

**MEET THE DUKE ROBILLARD BAND:
America's most versatile guitarist and his band
peel back the years to deliver a gritty tribute to
the early heroes of R&B**

Looking back, it was one of the most exciting eras of American music. Tiny independent R&B labels put out jukebox singles with infectious riffs, shouted vocals, honking tenor sax solos and dance grooves that electrified black America's clubs, bars and backyard BBQs.

And now Duke Robillard and his powerful band — with their feet hard on the gas pedal— have gone back to the 40s and 50s to resurrect the drive, the songs and the atmosphere of that distant era. But the view in their rear mirror makes the music seem much, much closer than you might think.

Low Down and Tore Up is just that, and while it's Duke's 18th record for Stony Plain, the internationally-distributed Canadian roots music label, it's certainly different from the others that preceded it.

Duke sums it up: "Basically, I just wanted to go in the studio and record live and capture the real feeling of the lowdown blues in an off-the-cuff sort of way, the way singles used to be made in the blues world for small labels." Robillard's regular compatriots support both the guitarist and the spirit of the songs: Gord "Sax" Beadle on tenor and baritone saxes, Bruce Bears and Matt McCabe on keyboards, Brad Hallen on bass and Mark Teixeira on drums.

Producer Dick Shurman says the new CD is a "rousing and rocking" affirmation of Robillard's grittier blues roots. "He's carved out a legacy that puts him on a par with the greats who inspired and informed him," he adds.

The new CD is the latest installment in Duke Robillard's long and amazingly fruitful relationship with Stony Plain. Following the success of Grammy-nominated *Stomp! The Blues Tonight* and his most recent release, *Passport to the Blues*, Robillard is in powerful form — vocally and instrumentally — on an album that stands out in his catalog for its over-the-top enthusiasm and the "live" quality of the recording.

One of the most versatile and accomplished guitarists playing today, Robillard has always been fascinated by the roots of American popular music — and he's tackled everything from blues to the classic American songbook to jazz guitar duets, rock-influenced trios, small and big band swing recordings.

A consistent producer, a session player for the likes of Bob Dylan, Dr. John, John Hammond and dozens more, he logs up to 250 shows a year and has toured as a member of Tom Waits' band.

COVERING (MOST OF) THE BASES IN DUKE ROBILLARD'S BASIC BIOGRAPHY

Any biographical summary of Duke Robillard has to cover a lot of ground. In no particular order:

- His legendary playing skills make him one of the most versatile guitarists on the planet. He's also a smooth, intimate and engaging singer.
- The Blues Foundation has named Robillard "Best Blues Guitarist" no less than four times, B.B. King says "Duke's one of the great players;" the *Houston Post* called him "one of God's guitarists."
- He won the Best Traditional Male Artist category at the Blues Awards in Memphis last year. And his 2009 recording, *Stomp! The Blues Tonight* gave him his second Grammy nomination (the first was for *Guitar Groove-a-Rama*, released in 2006).
- Robillard had his first band in high school, and was fascinated from the beginning by the ways in which jazz, swing, and the blues

were linked. In 1967, still a teenager, he formed Roomful of Blues, and the band was tight enough and tough enough to accompany two of his heroes, Big Joe Turner and Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson on record and in live appearances.

• **Roomful of Blues** — which still continues, 40 years on — gave Duke his first exposure to a wide public, and when he left after a dozen years, he played briefly with rockabilly king Robert Gordon, then cut two albums with the Legendary Blues Band (a sterling group of former members of Muddy Waters' bands). He led his own group until 1990, then replaced Jimmie Vaughan in the **Fabulous Thunderbirds**, before fronting his own band once again.

THE ROAD, IN YOUR TOWN AND JUST ABOUT EVERYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD

A glance at Duke Robillard's discography over the 19 years since he signed with Stony Plain in 1993 would suggest that this is a man who lives in the recording studio.

And while it's a fact that he has made excellent-sounding recordings in his own home studio, he's made even more projects at Lakewest Recording, a Rhode Island facility owned by his manager Jack Gauthier. The task, as always, is to make great music fast and economically, without sacrificing energy, feeling, and sound quality.

This allows him to spend most of his time on tour — he's a veteran "road warrior" who has played as many as 250 live shows a year, rivaling the legendary tour schedules of Buddy Guy and B.B. King in their younger days. Robillard travels literally from Montreal to Moscow, from Brazil to Barcelona, and from London, England to London, Ontario.

Now, with his new CD, *Low Down and Tore Up*, Robillard has demonstrated once again the freshness of his approach and his deep commitment to American music.

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Duke Robillard recordings for Stony Plain

Low Down & Tore Up (SPCD-1367)
Passport to the Blues (SPCD-1349)
Stomp! The Blues Tonight (SPCD-1342)
Introducing Sunny & Her Joy Boys (SPCD-1341)
A Swingin' Session with Duke Robillard (SPCD-1331)
World Full of Blues (double CD set) SPCD-1323)
Guitar Groove-a-Rama (SPCD-1316)
Live at the Blackstone River Theatre (DVD) (SPCD-1308)
The Duke Meets the Earl (SPCD-1303)
Blue Mood (SPCD-1300)
Exalted Lover (SPCD-1293)
More Conversations in Swing Guitar (with Herb Ellis) (SPCD-1292)
Living with the Blues (SPCD-1277)
Explorer (SPCD-1265)
Conversations in Swing Guitar (with Herb Ellis) (SPCD-1260)
New Blues for Modern Man (SPCD-1259)
Stretching Out Live (SPCD-1250)
Duke's Blues (SPCD-1195)

Other Duke Robillard productions for Stony Plain

Billy Boy Arnold — Boogie n Shuffle (SPCD-1266)
Chris Flory — Blues in My Heart (SPCD-1288)
Rosco Gordon — Memphis Tennessee (SPCD-1267)
Doug James — Blow Mr. Low (SPCD-1276)
Jay McShann — Goin' to Kansas City (SPCD-1286)
Jay McShann — Still Jumpin' the Blues (SPCD-1254)
Jay McShann — Hootie's Jumpin' Blues (SPCD-1237)
New Guitar Summit — New Guitar Summit (with Gerry Beaudoin & Jay Geils) (SPCD-1301)
New Guitar Summit — Live from Stoneham Theatre (DVD) SPCD-1302)
New Guitar Summit — Shivers (SPCD-1328)
The Rockin' Highliners — Oh My! (SPCD-1258)
Joe Louis Walker — Witness to the Blues (SPCD-1337)
Joe Louis Walker — Between a Rock and the Blues (SPCD-1345)
Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne — An Old Rock On a Roll (SPCD-1355)
Jimmy Witherspoon — Spoon's Blues (SPCD-1211)
Jimmy Witherspoon — With the Duke Robillard Band (SPCD-1252)