

## **Tim Murray of Guitar Workshop on Classic Rock Concerts**

### **Interview by guest writer: Gideon Smith**



Guitar supermaster Tim Murray sat down with us to discuss some of his favorite classic rock band shows. It was really interesting to see his collection of tickets of concerts from the 1960's onward (Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Allman Brothers, etc.) and listen to his memories of favorite shows. He is the owner of The Guitar Workshop in Charlotte where many musicians in the local scene have studied at one time or still study now. If you are looking for a guitar instructor look no further, Tim and company are the best you could ask for. Tim just lives for music, and never ceases to amaze me with his playing and ethereal understanding of the craft.

#### **LED ZEPPELIN (June 9th 1972 Charlotte Coliseum)**

"I saw Led Zeppelin twice, on Led Zeppelin 2 and Led Zeppelin 3. The first time I saw them they were doing LZ 2, I don't have the ticket stub for that one but I found the advertisement for it on the internet recently. But they weren't the big band they later became. They were just starting. The first time I saw Zeppelin was in '72. It was very good. It was a very small, stripped-down stage. The second time they came out and did "Stairway to Heaven" before it was released."

#### **JEFF BECK (Park Center)**

"Actually out of that group the Jeff Beck group was my more favorite one that broke off from the Yardbirds. Jeff Beck is still the man. I wish I had my Jeff Beck tickets. I saw him play in the Jeff Beck Jan Hammer band at the Park Center and then I saw the Beck, Bogert and Appice at the Park Center. Jeff Beck is a seventy year old wiz."

#### **THE FACES, ROD STEWART, FREE**

"Rod was very fun. That's why I liked Rod so much. I saw them twice with Ron Wood when Ron was still in the band and... fun. Had a great time, good rock n roll. Had a great audience rapport. The first time I saw them Free opened up for them and that was Paul Rogers, you can't beat that."

#### **LAMAR WILLIAMS AND THE FUNGUS BLUES BAND**

"In the Allman Brothers, after Barry died, there was a bass player named Lamar Williams who took his place. This was the band Lamar was in in Charlotte. It was called the Fungus Blues Band. The trumpet player in the band was one of my school mates, a guy named Stanley Graham. Stanley used to let me sit in with his band when Lamar would be playing bass so (technically) I played guitar with the bass player from the Allman Brothers (laughs)."

#### **LYNYRD SKYNYRD (Charlotte Coliseum)**

So you were at the Skynyrd show in Charlotte, NC at the old Coliseum when Ronnie fell off the stage? "I must have thrown that ticket away (laughs), they got maybe a song and a half into the set and he was drunk and fell off the stage and broke his collarbone. They came out and did 'Freebird' for about 20 minutes. The Marshall Tucker band were semi friends of mine. They were from Spartanburg, South Carolina and I worked at a music store off of Freedom Drive. I interviewed Toy Caldwell back then, so when I saw them with Skynyrd they were still called the Toy Factory. After they did that, they got their record deal and became the Marshall Tucker band. But, yes, Ronnie

fell off and broke his collar bone and they had to take him away to the hospital that night."



#### **ROLLING STONES:**

"I saw the Stones on July 6<sup>th</sup> 1972. Stevie Wonder opened for them. We watched from the mezzanine (which was kind of behind the stage). They had an enormous carpet that was a big dragon and was probably twenty by twenty at least. The lights that were behind them went up and the mirrors came down. That was when they were young and it was incredibly good. It was classic. Gimme Shelter. They were doing all of their blues tunes. It was great. That's the reason for being. The Stones, Rod Stewart the Faces, the Chuck Berry inspired stuff I love to play. That, that's what inspired me ever since then. That's rock n roll."

#### **WHICH ONES INSPIRED YOU THE MOST AS A MUSICIAN?**

"All the guitarists, every one of them has something to offer. The Dixie Dregs was probably the best band I have ever seen; just how tight they were and just the musicianship of the band. Mahavishnu Orchestra. The first time I saw them play they opened up for the New York Rock Ensemble down in Columbia, South Carolina. I was standing on the side of the stage watching them play and that was overwhelming; the power that band played with. John McLaughlin is still, to this day probably, I don't know, I keep saying he is the best guitar player I have ever seen but technique-wise nobody can touch that. He knows when to play quiet and he knows when to play just with intensity. He makes his guitar talk like nobody I have ever seen. He and Tom Emmanuel are probably the two best guitarists I have ever seen in terms of technique."

#### **WHO DID YOU MEET WHEN YOU SAID 'ARE YOU IN RATT'?**

"I met Tommy Lee. He was a very nice kid back then. He was very tall and very pale. He didn't have all the tattoos. I was doing a Christmas telethon down at the Radison. Apparently they were staying at the Radison as the night before they opened up for Autograph. The Autograph guys were walking around and I was practicing classical guitar. These two shoes walked up and stood right in front of me. I looked up and the guy looked like Frankenstein. He was really pale, young guy and he said 'That sounds real good.' I looked up at him a couple of seconds later and said 'Are you in Ratt?' and he said 'No I'm in Motley Crue. My name's Tommy Lee'. I said 'Hello, Tommy. I'm Tim.'"

#### **FAVORITE SHOWS OF ALL TIME?**

"Poco would be one. Kenny Loggins is another (believe it or not) (when Firefall opened up for him). That would be one of the most amazing concerts I have ever seen. The Beatles in Crosley Field didn't even register because you couldn't hear them and it was kind of like I was just in the same baseball field with them. The Yes show on the "Close to the Edge" tour was one of the most amazing things I have ever seen. The Elton John concert back in those days in 1971 or 1972 when I saw him. Cream and Hendrix. Hendrix all three times I saw him. The second time I saw him, after the Monkees debacle, he opened for them. He said he would never come back to this town. However he did because the money was too good. Chicago opened up that show and Terry Kath was there. He was Mr. Psychedelic with a burning guitar so Jimi was always kind of putting on a show to top Terry Kath (who was also burning). The third time I saw him was at the Atlanta Pop Festival and he did the 'Star Spangled Banner' with the fireworks shooting off. That was pretty special. Then the Rod Stewart and the Faces concert when I saw them

down in Clemson. Free opened for them and that was one of my favorite concerts of all time. I like that rock n roll."

*photography: Ellen Gurley*

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