



The Short

The Kingmakers play a fiery brand of rockabilly and jump-jive, put on a killer live show, and always dress to impress. They're sure to get even the quietest crowd up on their feet. Featuring the solid thump of the upright "doghouse" bass and the echoing twang of the big hollow-body electric guitar, The Kingmakers ignite the stage with the sound, look and feel of vintage rockabilly.

Over the past 18 months, this rocking 4-piece from Ottawa has travelled to Memphis to record their debut CD, recorded a second CD of new tunes, and thrilled audiences from Memphis, TN to Wakefield, QC with their wickedly engaging show. Never shy and always eager to please, The Kingmakers leave audiences begging for more.

The Kingmakers

Clark Lawlor, vocals and stunts

John Cormier, guitars and vocals

Steve Donnelly, double bass walker and vocals

Bob Primeau, skins and vocals

Discography

"Tupelo To Memphis" (2009) - inspired by the band's pilgrimage to Memphis and the voyage of Elvis and many other greats from obscurity to stardom. Featuring 13 new original tunes.

"Live At SUN Studio" (2008) - recorded "live off the floor" at the legendary SUN Studio in Memphis, Tennessee.

The Music

Rockabilly, jump-jive, swing, with hints of country, blues, and rock 'n' roll. Inspired by the greats including Elvis, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Tiny Bradshaw, Johnny Cash and many more.

Experience

The Kingmakers recently travelled to Memphis Tennessee to record at legendary SUN Studio, after which they performed on world-famous Beale St. with The Dempseys (who were featured in the Johnny Cash biopic **Walk The Line**). Veterans of local acts such as Jimmy George and The Lowbellies, members of The Kingmakers have played virtually every pub, bar and stage in the Ottawa area and at venues across the country, as well festivals such as Westfest, Mariposa, Canadian Music Week, MusicWest, Northern Lights, the Ottawa Folk Festival, and many more.

The Catch

Get ahold of The Kingmakers by your favorite means:

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References

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Photo: Bob Acton

See next page for more detailed bio



The Big Picture

Featuring the solid **thump** of the upright "**doghouse**" bass, the echoing **twang** of the big hollow-body electric guitar, and the **chugging** backbeat of a full drum kit, **The Kingmakers** are a **living snapshot of an era** where blues, jazz and country fell into bed together and spawned a **variety** of genre-bending styles from **jump blues** to **rockabilly** to **rock and roll**. It was in this era that kings were made, kings of rock and roll like **Jerry Lee Lewis**, **Carl Perkins** and of course the king of kings, **Elvis Presley**. And leading or following in their footsteps were countless other talented, if less well-known, artists.

It was an era where labels like **SUN Records** in **Memphis** became legendary, churning out 45-RPM singles for every exciting new act they could find. An era where **Elvis** lied about his mother's birthday to get into SUN Studio and record his first song.

In **tribute to this era** and the commitment to keeping its spirit alive, **The Kingmakers** were born.

Tupelo To Memphis

Not content to just admire the creators of rock and roll from afar, the band travelled to **Memphis**, Tennessee to record their debut CD at legendary **SUN Studio**. As if that wasn't enough mojo, they spent the afternoon at Elvis Presley's **Graceland**, and spent the night on world famous **Beale St.** where they joined The Dempseys (*Walk The Line*) on stage at Blues City Café. The result is the band's debut CD, "**Live At SUN Studio**". And they barely took a breather when they got home, getting to work immediately on the follow-up, the just-released "**Tupelo To Memphis**".

Featuring **Clark Lawlor** on the Shure 55S (the "**Elvis mic**"), **John Cormier** on the **electric**, **Steve Donnelly** on double bass and **Bob Primeau** on drums, The Kingmakers capture not just the music but the **raw energy** of the era, where **showmanship** was key and songs were catchy and to the point.

In the current spirit of rock and roll revival helped by films such as **Walk the Line** and releases like **Brian Setzer's** tribute to SUN Records, the time is ripe for a **visceral, modern** take on a historic musical period. The Kingmakers answer the call and rise to the occasion.

Veterans of many other local acts including The Lowbellies and Jimmy George, the band members are no strangers to local stages, between them having played virtually every bar, stage and festival in the area and across the country, including MusicWest, Canadian Music Week, Mariposa, Northern Lights, the Ottawa Tulip Festival, Ottawa Folk Festival, and many more.

At an early gig in Ottawa's cosy **Aloha Room**, manager Paul Ste. Marie was asking the band back before the final note had even stopped ringing. That's the kind of enthusiasm The Kingmakers generate. Repeat gigs at taverns and halls from Ottawa's Elmdale House to Wakefield's Black Sheep Inn continue to wow crowds and garner new fans and bookings.

The Tunes

While focusing on originals, The Kingmakers can perform up to three full sets of material including their own tunes and songs from the era that inspired them - early classics by Elvis (That's All Right Mama, Mystery Train, Little Sister), Carl Perkins (Boppin' the Blues) and Chuck Berry (Johnny B Goode, Route 66) to lesser-known gems from Tiny Bradshaw (Train Kept A-Rollin'), Jerry Lee Lewis (Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee), Robert Gordon (Red Hot) and Gene Simmons (Peroxide Blonde And A Hopped Up Model Ford) and many many more.

Booking

Email clark@kingmakers.ca

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Visit www.kingmakers.ca

PRESS RELEASE FOR "LIVE AT SUN STUDIO" CD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - MAY 1, 2008

From Ottawa to Memphis and Back Again

A few months back, Ottawa rockabilly band The Kingmakers headed south to the birthplace of rock and roll, Memphis Tennessee, to soak in some musical mojo and bring it back to the great white north. On their musical pilgrimage they visited Elvis' fabled Graceland, recorded at the legendary SUN Studio, and got to play live on world-famous Beale Street - all in the same day!

Recording at SUN Studio, the band decided to stick to their roots and record some of their favourite songs from the era ranging from obscure but significant tunes like Tiny Bradshaw's "Train Kept A-Rollin'" to more well-known classics like the Carroll Brothers "Red Hot" and, of course, Elvis' "That's All Right".

Lead vocalist Clark Lawlor relates the tale... "One of the first things [SUN Studio head engineer] James Lott said to us in his cool southern drawl was 'How old-school do you want to go?' Well, we went old-school all the way - everything recorded live off the floor, no headphones, no overdubs, with a local drummer who we had only met an hour earlier who as it turns out, happened to be playing the same kit that U2's Larry Mullen Jr. played on their Rattle and Hum sessions. As if there wasn't enough mojo already!" This raw, live-off-the-floor feel duplicates many of the quick, rapid-fire sessions of early artists like Elvis, Johnny Cash and Carl Perkins, who all recorded some of their earliest work at SUN.

The result is The Kingmakers' debut CD, "Live at SUN Studio". As Lawlor stood in the same spot Elvis stood when he made his first recording, over 50 years earlier, the rest of the band took their places, surrounded by pictures of all the great artists who had gone before. "I've never been so nervous in my life," says upright "doghouse" bass player Steve Donnelly. "Here was some little unknown band from nowhere playing at one of the world's most famous studios, in front of an engineer who was friends with Scotty Moore (Elvis' first guitar player) and had probably seen a thousand lame Elvis-wannabes come through. But once we found our groove he warmed up to what we were trying to do and in the end seemed to genuinely appreciate the songs and our ability to interpret them and give them their due respect while still making them our own."

Added guitarist John Cormier "It was a rare experience to make music in such a revered place but it shows how accessible the music is. We walked out of the session on cloud nine". While continuing the tradition of appropriating and reinterpreting other artists songs, the band also wanted to flex its own creative muscle so they've added a few original tracks recorded in their own studio, using much the same methods learned at SUN. Using a minimum number of microphones, doing backing vocals simultaneously into one microphone rather than recording everything separately, and even writing, arranging and recording songs in one session recalls the SUN Studio vibe with an original feel and gives listeners a taste of The Kingmakers second, all-original album, which is already in the works.

For more information contact:

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PRESS RELEASE FOR "TUPELO TO MEMPHIS" CD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - MAY 1, 2009

The Kingmakers Release Second CD In A Year

In late 2007, The Kingmakers set out on a trek from their home in the great white north of Ottawa to the mythical musical mecca known as Memphis, Tennessee. Through a combination of planning and serendipity, the band visited Graceland, recorded at iconic SUN Studio, and played live on legendary Beale Street - all in the same day. That musical adventure is documented on the band's first CD, "Live from SUN Studio", released in June 2008. Featuring seven classic covers from the early days of rock and roll and country, along with four originals, the CD captures the spirit of an era where musical styles were colliding and new ones were being formed.

Before the dust had even settled on the first CD, the band started writing and recording another batch of songs. Exactly one year later, the band's second CD "Tupelo To Memphis" is set for release. The new album features fifteen original songs which capture the energy of early rock and roll, country and swing, with a modern tone and original twist.

The title "Tupelo To Memphis" is inspired by the mythical journey of greats like Elvis Presley and Jumpin' Gene Simmons ("Peroxide Blonde In A Hopped Up Model Ford") from small-town roots to their eventual musical destinies, in some ways paralleled by The Kingmakers travels from Ottawa to Memphis to immerse themselves in the history of these great musical traditions. And with the same DIY attitude and shoestring budget of many of the early greats, the album was entirely produced by the band and recorded in their own studio.

"Recording in your own studio is a double-edged sword" relates upright bassist Steve Donnelly. "On one hand, you have low cost and no deadlines, but on the other hand it can be difficult to maintain focus and know when to quit. It can be hard to resist the temptation to keep tweaking, remixing and overdubbing, ad infinitum. Ultimately we left in some parts that may be a little rough around the edges but feel we've captured the live energy of the band with some solid original songs."

All long-time residents of central Ottawa, The Kingmakers have been playing together since 2005. Singer Clark Lawlor, guitarist John Cormier, and upright bass player Steve Donnelly all played together in The Lowbellies, while Donnelly also currently plays with Ninety Pounds of Ugly, Lynne Hanson and Ray Harris, and was also a member of venerable Ottawa celtic-rockers Jimmy George. Drummer Bob "Pinstripe" Primeau can also be seen around town accompanying many local blues artists.

The Kingmakers celebrate the release of their new CD "Tupelo To Memphis" Saturday June 6, 2009 at Juniper Kitchen & Wine Bar, 245 Richmond Road, Ottawa. The party starts at 9pm and there is no cover charge - come one come all!

www.kingmakers.ca