



www.jamesboraski.com



Member of The Blues Foundation

James Boraski & Momentary Evolution

Pick a music scene anywhere and you'll find those people who stand out for their positive attitude, their exemplary work ethic and their efforts to improve things for everyone concerned. When it comes to Blues in Thunder Bay, James Boraski is such an individual.

Raised in a small farming community near Brantford, Ontario, Boraski credits his late father Leo for his lifelong interest in music and the outdoors. Boraski was 12 when he bought his first guitar for \$26 on a shopping trip to Zellers with his mother. Early accomplishments on the instrument earned him a 12-string guitar that he named Janine.

Family responsibilities temporarily shelved Boraski's budding music career while his day job with Fisheries and Oceans Canada took him to Thunder Bay, Ontario (2000 to 2004) and then on to Inuvik and Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories (2004 to 2011).

The 'Land of the Midnight Sun' was more conducive to songwriting and jamming for Boraski who rolled up his sleeves and immersed himself in the Arctic music scape. In addition to being a musician, a music director, show producer, emcee and performer at many events, Boraski was the Executive Director and Vice President of Music NWT and served on the Board of Directors for the Western Canada Music Alliance.

Most significantly, in 2004, he formed James Boraski & Momentary Evolution (JB & ME) which became a proving ground for many of the region's musicians. Bolstered by a NWT Arts Council Grant, in 2009, Boraski released his first CD, 'NVR2L8' (Never Too Late) which was featured at Canada's Northern House at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.

Boraski returned to Thunder Bay in the fall of 2011 and reformed Momentary Evolution. Currently, the band features his wife Connie Boraski (vocals and percussion), Calum Robertson (vocals and lead guitar), Cale Wilson (lead guitar), Victor Dupuis (saxophone), Tom Boshcoff (bass) and Peter Reslinski (drums).

Co-produced with Jack de Keyzer, Boraski released his second CD, 'Comin' Home' in the spring of 2013 to excellent reviews and major air play on traditional, satellite and internet radio stations around the world. It settled in at #6 on the list of the Top 10 Canadian Blues Rock Albums of the Year as compiled by the Blues Underground Network, and it represented Thunder Bay in the Best Self-Produced CD competition at the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis, Tennessee in January 2014.

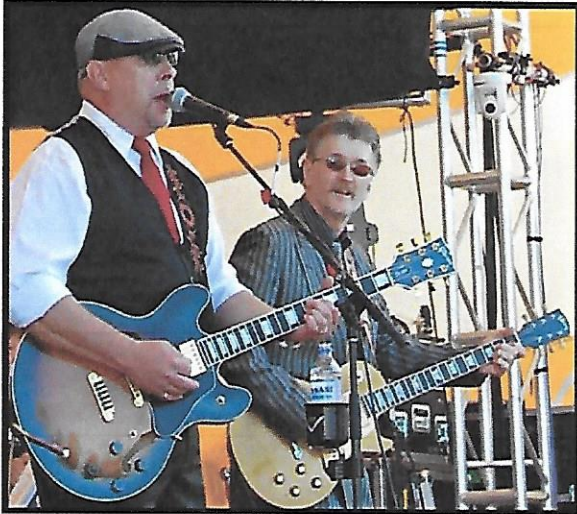
JB & ME's list of achievements is ever growing. They opened the Thunder Bay Blues Festival in 2014, headlined the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition and performed at the Waterfront District Rib Fest and Fort William Historical Park's New Year's Eve gala. In 2015, JB & ME were inducted into the American Heritage Blues Hall of Fame as a Master Blues Artist and Band. Boraski's acoustic duo, 'Pair of Six's', with partner Ed Drotar, also represented Thunder Bay at the IBC in 2015.

Stylistically, Boraski is a generous slice of Canadiana. His originals are danceable, upbeat blues-rock and R&B songs. His approach is understated, relying on unforced vocals with compelling lyrics and superlative musicianship to convey the message. Credit Boraski too, for eschewing the guitar histrionics that can undermine the Blues genre, and for resurrecting the art of rhythm guitar playing. www.jamesboraski.com

Our Town

Musician up for Memphis challenge

Brenda Dredge - Sunday, January 4, 2015 8:58:36 EST PM



Welcome to 2015 and another great year! As in the past, I know that local artists will continue to excel in their arts.

One Waterford native is already making big plans for a huge opportunity.

James Boraski, son of Caroline and the late Leo, credits his love of music to his dad. And he has carried that love to great heights,

Boraski spent almost 10 years as a federal employee, living in the Northwest Territories. In fall 2011, his work brought him back to Ontario and Thunder Bay.

Working full time, he still managed to dedicate much of his spare time to developing material for his second CD. Boraski's hard work paid off when, in fall 2012, he retired from the public sector and made music his full-time job. Just two years ago, he recorded his new CD, *Comin' Home*, with help from his friend, renowned blues musician Jack de Keyzer. Upon its release in April 2013, the CD received critical acclaim nationally and internationally. And the ride has yet to stop for Boraski and his group, *Momentary Evolution*.

Boraski entered his CD in the Thunder Bay Blues Society's 2013 best self-produced CD competition - and won! This afforded Boraski the opportunity to have his CD compete last January in Memphis at the 30th annual International Blues Challenge against 75 other CDs from around the world. While it didn't win, the CD did get picked up by several U.S. radio stations and received considerable airtime and recognition.

Boraski didn't stop there, though. James Boraski & Momentary Evolution, or JB & ME, were first runners-up in a challenge to represent the Thunder Bay Blues Society in Memphis. And last summer, JB & ME were chosen to open the 13th annual Thunder Bay Blues Festival with headliners Serena Ryder and Melissa Etheridge. JB & ME's performance earned great reviews and helped put them on the map of up and coming blues groups. They also headlined at Thunder Bay's Summer in The Parks Festival, the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition and the Thunder Bay Ribfest.

Last summer also saw JB & ME compete again in the 31st International Blues Challenge for a chance to represent northwestern Ontario later this month. Boraski also entered his acoustic duo, *Pair of Six's*, with JB & ME lead guitarist Ed Drotar. While JB & ME did not qualify, *Pair of Six's* won.

Last November, JB & ME were asked to perform at The Mary Webb Centre's concert series in Highgate, Ont., near Chatham. The performance earned them rave reviews. Reviewer Mona Natvik wrote: "Boraski took the stage by storm backed by an entire entourage of talent ... presenting a layered soundtrack of blues and soul."

Last month, JB & ME were selected to headline the New Year's Eve celebrations at Thunder Bay's Fort William Historical Park.

Boraski and Drotar are busy preparing for their upcoming competition in Memphis, which they consider a "world-class" chance to compete on an international stage. While in Memphis, *Pair of Six's* will also perform in the Great Canadian Polar Bear Blues Showcase at the Kooky Canuck Restaurant.

The International Blues Challenge, which runs from Jan. 20 to 24 at several fabled venues, attracts thousands of spectators. Among them will be festival organizers and record company and music industry professionals. There will be more than 275 blues acts and artists. It is characterized as the world's largest gathering of blues artists and fans.

"I am excited to walk and perform on those famous streets and famed venues of Memphis where all of the blues greats have ventured - particularly Beale Street," says Boraski.

If you would like to support Boraski and his quest in the IBC solo/duo category or would be interested in finding out more about the competition, you can contact him at his email james_boraski@live.ca or you can check out his website www.jamesboraski.com. You can also purchase a CD or DVD or book him for a future performance at either of these contacts.

Our Town is an Expositor feature that presents news and views from communities in our area. Brenda Dredge is a freelance writer who lives in Waterford. E-mail her at brenda.dredge@sympatico.ca.



James Boraski & MomentaryEvolution

www.jamesboraski.wix.com/jbandme

When duty calls and the road beckons, home is where you hang your hat... or, in the case of James Boraski, your guitar. Most certainly, Boraski's adventures travelling across Canada have had an impact on his music which has been described as "introspective, creative, lyrically pleasing and well-structured."

Bluegrass, Johnny Cash and Soul music were the soundtracks of life growing up in a small farming community near Brantford, Ontario. Boraski was 12 when he bought his first guitar for \$26 on a shopping trip to Zellers with his mother. When his father presented him with the challenge of learning 5 songs, Boraski turned to the Cash, Lightfoot and Valdy songbooks... his reward - a 12-string guitar he named Janine that he still plays to this day.

Family responsibilities put his budding music career on hold while his day job with Fisheries & Oceans Canada took him to Thunder Bay, Ontario (2000 - 2004) and then on to Inuvik and Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories (2004 - 2011).

The Land of the Midnight Sun was much more conducive to songwriting and jamming for Boraski who rolled up his sleeves and immersed himself in the Arctic music scene. In addition to being a music director, show producer, emcee and performer at many events, he was the Executive Director and Vice President of Music NWT, and he served on the Board of Directors for the Western Canadian Music Alliance.

Most significantly, in 2004, Boraski formed his band MomentaryEvolution which became a proving ground for many of the region's musicians. With the help of a NWT Arts Council Grant, Boraski released his first CD, NVR2L8 (Never Too Late) in 2009 which was featured at Canada's Northern House at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

Boraski returned to Thunder Bay in the fall of 2011 and re-formed MomentaryEvolution around wife Connie Boraski (backing vocals and percussion), Ed Drotar (lead guitar), Gary Hare (keyboards and backing vocals), Chris Saunders (saxophone), Mark Toskovich (bass) and Joe Riccio (drums). In 2013, the group finished second in the Thunder Bay Blues Society's regional International Blues Challenge (IBC) competition.

Under the guidance of his friend and co-producer Jack de Keyzer (one of Canada's finest Bluesmen), Boraski released his second CD, Comin' Home, in the spring of 2013 to excellent reviews and major air play on mainstream, satellite and internet radio stations around the world. It settled in at #6 on the list of the Top 10 Canadian Blues Rock Albums of the Year as compiled by the Blues Underground Network; it received international recognition and award nominations; and the album represented Thunder Bay in the Best Self Produced CD competition at the IBC in Memphis, Tennessee this past January.

Stylistically, Boraski's originals tend to be danceable, mid-tempo, upbeat blues-rock and R&B songs. His approach is understated, relying on unforced vocals, compelling story-telling, melody and superlative musicianship to carry the message. In fact, Boraski stands out for eschewing the guitar histrionics that plague much of the blues genre, and for resurrecting the art of rhythm guitar playing.

Boraski also stands out for maintaining a work ethic of doing a job well that he learned early in life. "Oftentimes, a person's success is fuelled by the unsung heroes that are behind them, pushing them," he says remembering his late father Leo who was his main inspiration.