



CHARLIE PICKETT

BAR BAND AMERICANUS: THE BEST OF CHARLIE PICKETT AND ...

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"Situating themselves at the crossroads where Johnny Thunders and Son House intersect, Charlie whipped up a bad voodoo vibe of heroin rock and midnight blues. These guys were one of the undiscovered giants of the late eighties."

— Peter Buck, REM

If you accept the premise put forth by Keith Richards that the title of "greatest rock and roll band in the world" is determined on a nightly basis, then we want to tell you about some guys that owned it on quite a few nights in the 80's, a band that, for a variety of reasons, fell through the cracks and never got the recognition they deserved. Twenty plus years on, we're aiming to rectify that with the release of *Bar Band Americanus: The Best of Charlie Pickett and ...*

Rising out of the fertile and groundbreaking underground music scene of the Southeast in the early 80's, CP and the Eggs (and later the MC3) were all motorcycle boots and sneers, and rode a squall of throat-grabbing feedback and Stones musical middle fingers. They were as much Thunders and Reed as anything country and their tales of scoring in Miami projects ("Overtown"), cowboy dreams ("A On Horseback") and laconic survivors' humor were unlike anything being heard on the nascent college rock circuit. For proof, check out "Liked It A Lot," the love song that didn't just hurt, but had a streak of existential horror in it that STILL raises the hair on our battered souls.

The influences are easy to spot, old bloozers like Son House and Howlin' Wolf, rockers like the Yardbirds and Velvet Underground. It's also easy, in retrospect, to draw the lines between Charlie Pickett and Green on Red, the Gun Club, a more hillbilly Dream Syndicate and a more art damaged Jason and the Scorchers. At the time, though, what they were doing with their influences came out of the slums and swamps of Miami like a tormented yowl.

Included in this collection are songs spanning Charlie's career,

unavailable (unless you're a seasoned crate diver) in any form anywhere for way too long. You'll find his early singles on Miami's Open label ("If This is Love," "Slow Death"); tracks from the seminal EP "Cowboy Junkie Au Go Go (tracks 3,8, 9, 13) which the Village Voice's Robert Christgau hailed at the time as "ace country punk;" remixed tracks from the Twin/Tone LP "Route 33," featuring the then-current guitarist

Jim Duckworth (**Gun Club, Panther**

Burns) (1, 5, 7, 12); the "The Wilderness" LP produced by **Peter Buck** (and featuring his guitar playing on 11) (4,10,11), tracks 16-19 from the legendary LP "Live at the Button," and finally a previously unreleased track (2) and even a new one (6). Rounding out this overdue collection are liner notes from **Peter Buck**, Bloodshot Records co-founder and long time CP-acolyte Rob Miller, as well as a historical primer on Charlie's career from South Florida writer Jeff Schwier.



Like a handful of other bands of that era, whose underappreciated and under-known work continues to resonate in strange and unprecedented ways today, these musicians flew under the radar, worked without a net, without a blueprint, without direct forebears and with little regard for the musical bones they picked over.

Charlie Pickett and his boys took the understanding of roots and rock and morphed and molested it and came up with something utterly original. Their fearless dismissal of stylistic straitjackets was pure punk and emblematic of a time when the rulebook had been tossed out and the possibilities seemed as endless as the horizon Charlie wrote about riding towards.

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