



**HAMMERED BY THE BLUES**  
weekly radio KOWZ 1170am/106.3fm



**Monthly**  
Entertainment Magazine

# THE LOW DOWN... -by Kyle Christen

## "Blue To The Bone" Mick Kolassa

I was thrilled to receive the latest disc from one of my favorite artists, Mick Kolassa, titled "Blues To The Bone," released on his own Endless Records label about a month ago. Some musicians play the blues, but Mick is a bluesman who plays music. Whereas a lot of us learned of our favorite musical genre through covers by Led Zepelin, the Allman Bros., and others, Mick discovered the real legends and their music first, like Muddy, Howlin' Wolf, and Sonny Boy. Mick's "Free Range Blues" style doesn't fall under any one type or region....he plays it all, and this wonderful disc is no exception. "This Getting Old Is Getting Old" starts fast with guitars, then the



rhythm section, and oh....the brass players.....along with the harp of Eric Hughes. A fun song with a not-so-fun take on the ups/downs of aging. Taking things down a bit is "Bourbon And You," with Rick Steff on organ and piano, plus the drums of Tom Leonardo. Jeff Jensen plays all the guitars on this CD, and he doesn't disappoint.....never has. Mick is singing about clearly missing his woman, but she's not around and "My bourbon's gotta get me through." "For Better Or Worse" is our type of blues right here. The lyrics will touch you, so listen closely. Ever have a partner, love interest, or spouse that imbibed too much? Many years ago, I did, and in those days, it was fun, but looking back, it really wasn't. Haunting music, with an absolute killer solo from Jeff, and I thank this great band for this one. It should be a song of the year candidate. "Something To Look Forward To" is straight up brass infused swing/jumpin' blues and it's a joy.

"If My Nose Was Runnin' Money" was written by Aaron Wilburn, but it's vintage Mick. A great shuffle tune with a message. He tells his gal "If my nose was runnin' money, I'd blow it all on you. Buy you a new Cadillac and a new Mercedes, too. Build you that mansion up on the mountain top, if my nose was runnin' money, but it's not!" "Text Me Baby" is a true, but unfortunate look at our world today, and it's also 3:37 of pure blues between Mick' vocals and Jeff's guitars. The lyrics are great and I'll save those for you, but it's just how those guitars are so welded together, along with a nice piano solo. "Mr. Right" has been re-done here, from it's original appearance on Mick's excellent 2020 release "Blind Lemon Sessions." This is what he learned from those old legends, and he learned well! Eric again kicks ass on the harmonica on this fun, very bluesy tune that is one of my all time favorites from him. How's about a little slower version of Merle Travis' "16 Tons?" Very impassioned vocals from Mick, and also includes a great harmonica performance by special guest Bob Corritore! To close out this collection is Mick's "Please Don't Write That Song." More of the brass duo (Mark Franklin & Kirk Smothers) adding the swing to this jump tune, of Mick's take on, well, songwriting, and maybe what you shouldn't do, as we have way too many of those poorly written tunes already (Amen!). A final smokin' solo from Jeff backs up Mick's vocal plea. And I loved it.

In the last 13 years, Mick has released 16 CD's, and 8 digital only albums. If you didn't know, he's been a board member of The Blues Foundation and The Hart Fund. 100% of the net proceeds from each of his releases have been split between those two. The Hart fund has helped several families of blues performers that you know of, to help and bury their loved ones in peace. He has a Ph.D and taught at the University of Mississippi (Oxford) for over 30 years, he wrote a book on Pharmaceutical Pricing, moved to Memphis, toured many miles as a musician, and started his own record label to help out some other artists. Recently, Mick has relocated to his home state of Michigan. One of the truest bluesmen I've ever worked with before, and am so happy that he continues to put out quality music, typically using the same excellent musicians as always. "Blue To The Bone" is another in a long line of solid CD's. Great stuff, Mick. I'm praying there's more of that music to come from those bones.