

MARK DOYLE AND THE MANIACS
"COMIN' HOME"



When an artist as acclaimed as Mark Doyle decides to focus his musical energy in one direction you'd anticipate a major force as the result and there's no disappointment here. The clarity of his focus on the British Blues era from the sixties that took him from concentration on jazz and classical piano to the electric guitar resonates deeply and drives The Maniacs.

With a stellar line-up featuring some of the areas most respected and accomplished musicians including *Frank DeFonda* on Drums/percussion, *Jack "Penetrator" Lipton* on vocals, *Michael P. Ryan* on bass/vocals and *Terry Quill* on Harmonica/2nd guitar and vocals, this outfit is downright armed and should be considered dangerous.

Mark's six string chops stand firmly beside his legendary peers, Beck, Green and Clapton to name a few. It's an absolute marvel to me his name isn't used as easily. His uncompromising fluidity changes gears from slow and easy to straight technical speed, fast as lightning, dirty and driven then clean and crisp. Together this band rocks, rolls, directs, produces, cajoles and flat out expects you to respond. They boldly take their place on a pedestal not many have the balls to assume and rightfully so, with their combined skills and Mark's colorful pedigree this combination is destined to fly beyond national restriction.

Each band member brings an immeasurable depth of talent to their respective position. Frank drives the rhythm section in metronome-like precision giving Michael a groove any bass player would love to ride over. Terry's solid 2nd guitar could easily take the lead in any other band and his harmonica speaks like a human, gritty and bluesy as a smoky club.

The individual qualities of each vocalist color each piece individually from Jack's blues-inflected punk snarl to Michael's

rich growls. Perhaps the one thing lacking is more of Mark's voice, distinct and individual as his guitar style, showcased here on Live Snakes. His unique breathy delivery lends itself perfectly to the style and in my humble opinion should be highlighted more often. When his guitar kicks in under his own voice this band rolls as an unstoppable force.

All or any of this should come as no surprise considering the diversity and levels of success that Mark has reached in his long career. From his early years in Free Will/ Jukin' Bone with Joe Whiting, another local luminary who Mark has collaborated with over the years locally, to national and international status playing lead guitar for the likes of Meatloaf, Andy Pratt and Cindy Bullens are just a part of his history. Mark has contributed session work with the likes of Hall and Oates, Judy Collins and Leo Sayer and provided his arrangement/vocal skills to the monster hit Straight From The Heart and the album Cuts Like A Knife by Bryan Adams. He's performed on Saturday Night Live, 5 nights at Wembley Stadium and the massive concerts at Castle Donnington with Meatloaf besides his bands touring with Savoy Brown, The Allman Brothers and Z Z Top. Mark's list of producer and arrangement credits looms as large as his performance list, notably his work with Maurice Starr, which brought more international acclaim with the huge success of New Kids on the Block and The Stylistics.

While the focus easily falls on his dynamic guitar playing, it's wise to remember he wrote or co-wrote most of the songs here, a departure from his two recent solo efforts Guitar Noir and Out Of The Past which are instrumental pieces. I previously used the word ubiquitous to describe Mark in a review of Michael P. Ryan's latest release Cashtown and it only becomes more apt as I learn more of his rich experience.

Our area has in this man a local, national and international legend that goes largely unknown through humility. I've seen many far less talented people blow their own horn like it's reveille when this man isn't quite sure where his bugle is.

"Mark's six string chops stand firmly beside his legendary peers, Beck, Green and Clapton to name a few. It's an absolute marvel to me his name isn't used as easily".

All of these qualities and years of experience blended with his multiple talents give basis to Mark Doyle and The Maniacs. With all of his musical energies focused clearly on this band I have no doubt that stratospheric success lies straight ahead.

Don't miss the opportunity to see the band live, full concert schedules are available at www.myspace.com/mdatm and check out Mark's huge discography and biography at www.markdoylemusic.com.

(Words by Greg Jackson)