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Big Joe Williams

Photo by Burton Wilson

**BURTON WILSON'S BOOK OF THE BLUES : TEXAS DEMS HOLD
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DR. SPOCK AND THE NEW PARTY : ROTARIANS SPREAD THE
GOODWILL IN HOUSTON**

Texas Blues Photo Book



Kenneth Threadgill

Burton's Book of the Blues
by Burton Wilson, with an introduction by
Chet Flippo. Speleo Press, Austin.

—by Tary Owens

Burton Wilson's long-awaited *Book of the Blues* is now out. For the last 10 years Burton has been photographing Texas musicians and his book is as close as you can get to a history of the Texas music scene. More than anything else the book is an excellent chronicle of the Austin scene, how it started, and where it went.

The photographs are fine; they capture the spirit of the '60's as well as anything I can recall. Between 1963 and the present an amazing array of Texas musicians have made Austin their home, or at least their stopping off place.

Included in Burton's collection are many of the greats of the blues and rock world: Janis Joplin, Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed, Big Joe Williams, Johnny and Edgar Winter, Freddy King, Otis Spann, Steve Miller, Mance Lipscomb, Robert Shaw, Jerry Garcia, Taj Mahal; the list could go on indefinitely. But the most important aspect of the book is the accurate representation of a scene; some of the groups are little-known, nationally, and some seem to have little to do with the blues, but all were essential parts of a music phenomenon that grew from a converted gas-station to Madison Square Garden.

The book begins with a photo of Janis, who lived in Austin off and on for several years. She began her musical career in Austin in 1962, playing with Lannie Wiggins and Powell St. John in the Waller Creek Boys. Lannie played guitar and banjo, Powell played harp and Janis played auto-harp. They all sang, but Janis carried most of the tunes.

They played what was then referred to as folk music, which included Appalachian ballads, the blues, jugband songs, bluegrass and country music, as well as contemporary songs. Included in their repertoire were songs from Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Bessie Smith, the Memphis Jugband, Hank Williams, Bill Monroe, Jimmy Rodgers and occasionally Bob Dylan or some of their own songs. From this same musical background grew most of

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the best musicians and singers of the era.

The second photograph is of Kenneth Threadgill, the father of the Austin music scene. Kenneth sings Jimmy Rodgers songs, perhaps better than Jimmy Rodgers did. His voice is funky yet true, and when he yodels it's like a bell. It was in Kenneth Threadgill's bar on North Lamar that Janis first sang in public and where a whole school of musicians developed. You can still hear Mr. Threadgill sing and sell Lone Star Beer in Austin.

Mance Lipscomb, pictured next, has influenced more musicians than anyone in Texas I can think of; he has been here since



Mance Lipscomb

the beginning and after more than 100 performances in Austin, still comes back, playing like an 18 year old and belying his 77 years.

From Threadgill's bar and folk music the Austin scene moved to rock in the middle '60's. The Thirteenth Floor Elevators were among the first acid-rock bands in the country and were the focal point for Texas music for several years. The Elevators preceded Burton's career as a photographer so they are not pictured, but the Conqueroo, who inherited the Elevators' following, are featured prominently.

Other early Texas bands that helped start a revolution were the afore-mentioned Conqueroo (who were originally a jugband called St. John and the Conqueroo), Shiva's Headband, The Sunnyland Special, featuring Angela Strehli, The Southern Flyers, later known as Pure Funk, The Wigs, Jerry Jeff Walker, and Kenneth Threadgill's band, The Hootenanny Hoots.

Some of the blues masters of the Austin area who influenced these bands were Robert Shaw, the King of the barrelhouse piano, Grey Ghost, not pictured, and Teodar Jackson, a fantastic blues fiddler who taught and inspired Spencer Perskin of Shiva's Headband.

(Teodar, pronounced "T Holy," died in 1965 and although he is not pictured, a benefit for him was the first musical event that brought together all the disparate parts of the Austin scene from country, to folk, to blues to rock and featured Austin's first light show. It was at this concert that Janis earned her first standing ovation and rave reviews, some six months before she joined Big Brother and the Holding Company.)

In 1966 and 1967 there was a mass exodus of musicians from Austin to San Francisco. On the West Coast, musicians from all over Texas formed groups and many became nationally known rock and roll stars.

Burton Wilson made several trips to California and photographed many of the members of the Texas musical Clan. Among the Texas-California transplants pictured in his book are Mother Earth, with Powell St. John and Tracy Nelson, The Steve Miller

Cont. on 14



Johnny Winter



Robert Shaw - King of the Barrelhouse Piano

photos by Burton Wilson

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JASPER JOHNS, Lithographs by the man who did a lot more than almost anyone — to define the Sixties, Jones Gallery.

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Galleries

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CONTRACT GRAPHICS. Paintings by Rob Yuikas, 5116 Morningside.
CRAWFORD GALLERY. Landscapes and still lifes by Rodde and Savin. Sculptures by Choate, 10am-5pm, Tues-Sat., 1100 Bissonnet.
DUBOSE GALLERY. Acrylics by Lamar Briggs, 2950 Kirby, 526-2353.
FERNDALE POTTERY. Handmade stoneware and bronze, 9am-5pm, Mon-Sat. 2902 Ferndale, 528-2796.
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GOOD EARTH GALLERY. A great new gallery featuring Houston artists. The price is right. Hours are 11am-3pm and 7-10pm daily, 508 Louisiana.
HOOKS-EPSTEIN GALLERY. Contemporary graphics by various artists. 1200 Bissonnet, 529-2343.
KIKO GALLERIES. Paintings, drawings, sculpture, etchings and lithographs by Le Corbusier, 410 Lovett, 522-3722.
LATENT IMAGE. Old and new photographs of Houston. A feast for the eye. 1122 Bissonnet, 529-2343.
MATRIX. Featuring five photographers offering a "hodge-podge" of styles. Fairview at Taft.
LONG AND COMPANY. Paintings by Marc Moldawer, 1212 San Felipe, 621-7382.

Book of the Blues

Cont. from 9
Band, Johnny Winter, Freddie King, Cross Country, Pure Funk, Mike Murphy, Boz Scaggs, and The Angel Band (later known as Free Chicken) which featured Powell St. John, Charlie Prichard and Bob Brown, and with whom I had the pleasure of playing bass.

More recently there has been a second wave of bands from Texas who worked the Vulcan Gas Company and later the Armadillo World Headquarters. Among these groups are The Hub City Movers, Greezy Wheels, Krackerjack, ZZ Top (now a national success), and The Brothers.

Finally Burton's book includes many artists who were not from Texas but passed through and left their mark on Austin's music. Some of them are Big Joe Williams, Muddy Waters, James Cotton, Jimmy Reed, Otis Spann, Doug Kershaw, Fats Domino, Taj Mahal, Earl Scruggs, and from India, the L.D.M. Spiritual Group.

Burton's book, although fantastic, has some important omissions. Doug Sahn and the Sir Douglas Quintet, White Trash, Rocky Hill, Guy Clark, Townes Van Zandt, Hop Wilson, Storm, Jimmy Vaughn, Freda and the Firedogs, Martin Fiero, Bobby Doyle, Big Martha Turner, Wayne Talbot, Freddy Fender, Jerry Fischer, Don Sanders, Rat Creek, Albert Collins, Red Angel, Clifton Chenier, Fred McClain, Minor Wilson, (Burton's son), Charlie Mingus, Ornette Coleman, Bobby Blue Bland, Buddy Holly, Little Son Jackson, Black Ace, Kris Kristoferson, Joe Tex, and John Clay are a few of the fine Texas musicians who will be featured in Burton's next book.

Until the sequel appears, *Burton's Book of the Blues* is the best chronicle we have. Texas has produced, and continues to produce, a rare breed of music, with deep roots in country music, the blues, church music,

soul, Cajun, Mexican, jazz, and rock and roll. Only in Texas can you find musicians who can play in any of these styles comfortably and without prejudice.

This unique background has produced many of the greats of country music, blues and rock and roll. Nowhere else can you find such an array of greatness and variety. *Burton's Book of the Blues* is easily the most important book to be published on Texas music, and, perhaps, the most significant era of rock and roll history. It will soon be a collectors item and even though it costs \$5 *Burton's Book of the Blues* is a true bargain.

unclassifieds

MESSAGE: I don't take orders from anyone. Roxana.

GENTLEMEN! A lie appears in this issue of Space City! John Walsh.

NEED RIDE OR PARTNER to Bay Area (Calif.). Expenses, Call 729-2897 and ask for Gandalf.

WAYNE: I'm not pregnant! Please call or come back. Luv, Kathy.

HARMONY SIX STRING guitar with case and extras, \$50. Call 864-8144, ask for David.

DAEFLOWER FREE SCHOOL has gone into the moving business, so if you are changing apts, or houses give them a call at 529-0579. Profits will be used to keep the school operating.

TWO PRISONERS RECEIVE NO mail from the outside and would like to correspond with females. Age is no barrier. All letters will be answered. Allan K. Green, No. 228754, Steve Bessett, No. 358702, P.O. Box 777, Monroe, WA 98272.

INFLATION FIGHTER! Am presently living in a 4-bedroom house alone (bummer) and would like to share pad with one or two. \$95 or \$60 each month. I'm 25, single and a semi-freak. Call 664-6572.

LONELY TEXAN WANTS COMPANIONSHIP. Would like it if some freak out in the U.S. would write. Dortha White, 12311 Atwell, Houston, Tex., 77035.

ROLLING STONES AFTERNOON - want to trade 4 floor seat for 4 seats in the stands. Good seats. 523-1402.

WANTED: RELIABLE CAB DRIVER. Weekends only. Temporary. Call 529-7768.

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LOST OR STOLEN: '64 or '65 fender stratocaster, black neck, sunburst red, lt. brown vinyl bardsbell case with orange/red velvet liner. Please return, sentimental value, generous reward. Call Cliff at 521-0723 or 526-7708.

WANTED: Truth, Call Alexander, please.

AIR CONDITIONER FOR SALE: Call 521-0623.

JAMIE & PEGGY: I can't believe we missed out on lemon ice cream.

WANTED: HIP FEMALE to babysit with 9 mo. old child during the day in our home in exchange for meals and small salary. Should have transportation—house is on north side near Heights. Must be experienced, non-coercive, and completely reliable. Call 692-8106.

DOES ANYONE OUT THERE know a good barber-stylist (licensed) who is really experienced in cutting long hair on dudes, who will take a bit of time, and who is not totally assembly-line oriented? If so, would you be so kind as to call me at 692-8106. Thanks.

NEED SOMEONE WITH VAN or truck to help us move July 5. Please call Judith or anyone at 666-7916.

FOUND: MEDIUM SIZED DOG, beige, looks part shepherd, just had pups. Come by Turtle News.

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unclassifieds

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