

# STREET BEATS

## Brace for the Blues Explosion

By Larry O'Connor  
staff writer

The beakers and test tubes are out. Like the teenager in the basement with a chemistry set, blues man Kim Wilson is experimenting. End result: The Blues Explosion.

The lead singer of The Fabulous Thunderbirds will join guitarists Luther Tucker and Duke Robillard, along with drummer Fran Christina and bass player "Sister" Sarah Brown, for a special 10-date tour. The Blues Explosion stops by Sully's

in Dearborn on Friday.

"There's a lot of people I've known for years and years," said Wilson, who is formerly of Redford Township. "I've admired them through the years. Some of them I've never had a chance to play with because of being on the road so much."

"I like to work in combinations." The Blues Explosion is indeed one lethal combination of blues musicians. The lineup includes:

- Luther Tucker, guitarist who has performed with Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, Little Walter

Jacobs and James Cotton.

- Duke Robillard, guitarist and vocalist who was one of the mainstays of Rhythm of Blues.
- Fran Christina, drummer with The Fabulous Thunderbirds.
- Sarah Brown, a bass guitarist who made a name for herself in the Austin, Texas, blues scene. She performed extensively in the Ann Arbor area with the Boogie Brothers before moving to Texas.

Wilson got the notion for a tour after catching Tucker perform in July at an anniversary at Anton's, a well-known blues club in Austin.

"I have a real soft spot for Luther," Wilson said. "One of the first blues records I had was a James Cotton album and Tucker was great on that."

"I saw him perform and I told him, 'Tucker, we're going on the road.'"

He holds the same reverence for Robillard, quite a guitar slinger in his own right.

"He can do it all," Wilson said. "See, Duke always gets in my face. I'll watch him perform and he plays 100 verses — at my table! I told him, 'I'm not coming to any shows you're playing unless I'm on stage with you.'"

Wilson promises a heavy dose of straightforward blues.

But he said, "A lot of crazy things can happen."

Which is part of the reason Wilson put together the tour. The Blues Explosion allows him to do something a bit different from the T-Birds.

He's quick to point out the Blues Explosion is not replacing The Fabulous Thunderbirds in his life. Group members will be writing some material for an upcoming album soon.

Like those he'll join on stage, blues music is a passion for Wilson. He has performed with many heroes, includ-

ing Eddie Taylor, Albert Collins, John Lee Hooker and Muddy Waters.

Wilson lived in Redford Township until he was 9, moving to California.

"I didn't want to leave," he said.

He performed with a number of bands in California, but his big break didn't come until he moved to Texas. There, he met Muddy Waters, who he said helped launch the Fabulous Thunderbirds.

"Muddy was kind of like my second father," he said. "He took me under his wing. He made me. I love all those guys, but he put the final stamp on me."

The Fabulous Thunderbirds emerged out of the Austin scene, touted as the blues band of the future. The group has released several albums, gravitating more toward mainstream tastes while still keeping its blue edge.

Wilson, though, has always kept himself busy with other projects. He recently produced and performed on Jimmie Rodgers' latest album. The Blues Explosion has him really excited.

"I do a lot of different things," said Wilson, who lives in Austin. "I play all different kinds of blues. I like big bands with horns. I like keyboards and two guitars opposed to one. I like covering all the areas."

But with all those names on one stage, perhaps some egos would be covered up by others. Wilson quickly shoots down such a notion.

"No. We're all grownups here," he said. "(Shoot) man, every single person is the best that there is. They're like I am, they just like to play."

The Blues Explosion performs Friday, Oct. 20, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, between Michigan and Ford, Dearborn. For information, call 846-5377.

## IN CONCERT

- FLOUR**  
Flour will perform on Monday, Oct. 16, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- IODINE RAINCOATS**  
Iodine Raincoats will perform on Monday, Oct. 16, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 966-2747.
- WINTER HOURS**  
Winter Hours will perform on Tuesday, Oct. 17, at Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- BORAX**  
Borax will perform on Wednesday, Oct. 18, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- GREG STRYKER**  
Greg Stryker will perform Wednesday through Saturday, Oct. 18-21, at Jagers, 3481 Elizabeth Lake Road, Pontiac. For information, call 681-1700.
- DIFFERENCE**  
The Difference will perform on Thursday, Oct. 19, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- FREEDOM**  
Freedom of Expression will perform on Thursday, Oct. 19, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 966-2747.
- TRASH BRATS**  
Trash Brats will perform with guests, Sanctum, on Thursday, Oct. 19, at 3-D

- Club, 1815 N. Main, Royal Oak. For information, call 582-3344.
- PIL**  
Public Image Limited will perform with guests, Fitch for Lulu, at 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 19, at the Fox Theatre in Detroit. For information, call 567-6000.
- ADRENALIN OD**  
Adrenalin OD will perform on Thursday, Oct. 19, at Blondie's, West Seven Mile, east of Telegraph, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.
- THE SHY**  
The Shy will perform on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 20-21, at Griffin's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. For information, call 334-9292.
- LILIAN AXE**  
Lilian Axe will perform on Friday, Oct. 20, at Blondie's, West Seven Mile Road, east of Telegraph, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.
- REGULAR BOYS**  
Regular Boys will perform on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 20-21, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 966-2747.
- HIPPOTHRONE**  
Hippothrone will perform along with Model Citizens and Phineas Gage at 9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20, in Oakland University's Abstemious Hall, in the lower level of Oakland Center. The band's extravaganza will be a benefit for WOUX-AM, the campus radio station at OU. Tickets are \$3 in advance, \$5.50 at the door. For information, call 370-4272.



Kim Wilson, formerly of Redford Township, has put together an all-star cast of musicians for the Blues Explosion.

## LIVE

### BOB MOULD

— Nectarine Ballroom, Ann Arbor.

"There's a lot of Husker Du left in this man."

So declared one nearby fan while watching Bob Mould tear through 100 minutes of rock-and-roll last Monday at Ann Arbor's Nectarine Ballroom.

Mould, who fronted the now legendary Husker Du, laid to rest any fear that he had abandoned that pioneering postpunk band's penchant for using volume as a weapon. Touring to support his brilliant solo album, "Workbook," Mould transformed the haunting melodies of the relatively tame record into a hard-driving guitar assault.

"Workbook" is a brooding album of dark lyrics and moody music laced with cellos and acoustic guitars. On stage, "Workbook" takes on a deafening Husker demeanor, with Mould, guitarist Jim Harry, bassist Tony Arnone, and Gold Palominos' drummer Anton Fier replacing the intricate string and vocal arrangements with tight guitarwork and deadly drumming.

Mould isn't strapped on the acoustic guitar for "Sinners and Their Repentances" and a brief show-closing medley of Husker hits, including

"Hardly Getting Over It" and the wonderful "Makes No Sense at All."

With his blond bangs tumbling on his forehead and his guitar dangling at his knees, Mould led his band through the entire new LP, plus a few outtakes a new songs scheduled for his second solo album, as well as an encore rendition of Neil Young's "Cinnamon Girl."

Mould closed the first set with the album's first single, "See a Little Light and 'Whichever Way the Wind Blows.'" The latter, "Workbook's" rockiest track, sent some of the diehards on the packed dance floor slam-dancing to its frenzied beat.

The song and set, came to a pounding conclusion with Mould under strobe light, spinning his guitar like a top near the amplifier, creating skull-splitting feedback that would've made Jimi Hendrix shudder and Pete Townshend plug his ear. The din continued as Mould laid the guitar across the amp column and ended up on the floor screaming into the microphone, to the delight of the awed crowd.

— John Cortez

## Bonedaddys boogie big

### World beat spurs band

By Larry O'Connor  
staff writer

Beware of the Bonedaddys. They make you sweat.

So apply a double dose of that deodorant stick and be prepared to dance. That's the word from the leader of the eight-member band, which rolls in to the Majestic Theatre Saturday with its engaging, engaging and energized brand of world beat.

"It's just got those rhythms," said Mike Tempo, the goatee and bespectacled percussionist with the Los Angeles-based Bonedaddys. "We get your butt popping."

The massive beat the Bonedaddys lay down encompasses a rather diverse blend of music from around the globe, including New Orleans, West African, Soca, rhythm and blues only to name a few.

The sound is molded into an electrifying, mesmerizing and any other "flying" you can pull out of your back pocket. Those who listened the Bonedaddys' first LP on Chameleon Records, "A-Koo-De-A," were left speechless.

So, too, were the people at Miller Brewery. The brewery was looking for a few good bands to come up some music for a commercial. The Bonedaddys sent along a demo tape of its eclectic world beat sound.

"They loved it," said Tempo. In a telephone interview where the Bonedaddys are recording the beer commercial. "We're able to be ourselves and be weird and still be sponsored by a major corporation."

THINK THAT'S unusual? Look at the lineup for these zany party purveyors. A drummer from Texas, a percussionist from Paduch, Ky., a keyboardist and guitarist is from New Delhi, India and the keyboardist is from Trinidad.

Then we find out the singer has roots in Waits, Calif., and Topeka, Kan.

"Oh," added Tempo, "we have a guy who's from Germany and Ohio who sits in on our albums."

Things start to make sense. Really, they do. All these guys are from different parts of the globe, combining their diverse musical influences to make world beat an applicable description of the Bonedaddys' music.

"It's a world beat approach," said Tempo, "but it's a rock'n'roll attitude."

At that point, we give up. Let's say the music is indescribable, but enjoyable. And there will plenty more to enjoy in upcoming months. The band

will release its second album, "World Beatniks," on the Chameleon label Oct. 25.

The disc will feature some of the Bonedaddys' club favorites in five years of touring as one of the hottest dance bands around, including a cover of Elvis Presley's "Crazy Fish."

This latest LP could break the Bonedaddys into the national spotlight. College Music Journal has given an advance copy a thumbs-up review.

Any success would be more than what any member expected when the group formed five years ago. Tempo called several of his musician buddies in order to play some of their favorite music. Response was overwhelming.

THE BONEDADDYS quickly made a name for themselves on the dance club circuit, though Tempo said his group prefers the "down home places" to the sterile disco atmosphere.

A lot of that depends on the audience though, Tempo said. "We just played for a crowd in Houston, Texas, for people in black ties and cowboy boots. They got down and sweaty."

Also, in their musical travels, the Bonedaddys have opened for such diverse acts as blues guitarist Robert Cray, reggae guru Burning Spear and alternative rock's Jazz Butcher.



Mike Tempo (lower left) helped found the Bonedaddys, a group that has quickly made a name for playing a zany beat in dance clubs across the country.

In each case, the group won over audiences.

"People want to have a good time and we provide it," Tempo said. "It's honest music, really. We're not trying to uphold any traditional forms. We won't try to do a West African song exactly like a West African song."

"Heck, our guitar player is from India."

The Bonedaddys will perform Saturday, Oct. 21, at the Majestic Theatre, 4124 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 833-0120.

## LOCAL

- Here are the top 10 songs heard on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sundays (repeated 6:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays) on WDTB-FM 90.9.
- "I Can't Change the World," Art School.
  - "When I Was Yours," Sensitive Big Guys.
  - "War World," Warworld.
  - "Eclipse," Naming Mary.
  - "Born to Die," Dave Uchall.
  - "Mirrored Emotions," Rolling Stones.
  - "Mortal Men," Neneasia.
  - "Monster Mash," Jerry Vile.
  - "Green Haze," Elvis Hitter.
  - "Charlie," Cuppa Joe.

## SINGLES

- Here are the top 10 selling records, according to Cashbox magazine.
- "Cherish," Madonna.
  - "Miss You Much," Janet Jackson.
  - "If I Could Turn Back Time," Cher.
  - "Heaven," Warrent.
  - "18 and Life," S'kid Row.
  - "Girl, I'm Gonna Miss You," Milli Vanilli.
  - "Mirrored Emotions," Rolling Stones.
  - "Love Song," The Cars.
  - "One," Bee Gees.
  - "Don't Look Back," Fine Young Cabbals.

## REVIEWS

### OH MERCY — Bob Dylan



Nary a negative word has been breathed about this record, and it's high time its shortcomings were recognized.

The lyrics aren't printed on the jacket.

Other than that, it's hard to find fault with "Oh Mercy," the album that has Dylan fans rejoicing and critics hailing it as Bob's best since 1974's "Blood on the Tracks." Finally, they're right.

The success is largely a result of Dylan's teaming with producer Daniel Lanois, rock's current King Midas. Lanois, who has recently worked with such heavyweights as Peter Gabriel, U2 and Robbie Robertson, dropped a solo album that is doing for the chance to work with Dylan. Like Mark Knopfer did with 1983's "Infidels," Lanois proved that the right production can make mediocre Dylan music stand up to its previous classics.

As with most of Dylan's material, the lyrics are at times introspective, at times apocalyptic. The music is

### REI MOMO — David Byrne



David Byrne is most readily known for his work with Talking Heads. With that band, he redefined traditional notions of pop songs, constantly challenging the listener with new styles of singing.

He quickly adapted and once again was one of the most imaginative proponents of the new technology. Not content with confining his talent to these arenas, he has been recognized for his outstanding work as a filmmaker ("True Stories" and "Stop Making Sense"), soundtrack composer ("Last Emperor," "Married to the Mob," "Something Wild," "Catherine Wheel"—A Twyla Turn Dance), and producer ("Walling"—Fun Boy 3, and "Mesopotamia"—B-52).

With such an exalted track record, it is impossible to ignore what Byrne turns his attention to now.

In this instance he tipped his hand earlier this year by his involvement with the release of "Brazil Classics," a collection of Brazilian folk songs. His constant effort to push himself into unknown territories has extend-

### BIG BANG! — Fuzzbox



Four women, a pop band. All right, go ahead and draw your own conclusions.

But before you write this band off as banal Bangles clones, take a listen to this rather fine debut LP from this Birmingham, England, quintet. The results are surprising.

Let's make a case for Fuzzbox to be taken seriously. For one, this group writes its own songs.

We'd like to enter for evidence the brassy numbers such as "International Rescue," "Self" and "Versatile for Discos and Parties."

Dance rhythms, sunshiny peppy numbers, hyppotic beats, yes, Fuzzbox can cross off all the boxes. Request most any number from "Big Bang!" (Gelfin) down at The Shelter. This will shake any loose plaster from the walls.

Also, there's lyrical bite to the band. Fuzzbox is an all-girl band that likes to have fun. Yet they avoid

the biggest downfall in pop triteness.

Songs such as "Jamalcan Sunrise" are written from a feminine perspective. In this case, the natural traps women can fall into through marriage and family.

Versatility? You bet. The new-age quality of "Irish Bride" displays a group in command of its craft. OK, granted, this particular number sounds a bit like Enya, but it's moody, mystical and marvelous.

With all that, you're still not buying it. Must be those hiked-up hemlines Maggie, Tina, Jo and Vickie display on stage, huh?

"Why is it that when Prince does it it's brilliant and a woman does it and she's a hussy?" asks Vickie in the press notes.

Good, heartfelt music speaks louder than image. Fuzzbox will have a voice in music circles for years to come.

— Larry O'Connor