Nut Zippers and whipped up a mean batch of swampy juke joint tunes about getting drunk and getting dissed, not necessarily in that order. Their music's as smooth as buttah with moonshine's bite and a serious kick. They're online at theblueeyeddevils.com" . [Bill Picture, S.F. Examiner] Atomic Magazine(Taken Verbatim): The distinct immediacy in the southern blues tradition can strike even the most hardened Yankee like a slap in the face. The Blue Eyed Devils found an inroad to that tradition in producer Jimbo Mathus' Shorty Brown Studio deep in the wilds of North Carolina. Armed with peach brandy moonshine, the boys took just three days and produced a valiant tribute to the smoky downhome blues bands that have come before them. For a bunch of white pickers from San Francisco, the Blue Eyed Devils have a remarkable feel for the mournful howl of the blues on these songs, recorded in the same purely live fashion as field recordings of the original blues legends. From the first delicate duet between Brendan Wheatley's sharp harmonica and Chris Cotton's rough-voiced wail on "Good Times," to the akimbo boogie of the album-ending "Trouble," the ghosts of long-dead bluesmen like Lightnin' Hopkins or Slim Harpo seem to have haunted Shorty Brown's place for the Devils. In between, Cotton and Wheatley trade off choruses on "I'm Movin' Blues," "Bare Bones Woman Blues," and "3am Blues." There's a lot of hurtin' to be had here. Jimbo's production (surely learned from his own experience with the Squirrel Nut Zippers) also capitalizes on an atmosphere where you can almost feel the sweat coming off the walls and hear the scrape of fingernails on washboard and heavy boots coming down hard on beaten plank floors. Something has come out of the swamp and infected this disc. Beware, beware. -S. Clayton Moore Blues Revue June/July 2003(Taken Verbatim): Even before the CD starts spinning, it's clear that The Blue Eyed Devils have an old-fashioned streak. There's the disc itself, for one thing, designed to look like a record (remember those?). There's the title, as though the band reached across a thousand miles and back several decades from their San Francisco Bay Area base for something older and grittier. And there's the fact that the album was recorded live over a five-day period at the studio of Jim Mathus of Squirrel Nut Zippers, no stranger to retro. So what about the music? Well, it's solid, mostly acoustic stuff,

starting innocuously enough with "Good Times," a mellow slice of harp-and-guitar with some nifty vocal duet work. "Buked and Scorned" has a high-rolling pace and cool harmonica courtesy of band member Brendan Wheatley, and "I'm Movin' Blues" sounds just a little like Mississippi John Hurt. From there, though, The Blue Eyed Devils swing wide of the traditional highway, betraying a bit of the West Coast in "Caliphono Blues" before heading for mountain-stomp territory with "Lone Mountain." While they swing right back again for "that Train," to which Mathus lend mandolin, it's evident that the Devils aren't mere re-creationists. Actually, it's not always clear what they are; one gets the sense at times they could just as easily be playing rock-n-roll. Though this isn't their first album, being preceded by 2001's *Hard Luck Town*, sometimes it feels like it is. On the other hand, they're endearingly indie, with a bit of the rawness that all blues bands mining this particular territory - music reminiscent of prewar country blues, but with just enough urban sheen to suggest the genre's transformation during its migration to Chicago, should possess. Perhaps that's not too surprising, since producer Mathus has played with Buddy Guy. There's a lot of potential here, and the band deserves a broader hearing.

GENEVIEVE WILLIAMS (Blues Revue June/July 2003) Feb 5th, 2003 San Francisco Bay Guardian: "They may reside on the peninsula, but the four young fellas who dub themselves the Blue Eyed Devils have their musical feet planted firmly on Chicago's South Side, circa 1939. That's where producer Lester Melrose once rounded up Big Bill Broonzy, Washboard Sam, and other blues hotshots recently arrived from the South for RCA Victor's Bluebird label and other record companies. Although it had a direct influence on the electrified post-World War II Chicago blues style fashioned by Muddy Waters, the "Bluebird sound" associated with Melrose has come to take a backseat among revivalists to the rawer country blues styles of the prewar period. "Too urban," "too commercial," the purists complained, dismissing it as hokum. Born a generation too late to concern themselves with such arcane distinctions, the Devils dive headfirst into this upbeat style on *The Legend of Shorty Brown* as if they were playing for their rent and lay claim to a largely forgotten slice of Americana in the process. Chris Cotton's deep Delta drawl and expertly picked acoustic guitar lines, Brendan Wheatley's harmonica howls, Brett Klynn's two-beat slappin' bass, and the rural rhythms churned up by Justin Markovits on traps and washboard are true to tradition. Yet there's nothing academic about the 11 original tunes on their second CD, all rendered with the joyous ruckus of an old-time fish fry" Lee Hildebrand, SFBG RETAILERS CORPORATE AND INDEPENDENT ALIKE THAT STOCK "THE LEGEND OF SHORTY BROWN:" Cactus Music Video, Houston TX cdgb's, Mason City IA

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