

ANDY GUNN - LONG BIO

Recently heralded as 'a great lost Scottish talent and one of our finest ever blues players', Andy Gunn's inspirational return to the music scene was proclaimed, in his own undeniable style, by the acclaimed 2015 album *Miracle of Healing*.

Andy's truly original, intuitive and soulful playing has drawn comparisons to Stevie Ray Vaughan and Jimi Hendrix. He has shared the stage and billing with some big names too - highlights of his career this far include supporting Buddy Guy at The Queens' Hall, jamming with Albert Collins and backing Geno Washington at the first Belladrum Festival.

Andy pays tribute to his parents for the gift of his first guitar at an early age, and to his mother's rock'n'roll collection for leading him to Blues masters like Lightning Hopkins and Muddy Waters. This early development formed a precocious talent - Andy's first band Jumpin' the Gunn were signed by Virgin's blues label, Point Blank, and they travelled to Memphis just as he was leaving school. This early experience gave Andy the enviable opportunity to learn from and exchange riffs with Al Green's rhythm section and Pop Staples, to name a few. Here, his raw talent developed into a prodigious touch which led to Andy being ranked as a world class talent.

When Andy returned to Scotland, a new chapter in his career began. He played alongside The Sensational Alex Harvey Band, with members of Gary Moore's Midnight Blues Band, Martin Stephenson, and toured with 4 times British Blues best harp player Errol Linton. Years later Andy was to return to the US, on a voyage of musical discovery touring New York, Chicago, Memphis, Nashville and New Orleans, jamming with many great musicians, igniting the music scene and sparking the comment 'damn, I didn't know they picked cotton in Scotland!'

However, not everything has been gifted to Andy, and this explains his lost years. When Rob Ellen wrote 'Andy Gunn is the blues', he was referring to the deep personal tragedies that have affected Andy's life and health. Born with Haemophilia, as a child, Andy was one of the patients affected by blood products contaminated with HIV and Hepatitis C via the clotting medication Factor 8. For many years, Andy campaigned to bring justice for his fellow victims of the contaminated blood scandal. These protests eventually helped to bring ex gratia payments to the bleeding disorder community.

As a teenager, these infections played a large part in him falling into the world of alcoholism and addiction, though he has now been in recovery for many years and tries his best to give back to his fellow addicts and community.

However, his desire to play and the strong support he received from fellow musicians meant that the years lost to illness were transmuted, with great thanks to Martin Stephenson, into the brilliant and soulful album '*Miracle of Healing*'. It was also during this period that Andy battled an HIV related cancer for the second time and came through the other side. Here, his intelligent articulation of personal tragedy, wealth of experience and unique talent shows, in Ellen's words, why 'Andy is a true guitar great of the old school and a living blues legend of the modern age'. However, although Andy can articulate the blues like no other, his optimism, style and astounding talent means seeing him perform is an electrifying, uplifting and unforgettable experience. When *Blues in Britain* described Andy's music as 'a resounding triumph over adversity', they were exactly right. The Andy Gunn Band goes from strength to strength, playing gigs throughout the UK, recently taking the stage at the Darlington, Orkney and Dundee Blues Festivals and at the Northern Roots and Southern Fried Festivals.

In addition to *Miracle of Healing*, Andy has recorded the albums *Flip Flop Kinetics*, *Bonar Bridge Sessions*, and *Regional Variations*. His fifth and highly anticipated album '*Too Many Guitars To Give Up Now*' is due for release Feb 2018 and features some of the best musicians in Scotland, taking Andy back to his blues roots.