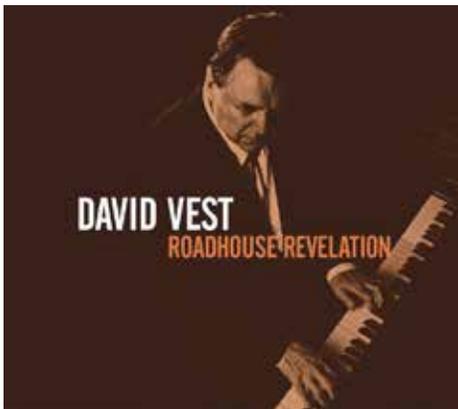


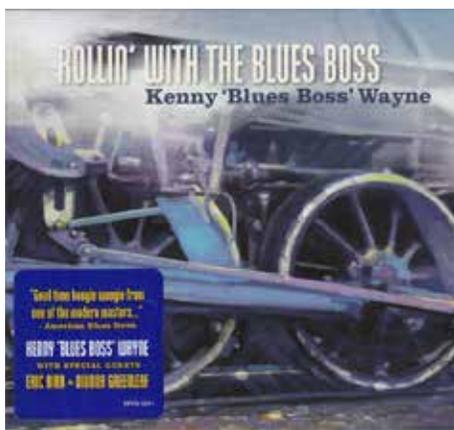


Illustration by Nathaniel Mesner



David Vest *Roadhouse Revelation* Cordova Bay/Universal

David Vest is a veteran, now residing in Vancouver, but a product of the American south, born in Alabama in 1943. The *East Meets Vest* band is back, this time as the **Willing Victims: Gary Kendall** on bass, **Teddy Leonard** on guitar and **Mike Fitzpatrick** on drums and Vest has drawn on those Gulf Coast memories for a most amazing set of songs. "Freight Train Rollin'" gets things off to a rocking start, a stomping train song. "Ramblin' Man" is a beauty, not the **Allman Brothers** song, but drawn from the same well and full of hard-earned wisdom. "Street Car" is an acoustic ballad with a jazzy feel, about memories that seem almost real. "Crooked Politicians" will bring a smile to your face with its snappy tune and clever rhymes – I think he's met a few of these. "Santa Fe Steamer" is just Vest and his piano, another storming train song and proof, if you need any, of why he was the piano player of the year. "That Happened To Me" is a fabulous slow blues about bad things happening, like losing one's home - utterly convincing. I knew right away that "Heart Full of Rock And Roll" is as close to a personal anthem as I'll find and it gets a roaring, live performance here that almost ends the disc. That credit goes to a lovely little piano tune, "Pretty Things For Anne". These aren't all the songs but they're all excellent and delivered perfectly in his 'weathered & unpretentious voice'. I think this will be a candidate for album of the year and I hope there are many more Gulf Coast memories to come. Mr. Vest was just here and I hope you caught one of the shows, otherwise get this disc and stay informed at www.davidvest.ca.



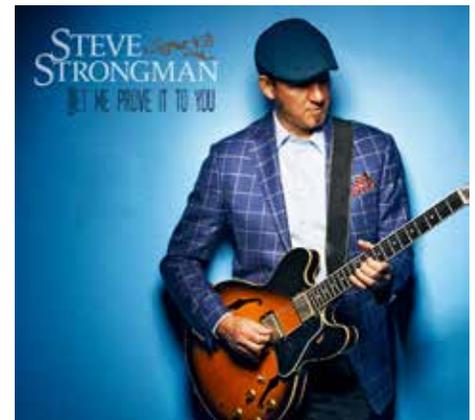
Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne *Rollin' With The Blues Boss* Stony Plain/Warner

Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne has been fortunate enough to record many times over his thirty-year career and he's been deservedly honoured with multiple nominations and awards on both sides of the border. His first disc for Stony Plain was produced by **Duke Robillard** and featured that fine band. This time out, he has **Tom Lavin** in the producer's chair (and playing guitar) and Lavin has assembled a rather large cast for the Blues Boss's new songs. The result is a delightfully varied program that cloaks Wayne's love of tradition in his most contemporary setting yet. Lavin gives himself a BB-styled guitar intro to the opener, "Leavin' In The Morning", no doubt because the intent was to bring that modern **BB King** sound to mind. That sound carries over into "You Bring The Jungle Out Of Me", which opens with jungle sound effects and has a horn section that gets to imitate jungle animals. It's probably a lot of fun live but not so much here. "Roadrunner" is not the **Bo Diddley** song but an original on the same theme - it just cooks along on a solid groove as Wayne lovingly describes his life on the road. He has written a fine new soul blues ballad as well, "Baby, It Ain't You", wonderfully done as a duet with the sultry-voiced Texan, **Dianna Greenleaf**. You should check her out at www.dianna.com. Another guest gets the lead vocal on the toe-tapping "Two Sides": **Eric Bibb** is also featured on acoustic guitar. Wayne takes the horns with him on a trip to the Crescent City with the rollicking instrumental "Ogopogo Boogie". Piano and tenor sax lead in the aptly named "Keep On Rockin'" and he keeps the tempo going to finish with "Out Like A Bullet" – just storming boogie woogie piano & drums. Keep 'em coming, Kenny, and keep on rocking.

Steve Strongman *Let Me Prove It To You* Self

A Natural Fact was most unusual for Hamilton's **Steve Strongman** and not just for winning the JUNO award. It was an

acoustic album from an artist known for his electric shows. To say that news of his next disc was eagerly anticipated is a major understatement. Well, here's the news: it will be released on May 13, it's electric (mostly) and it's great. The opener is a stunning rocker – "There's Something Goin' On" is a 'there's mule kickin' in my stall' song with a slide hook to die for and a great chorus (with **Emma-Lee**). "What I Believe" is a slower & heavier, with some neat little shifts and a section with harp over an acoustic slide. "Get Used To It" is mostly acoustic, again with slide and again with a good tune and **Jesse O'Brien** on piano. The song says you're not going to get everything you want. It's not the only one here about getting older, "We're Going Out Tonight" has an old friend calling him up and wanting to go out like the old days but our narrator has a wife and kids and things to do. Again with an inventive arrangement and tune. While Strongman plays some pretty mean harp himself, he's brought along **Guy Bélanger** from Montreal for "Lookin' For Trouble". Somewhat unusually, the song fades in as Strongman sings over his slide, the two



have a dueling solo feature. The acoustic "Older" confronts the issue head on and the chorus, rather tunefully, says 'he's getting older but not old' - uptempo and optimistic. Strongman is a one of our finest entertainers and one of our strongest songwriters. This album keeps that all-important momentum going. A strong contender for next year's JUNO and he's debuting it in Hamilton on May 9 at Hamilton Place, the Molson Canadian Studio Theatre. Our turn comes at Hugh's Room a week later, on May 15th. The web site is www.stevestrongman.com.

Catl *This Shakin' House* catl

Catl is a duo for their fourth disc. **Jamie Fleming**, who calls himself catl, is on guitar & vocals and **Sarah K (Kirkpatrick)** is now on standup drum kit & vocals. Despite the reduced lineup, the fury and intensity that is the hallmark of this alt/punk band is undiminished. They say in the press kit that they toured the American South as a duo