

Andy J Forest - Harmonica - Vocals - Guitar & Frattoir
Born on May 10th 1955

Harmonica player - Singer Songwriter,

In 1975 at the age of 19 Andy went to New Orleans for Mardi Gras but wound up staying. There he was able to sit in with Earl King, James Booker, Dave Malone and many other local greats. He went to Europe to see the sights but when he ran out of money he quickly learned that he could get by playing Harmonica. At first on the Streets of Paris, Casablanca and Barcelona with an African guitar player (Tao Ravao) and later he did some sound tracks for films, played in clubs and then festivals and theaters. He wound up in Italy in 1979. ten days turned into ten years. Between 1985 and 1990 Forest acted in a dozen films shot in Italy, Morocco, Brazil, Venezuela and Croatia. Sometimes lead roles. But he never stopped playing. Andy has been playing harmonica and singing professionally since 1977. He has recorded 23 albums including two 45s. These recordings feature mostly Forest's original songs. After living in Europe for ten years he returned to his home New Orleans in 1990 where he plays in clubs and goes on tour in Europe and Canada occasionally.

He has played on stage with B.B. King, Bobby Blue Bland, James Cotton, Luther Allison, Johnny Shines, Champion Jack DuPree, James Booker and many other greats of the Blues. He has written scores of songs, one novel which was published in 3 languages ("Letter From Hell") He also paints "outside" art, mostly of blues and jazz singers. Andy's CD "Real Stories: of Love Labor and Other Man-Made Catastrophes" for Slang Records won "Best Blues Album" of 2007 in the Best of The Beat Awards of New Orleans. The 2011 CD "NOtown Story: The Triumph of Turmoil" was nominated for another Best of The Beat Award for 2010. As were the CDs "Other Rooms" and "Word Shadows & Ghost Notes".

The latest release is “Andy J Forest: I Don’t Wanna Work-Modern Vintage Blues” on Appaloosa Records in 2022. Of this new recording, Robert H. Cataliotti wrote for Living Blues Magazine: “Forest’s harmonica work shines throughout..” “He really cuts loose..” “Forest employs his weathered but resonant voice to shape personas that deliver his originals with the perspective of a man who has experienced life’s ups and downs yet remains committed to carry on”. “(He) shines as a singer and story teller”

Other Quotes from press about Andy J:

John Swenson for OffBeat Magazine wrote:

“Forest is a Blues Harmonica wizard”

“Causing such mayhem (he) pushes the party limits...)

“One of the best harp players in New Orleans”

Mark A. Cote for Blues Revue Magazine

“Some intriguing rock/blues”

“Visionary songwriting skills”

“Delta R&B sound twisted up with jazz/rock, S oils and Blues of old”.

Blues Access Magazine

“ A fine series of intriguing albums ... original compositions, lusty singing, hot harmonica.”

“Distinctly out of the ordinary”

Ottawa’s blues periodical Obscene printed

“Andy performs harp magic.... Every number truly entertaining”

Kathleen A. Rippey for New Orleans' premier music magazine OffBeat

“Powerful blowing and tasty riffs...”

“He gets premium sidemen to play with him...”

“... his lyrics are poetic slices of real life and make the songs uniquely his own”.

Gambit Weekly in New Orleans:

Hailed Forest as “One of the scene’s more experienced and vital practitioners”.