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Features/Artists

Vivian Campbell
Blues Beyond Belfast

By: Willie G. Moseley
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Blues Beyond Belfast



Considering his lengthy resumé, one might expect Irish guitarist Vivian Campbell would have released a solo album long before September of 2005. And Campbell's efforts in bands such as Dio, Whitesnake, and Def Leppard might create a stereotype among listeners about the musical direction of the guitarist's new album, but *Two Sides of If* (Sanctuary) is a surprise, genre-wise, in that it's a blues tribute rather than a hard rock effort, and features contributions from ZZ Top's Billy F Gibbons, vocalist Joan Osborne, and drummer Terry Bozzio

VG spoke with the affable guitarist while he was on the road with Def Leppard, discussing guitars, influences, and his new album. Campbell is originally from Belfast, Northern Ireland, and we inquired if one of his earliest influences was fellow Irish guitarist the late Rory Gallagher (see feature in this section).

"Rory was my first guitar hero, the first concert I saw, and his live album was the first 12" record I owned. I got into him when I was about 12, right around the time of Irish Tour '74. I wanted a Strat bad; I had a Strat copy, but I was working weekends, trying to save

up money. My father finally bought me a Fender, and surprised me with it. He opened up the trunk of his car, and there was a Telecaster (Thinline) – the one with the two humbuckers and an f-hole. That was my first real guitar."

"Then I really got into (Thin Lizzy guitarists) Brian Robertson and Gary Moore," Campbell added. "They were Les Paul cats, and by the time I got into Sweet Savage, I was a Les Paul guy."

Campbell refinished his first Les Paul more than once and played it on the first album by singer Ronnie James Dio's self-monikered band following Dio's departure from Black Sabbath. Campbell was 19 years old when he got the Dio gig. By the time of the second Dio album, Campbell had acquired a couple of Charvel Strats from Grover Jackson. After departing Dio, he joined mega-group Whitesnake at the height of that band's popularity in 1987, and he was an endorser of the Kramer Nightswan model, which had two humbuckers and a reverse headstock. Campbell later formed a short-lived band called Riverdogs, which "made one record that totally fell between the cracks." He had also attempted to start a solo album in the early '90s.

"Musically, it was going to be very different for me," he explained. "I grew up very much a guitar guy, and was writing songs for Dio that were guitar-based. But after doing it for a couple of years with that band, I felt very conflicted, and for the first time in my life I started to listen to soul and pop singers, and I started vocal lessons."

The guitarist's shot at a solo effort was abruptly halted when he got a phone call about joining Def Leppard following the death of guitarist Steve Clark in 1991. His first performance was at the Freddy Mercury memorial concert in '92, followed by tours to support Leppard's Adrenalize album. He's been with the band ever since and these days is back to favoring Les Pauls.

As with a lot of original blues recordings, Two Sides of If was done live in the studio. Moreover, blues is typically associated with older guitars, so we asked Campbell if he'd made a conscious decision to use vintage instruments on the album.

"I have a few Gibson reissues," he said. "So they're not 'old' guitars. I was jamming in a lot of clubs around L.A., and the guitar I was

using most was a '56 Les Paul reissue with P-90s, and I used that a lot on the record. I also borrowed some guitars from Gibson – a dot-neck 335, and an L-5 Custom, a big-bodied jazz guitar of the sort I'd never played before. They all sounded beautiful.

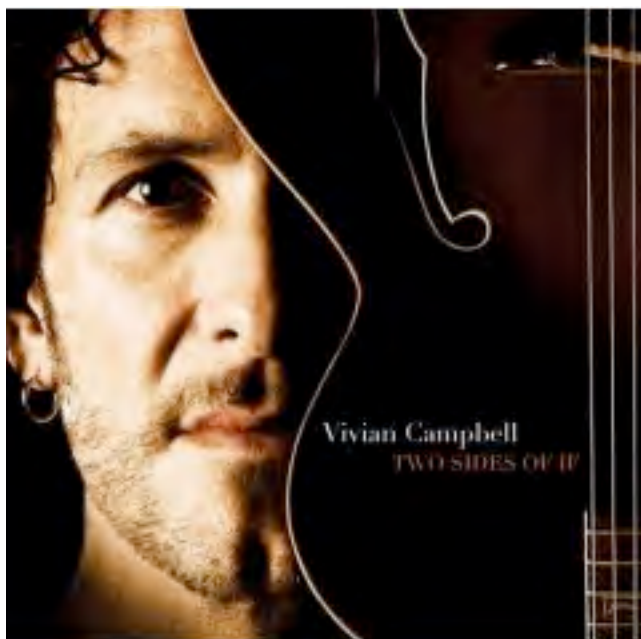
"I put a list on the CD of what gear I used on each song," Campbell noted. "And the real surprise guitar, for me – the one I used most of the album – was a great-sounding new Yamaha with a Bigsby (vibrato). I also took that guitar to jams around L.A., and people would come up and ask me about it. It turned out to be the shining star of the record."

Two Sides of If has 12 tracks, including two tributes to Gallagher. "Calling Card" gets particularly close to Gallagher's tone. "I've got to say that comes more from my style of playing, but Rory's definitely the primary influence, and I did pick up a lot of his habits; I definitely attack too much with my right hand. But I'm particularly pleased with the way the guitar sounded on that song; that was the Yamaha, and I used a Fender tweed amp that (Leppard guitarist) Phil Collen's guitar tech modified. I think that tonally, that's probably my favorite song on this record."

Singer Joan Osborne contributes vocals on a cover of Cream's "Spoonful," and the redoubtable Billy F Gibbons wrote and performed on "Willin' for Satisfaction," and trades guitar licks with Campbell on a version of Fleetwood Mac's "Like It This Way."

Summing up the album, Campbell noted, "I'm really satisfied with the way it turned out. A lot of people wouldn't expect it. My wife has always been a blues fan, and she told me 20 years ago 'You play guitar like a blues guy, and you've got this rough voice, so you sing like a blues guy. You should make a blues record.' It finally happened, and nobody knows me as a singer, and some people who think they know me as a guitar player will be surprised, as well. I'm not the same guitar player I was 20 years ago. I've come a long way since then."

Editorial Reviews



Super talented heavy rock guitarist Vivian Campbell burst onto the Irish rock scene in a band called Sweet Savage. Soon thereafter in 1982 Ronnie James Dio recruited the young prodigy as the lead guitarist for the then brand new band Dio, and Vivian is featured on the first three legendary Dio albums. Via stints in David Coverdale's Whitesnake and Lou Gramm's Shadow King, Vivian joined mega band Def Leppard in 1992 and remains one of the 2 lead guitarists of Def Leppard, touring and recording with them to this day. A long time fan of the blues, Vivian Campbell was determined to one day record his interpretations of great

American blues songs. In April 2005, Vivian and 5 fellow musicians, including the great drummer Terry Bozzio (Mothers Of Invention, Missing Persons), recorded this great electric blues album. Two Sides Of If features classics originally recorded by blues legends like Muddy Waters, Albert King and Robert Johnson as well as songs from the likes of Rory Gallagher and Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac. The album closes with an original by ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons and last but not least the great Joan Osborne performs sizzling lead vocals on a great cover of Howlin' Wolf's classic song "Spoonful."

Modern Guitars Magazine

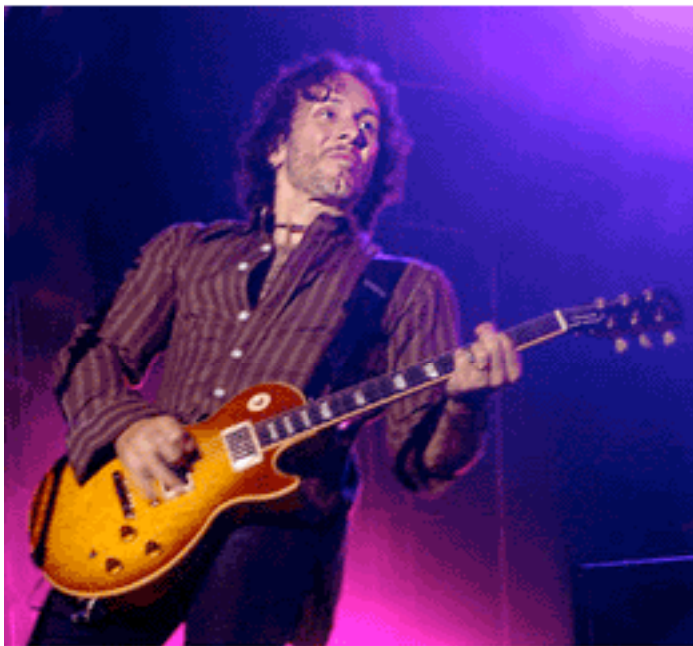
News and information about electric and acoustic guitars

Modern Music Publications

August 25, 2005

Vivian Campbell Interview

by Brian D. Holland.



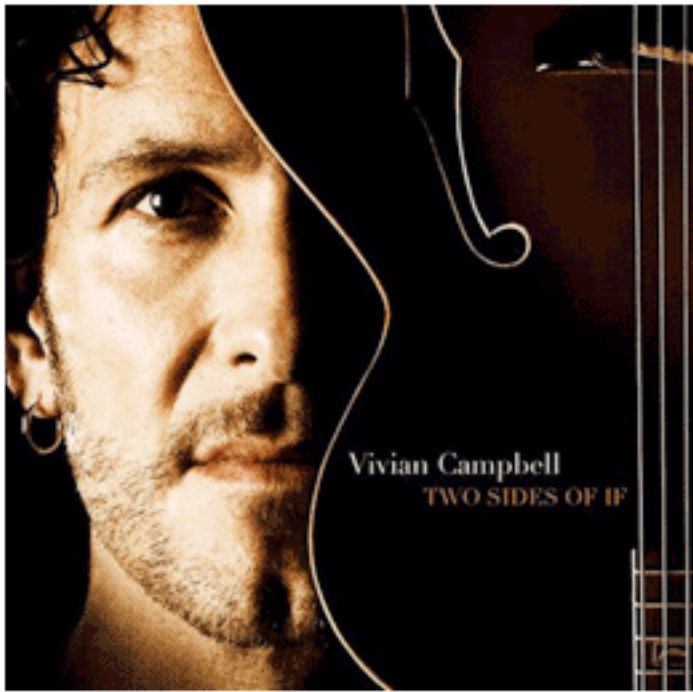
Vivian Campbell. Photo by John Nunziato
for *Modern Guitars*

Vivian Campbell is best known as the guitarist who replaced Steve Clark in Def Leppard. That having occurred in 1992, you can consider him a longtime regular as close to fourteen years have come and gone. It was a big move for him, but Vivian was used to big moves.

The hard rock/metal guitarist grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where his first major outfit, formed in

1979, was known as Sweet Savage. The band was basically part of the new wave of British heavy metal. Though Sweet Savage never made an official release until years later, their song 'Killing Time' was later covered by Metallica on an early, obscure compilation of covers, known as *Garage, Inc.* Vivian eventually left Sweet Savage to join Dio, the band fronted by singer Ronnie James Dio. Following timely success with Dio, and emerging as a celebrated talent within the industry, he was eventually asked to join the David Coverdale-fronted group, Whitesnake. After a couple of other projects, including a blues-rock band known as Shadow King and fronted by vocalist Lou Gramm, he was asked to join Def Leppard.

I caught Vivian Campbell on a stop in Def Leppard's Rock of Ages Tour, the current concert segment advertising their new greatest hits compilation. Though the Leppard tour was the event of the moment, Vivian's new blues CD, *Two Sides of If* (release date: September 27, 2005), was the focus of our conversation. [See: Brian Holland's review.]



Two Sides of If, by Vivian Campbell

Listen to two songs from Vivian Campbell's solo project, *Two Sides of If*

Messin' with the Kid

The Hunter

How's the Leppard tour going?

Vivian Campbell: It's going good. We normally do six weeks on and then take a couple of weeks off. It

gives me a chance to go home to my family for awhile. But it's going well.

How was playing at Live 8?

VC: It was great, but it was a blur. We got onstage, did a few songs and then took off. We had another gig that same night.

I saw Def Leppard on early morning TV awhile back. You did an interesting cover of Badfinger's 'No Matter What'.

VC: We had finished recording about 18 songs for a covers record. That was actually the first one we recorded. We were all unanimous on it. We sat down at a table with paper and pen, trying to decide what songs we were going to do. We were on board with that one right away. The record company took it and they're using it as our

first single. But right now we're currently touring Rock of Ages – The Definitive Collection, so we'll let that run its course before releasing the covers record.

You're also releasing a blues CD as a solo project.

VC: That's right. It's going to be called Two Sides of If.

That's an interesting title.



Vivian Campbell. Photo by John Nunziato
for *Modern Guitars*

VC: After we had finished the record, someone asked, "What are you going to call it?" The only title I could come up with was 'Wires And Wood'. I thought it was a clever reference to guitars. But the record company said that they didn't want to focus just on Vivian Campbell the guitar player; they wanted to focus on Vivian Campbell the singer and guitar player. So they forced me to come up with a different title.

I thought about it for a while. Then Tor, the chap who helped me produce it, told me that I sang one of the lines wrong. I asked him which one. He said

it was in 'Ain't Superstitious', where Howlin' Wolf sings, "There's two sides of death. Baby, that ain't no good." I was transcribing the lyrics, and listening to them over and over. I could have sworn he was saying 'two sides of if'. But for want of something else, and also

because I thought 'two sides' could represent two sides of me. People know me as a rocker, yet this is something totally different. But when it comes to the lyrics, people always do different versions of blues songs anyway. For example, in the Jeff Beck Group version of the same song, Rod Stewart's words are totally different than the Howlin' Wolf one. Anyway, that's how I came up with the title.

Was it hard growing up in Belfast, musically and socially?

VC: When I was growing up there, and going to school in the 70s, the whole center of Belfast would shut down at 5:30 at night. There'd be these huge barricades and it would be a ghost town. There was nothing but armored vehicles and troops; it was pretty weird. There was a local music scene. There weren't a lot of international acts in Belfast in the 70s, for obvious reasons. Most of them were Irish, you know, Rory Gallagher, Thin Lizzy and people like that. Rory Gallagher was the first concert I saw, at Belfast Ulster Hall, which was a great, great venue. I saw a few bands there eventually. I remember Dr. Feelgood and UFO. There was a very strong punk-rock scene, which really didn't interest me much. I wasn't into punk at the time. Sweet Savage, though, we were the local hard rock band. When a national act was doing a British tour, the opening act never came to Ireland, mainly because it was too expensive. So we always opened, for like, Motorhead, Thin Lizzy, Wishbone Ash, or whomever else came over.

Who were your influences?

VC: Marc Bolan, Rory Gallagher, Brian Robertson, Scott Gorham, Gary Moore, the classic Lizzy guys. I was very much a Gary Moore fan for several years. Michael Schenker was a bit of an influence. He's a great, great guitar player. But I was devoted more to the Gary Moore vibe. He just has so much passion. I would always cop his licks. And the first time I heard Eddie Van Halen, that was pretty mind blowing. And Rory Gallagher's Irish tour record, he was peaking there.

Do you spend a lot of time on the quest for tone?



Vivian Campbell. Photo by John Nunziato
for *Modern Guitars*

VC: Not at all. I plug a Les Paul into a Marshall 900. You can't get much more tone than that.

You've always been somewhat of a blues fan, too?

VC: Yeah, Rory Gallagher used to do a bunch of blues standards that I actually thought were Rory Gallagher songs. I

went and researched, and found out who actually wrote them.

Talk about the Vivian Campbell blues CD, *Two Sides of If*. What made you decide to do it?

VC: About twenty years ago, my wife heard me sing. She said, 'You know, you sing like a blues guy. You play guitar like a blues guy, too. Maybe you should do a blues record'. I laughed, and told her to go away and stop being a silly woman. [Laughs] I didn't think much about it, but I always knew that the way I played was more akin to blues than anything else. I let my left hand do most of the work, and I'm basically a down-stroke picker. I fret pretty hard with my left hand, so that articulates the note. So, a couple of years ago I got roped into playing a blues set at my daughter's school fundraiser. You know how it is, when you have kids, you do these fundraiser events. They had a band, and they asked me to do a blues set. So I got up and did four or five songs. That's where I met Tor, the keyboard player. He had put together the little band because his daughter went to the same school as mine. We did the set, and he told me that he thought I should do a blues record. He also said that he thought I sounded like a blues singer. I said, 'Okay. We'll make it happen'. Tor went out and made a few calls and got a bit of interest, so I said, 'why not, let's do it'.

Much of the CD, especially your voice, sounds like a cross between Gary Moore and Rory Gallagher.

VC: [Laughs] Not without good reason.

I'm sure a lot of fans will welcome that.

VC: I hope so.

Talk about your gear, at home and on the road.



Vivian Campbell with his Gibson Custom Shop '56 Goldtop Reissue with P-90 pickups. Photo by John Nunziato for *Modern Guitars*

VC: I have a little 2/12 Marshall cab I use at home. I used it on the blues record, too, with a Marshall 900 head. Whatever I plug into it sounds pretty good. That's my main thing at home. I have a few guitars. I have a really nice '66 Telecaster at home. But for the most part, I'm a solid body, fixed bridge Gibson guy. I like chunky necks. The one I was playing in your photos, the 50s reissue with the P-90s, I play that a lot at home. I have quite a few Gibsons. I have a '62 Stratocaster. It's my only actual Fender Strat. It has been modified a lot. I've never been a guitar collector guy, though. I just have instruments I'm going to play.

On stage we have an A rig and a B rig, for when we have to piggyback. Like during the Live 8 show, that was the B rig. We shipped the B rig there. I have three



Vivian Campbell. Photo by John Nunziato
for *Modern Guitars*

or four Les Pauls that go in that B rig guitar trunk. There might be one Les Paul that I'll hand carry between cities, like that tobacco sunburst one I've been playing for the last ten years or so. Although, I've been getting more into playing the Les Pauls with the thicker neck, but I really only have one of those with humbuckers on it. It's a '59 Custom Shop reissue. I've been playing that a lot on this tour, more than

any other guitar.

The amp I use with Leppard I've been using for the last ten years or so. It's a JMP Marshall head rack mount that's midi switchable, which is handy for us because we do a lot of program changes. In the A rig I've got the Marshall 9200s. In the B rig it's an identical set up with the JMPs, the only difference being Mesa Boogie Power Amps, which tend to be a little crispier, a little bit more rock.

When it comes to the rack stuff, it's a little bit different on the outboard stuff. In the A rig I'm using TC Electronic 2290 stereo delays, an old Yamaha D1500 mono delay unit, Rocktron chorusing, Dunlop Wah-wah pedals, and basically that's it, as far as the signal processing goes. The crunch and crank come from the JMP. I have one of those Tonebone pedals, but I don't use that with the JMP. The Tonebone I tend to use outside of the rack stuff, like if I'm going to do a little gig around LA with the 900 head. I'll take the Tonebone along for that.

On the blues album?

VC: For the blues album I didn't use any rack effects or anything. It was pretty much straight in. I used a lot of hollow body guitars. The

guitar I used more than any other on the blues record was Yamaha AES1500. It has DiMarzio pickups and it sounds so good. I also used a Gibson L5 Custom on a couple of songs. I used a Gibson dot neck 335 with the chunky neck on a couple of tunes. I used my '56 reissue Les Paul with the P-90s. I also used a Les Paul Classic, which is basically a goldtop with humbuckers. I used my Marshall 900 with the little 2/12 Marshall cab, and a Fender Deluxe Reverb on a couple of tunes, also a Rivera Quiana 1/12 combo on at least one. But the setup I used more than anything else was a Matchless Clubman 35 head through a Vox AC30 cab. No rack effects or anything.

Though I did use a booster pedal on a couple of songs. We were running a lot of cable, and there was a lot of distance between guitar and amp, so I used a booster pedal to boost the signal.

You received a nice visit from the Rev. Billy G.



Vivian Campbell. Photo by John Nunziato
for *Modern Guitars*

VC: Yes. Billy Gibbons came down and played his Gretsch 'Billy-Bo'. He brought this little boutique head with him called a Mohave, a little 50-watt head. We put it through a Marshall 4/12 cab with Celestion Vintage 30s. He used a Real-Tube pedal as well. He came into the studio knowing exactly what he wanted to do. He tells the keyboard player what to play; he tells the harp player what to play. He's obviously experienced,

you know. And he's a lovely guy, a funny guy, too.

Joan Osborne sang 'Spoonful'?

VC: Yes. Unlike the rest of the record, Joan's track we did as an overdub. The rest we did live. We cut 'Spoonful' live, the backing track that is, and I did a scratch vocal on it. Several weeks later I took the session to New York, where I met up with Joan. She sang on it and then I took it back to LA, where I overdubbed slide guitar as well. She was lovely to work with, and she's a sweet, sweet girl. I think she's the Janis Joplin of this generation. She's just got the goods.

ice

september 2005

everybody singin' the blues

Presumably pop icon **Dion** and **Def Leppard's Vivian Campbell** don't have much in common, other than "musician" for occupation, but both have new blues-based projects. The ever-resilient Dion, in the 46th year of his career, has *Bronx in Blue* set for September 27 on Orchard, and Campbell's *Two Sides of If* arrives from Sanctuary September 6. Both dip into the **Robert Johnson** catalog, with Dion doing "Walkin' Blues," "Crossroads," "Travelin' Riverside Blues" and "Terraplane Blues," while Campbell opts for "Come on in My Kitchen" and "32/20 Blues." Dion taps **Willie Dixon** for "Built for Comfort,"

and Campbell does Dixon's "I Ain't Superstitious" and "Spoonful," with **Joan Osborne** joining on the latter. Both also cover tunes by famous harp players: Dion performs **Little Walter's** "You Better Watch Yourself" and **Jimmy Reed's** "Baby What You Want Me to Do," and Campbell fires up **Junior Wells'** "Messing with the

Kid." Similarities end there, with Dion playing acoustically and Campbell cranking the amps. Campbell debuts a **Billy Gibbons** tune called "Willin' for Satisfaction," with the **ZZ Top** per on hand.

■ **Vivian Campbell** (Def Leppard guitarist) *Two Sides of If* (see page 28) (Sanctuary)



VIVIAN CAMPBELL DOES THE BLUES

Straight off the Def Leppard tour bus Vivian Campbell took a few minutes to discuss with us his new project which is called Two Sides of If. It is his first solo album after nearly thirty years as a guitarist in bands like Dio, Whitesnake and currently Def Leppard, and this compilation is a slight left turn in what we might expect from a heavy metal hero. Vivian decided to do a blues album with guests such as Billy Gibbons and Joan Osborne. He combed blues clubs across the country and made Cozy's in LA a second home while immersing himself in the technique and whatever else it takes to make a good blues record.

22CR: *Being a Heavy Metal Superstar what made you decide to do a blues record at this point in your career?*

Vivian: Well not to sound conceited but because I can. I had a year off and got to spend some time at a place called Cozy's in Los Angeles which is probably one of the best Blues clubs around. Believe it or not my wife told me about twenty years ago to make this record but I ignored her like we all do our wives unfortunately (laughs). I know I can play it and I also can sing it so I wanted to study it further and make a record.

22CR: *How did you get Billy Gibbons involved?*

VC: Billy was on the wish list and I was very fortunate to get him. I knew him through a mutual friend and via emails and phone calls I was able to get him to play on the CD.

22CR: *Where did you find the other musicians and how did you know they would be right for your project?*

VC: Bruce Cornett is an amazing guitar player who I met while jamming in a blues club one night. The rest I met virtually the same way at clubs and we just jammed together and that's how you know the chemistry is there when you can just play spontaneously and make great music and that's what we did.

22CR: *Are you going to tour with this band?*

Vivian: Unfortunately no, I don't think that the record company is going to head us the money and I have already put enough money into it so I don't think so. We did do a one off show in LA last month after the release of the record but there are no plans on taking it out on the road.

22CR: *How do you feel about creating a new fan base that may not like your past work?*

VC: I don't think that I will be creating a new fan base with this CD. This is just something I wanted to do because I never did anything on my own. All the old Dio records I get nothing from so this is something that may be able to clothe my grand kids with.

22CR: *You have obviously been influenced by blues musicians, who else have you been influenced musically?*

VC: Well if you mean anyone in today's market I would have to say nobody but of course I admire guys like Eric Clapton who is basically a blues player as is Anous Young. I stopped listening to hard rock music

By Scott Miller

Photo by Robert Tuzo

“The last thing people want to hear is a heavy metal guitarist’s rendition of the blues.”

who made me want to play guitar though, after I heard him I wanted to learn everything about it. I was into the T-Rex glam scene with Marc Bolan and Thin Lizzy as well growing up.

22CR: Did making this CD afford you using different styles of guitars or other instruments?

VC: No not really the blues doesn't play real well over an acoustic guitar and that's not what I was going for. I used what I always use when I play and just changed my style of playing towards the blues. The last thing people want to hear is a heavy metal guitarist's rendition of the blues.

22CR: Is it hard being in a mainstream band such as Def Leppard where no one really knows how accomplished a musician you really are?

VC: Well I can think of worse things I could be making a living at. No that doesn't really bother me I love the band Def Leppard and what we do.

22CR: Why was your stay in Whitesnake so short?

VC: I played at the end of the big tour in 1987 and it just wasn't going to work out for me. I kind of knew what the situation would be but I have

no regrets. Whitesnake has always had this revolving door of musician and still does.

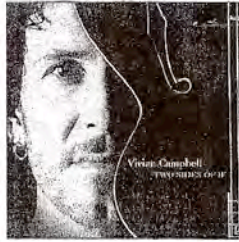
22CR: What would you like to have accomplished with the release of the new CD?

VC: The CD is for my personal satisfaction. I had not done a solo record and wanted to add it to my catalogue and just have some fun which real is the main idea when you make a CD like this and I think we did it.

After being on the road close to a year with Def Leppard Vivian and the band are winding down the tour. It seems as though the rumors of Vivian's unhappiness in the band are false and that he is quite content at where he is as a musician. The new CD Two Sides of It is a journey into the roots of where hard rock was born. Vivian takes you into a smoky bar for a few beers while he jams the blues. The record was done in three days and the musicians were under strict rules to have fun and be spontaneous which definitely comes across in the CD.

Visit www.viviancampbell.com for more info.

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■ "Two Sides Of If," Vivian Campbell. Sanctuary The Def Leppard guitarist delves back into the blues on standards like "The Hunter," "I Ain't Superstitious," and "Spoonful."

The result is more blues/rock than blues with fiery and fleet-fingered guitar solos and rather average vocals.

THE City Paper

Monday, October 3, 2005 9:27 AM

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By Ron Wynn, rwynn@nashvillecitypaper.com
September 30, 2005

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They've contributed so many magnificent soul and country sessions over the years that the team of Dan Penn and Spooner Oldham easily fit in either camp. So it's no surprise that the new release *Moments From This Theatre—Dan Penn and Spooner Oldham Live* (Proper/English import) also merges these two styles in every way. Penn's singing is as direct, honest and sincere as his lyrics, while Oldham's accompaniment on electric and his harmonizing are just as sparse and ideal, perfectly filling the space and never intruding or affecting the mood. This disc was recorded some seven years ago, while Penn and Oldham were backing Nick Lowe. It also shows that while soul and country songs often have varying degrees of production gloss and different instrumental structures, there's little difference when it comes to the key ingredients, narrative flair and vocal conviction. Whether doing "I'm Your Puppet," "It Tears Me Up" and "The Dark End of the Street" or "I'm Living Good," "Ol Folks" and "Memphis Women and Chicken," the Penn/Oldham team sounds at ease and creditable. Oldham steps out front on "Lonely Women Make Good Lovers," a tune he co-wrote with Freddie Weller, and ably displays his country chops. It took far too long for this to surface on these shores, but fortunately it has finally arrived. *Moments From This Theatre* shows that Penn and Oldham are nearly as marvelous on stage as in a studio setting.

Contemporary blues

Vivian Campbell would probably be the last name anyone would associate with the blues, mainly since he's more than the past two decades supplying the guitar energy for Def Leppard, Whitesnake and Dio. But *Two Sides of If* (Hylo/Sanctuary) is a well played, if sometimes a bit too respectful and derivative, venture into the blues. Campbell's versions of "Messin' With The Kid," "Reconsider Baby," "I'm Ready," "Come On In My Kitchen" and "I Ain't Superstitious" among others are often impressive, particularly in terms of the cleanness of the line and dexterity of the playing. But more personally interesting are "Willin' For Satisfaction" where Campbell and Billy Gibbons build, nurture and finally develop a guitar workout number that's both energetic and fun, and his cover of Rory Gallagher's "Calling Card," which is also a bit looser than several other tunes. Campbell's certainly a great guitarist, but like many other rockers who pop into the blues world, he's somehow too concerned about demonstrating his love of the art form. When he just cuts loose, his credentials become more evident.

Reneé Austin has a big, booming and sensual sound, part blues belter and part soul shaker, and each side gets ample room on *Right About Love* (Blind Pig). Other than a respectful cover of Arthur Crudup's "That's All Right" and a better version of Bobbie Gentry's "Bugs," these are Austin originals. The best tunes like "Mouth of the Delta," "Right Above Love" and "Harder Than It Has To Be" feature Austin's surging vocals upfront and driving the arrangement. Austin also shows her country side on occasion, particularly during such songs as "Chicken Coop" and "Mister Cowboy." She co-produced the set and even adds some acoustic guitar backgrounds, though such players as multi-instrumentalist Kevin Bowe, keyboardist Bruce McCabe and the drum/bass duo of Billy Thommes and Dik Shopteau anchor the musical foundations. Austin has lots of soul and blues fervor, with ample down-home grounding as well.

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CD reviews : Classic Rock : Vivian Campbell

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Vivian Campbell – Two Sides of If



– We all ready know Vivian Campbell can play guitar, but can he sing? That’s what this member of Def Leppard hopes to prove with his solo debut, *Two Sides of If*. Hardly what you’d expect from a hard rock musician, this album is infused with the blues.

On this album, Campbell pays homage to early blues–influenced rock music with renditions of Muddy Waters’ “I’m Ready,” Fleetwood Mac’s “Like It This Way,” and Eric Clapton’s “Reconsider Baby.” It is clear that Campbell has learned a great deal from these musicians, and he shows his gratitude with this album.

Two Sides of If is an album that digs up the roots of rock, and replants them for today’s generation.

Reviewer: Gail Hoffer

THE BUFFALO NEWS

Vivian Campbell, *"Two Sides of It" (Sanctuary)*. Irish guitarist Vivian Campbell made his name in the world of hard rock and metal, as a hot-shot, fleet-fingered kid with Ronnie James Dio, and as a mature adult with pop-metallers Def Leppard, with whom he still tours and records. When metal guys get the blues - invariably, late in life - the result can be downright embarrassing. But fellow Irishman Gary Moore pulled it off convincingly and, somewhat surprisingly, so does Campbell. Both men have an indelible connection to the blues through the Irish rover, Rory Gallagher, that country's equivalent to Stevie Ray Vaughan. Campbell worshipped Gallagher as a kid; the thing about the blues is, once it's bitten you, it will have to come out sometime. As a player, Campbell - with a band that includes virtuoso Terry Bozzio on drums, playing with uncharacteristic understatedness here - plays with conviction, chops and tone. As a singer, he sounds pretty white, a fact underscored when Joan Osborne lets it rip with buckets full of soul on "Spoonful." (It's a problem with the vibrato; rock guys don't often apply the right vibrato and inflection on blues recordings, Eric Clapton being the glaring exception.) Still, Campbell does an admirable job throughout, and the inclusion of ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons on two tracks is a godsend for guitar lovers. A sturdy and often impassioned coming out as a bluesman for Campbell. *** (J.M.)



INTERVIEW

An Interview with: Vivian Campbell

By: Clyde Richardson

September , 2005

Vivian Campbell on the Blues Trail

All you Def Leppard fans can relax, Vivian is still playing with Def Leppard. However, Vivian has released a solo cd that is ALL Blues. The title is "Two Sides of If". You can read all about Mr. Campbell and his latest news along with some audio clips at www.viviancampbell.com so please check it out.

I had the great opportunity to speak with him via phone on 9/14/05 and the following is what transpired.

I immediately stated that unlike most interviews, where you have pointed questions and become self-serving to the interviewer, I just wanted to hear what Vivian Campbell, the artist, had to say. He immediately told me he did this solo cd in the Blues genre because he's always had a love for it and for the last 20 years his wife has been telling him he should (thank you Mrs. Campbell). While not singing in Dio, Whitesnake was more of a vocal challenge that finally led to Def Leppard where the vocals are impeccable so everyone has to pull their own weight.

Vivian informed me that he's been just saturating himself in the Blues for the last year and a half while mostly in L.A. Being the lead vocal is a major leap for the guitar-slinging virtuoso and, in my humble opinion, he's nailed it! He's got a World Class band together, complete with Terry Bozzio (he really should have me playing with him a bit on guitar, though...just wishful thinking). To quote Mr. Campbell, "the sound comes from the sum of its parts". His major influences throughout his life have been Rory Gallagher, Jeff Beck, Gary Moore and Muddy Waters. Serious players, serious tone!

Vivian's new cd stayed with the traditional standard blues feel, doing them real justice. I asked, "why all the standards?" By the way, Billy Gibbons not only played on the cd but wrote (and finished writing) one track just 5 minutes before recording it. Even Joan Osborne did a guest appearance, how cool is that? I wonder if she'd marry me? He did all the standards because he didn't want to be presumptuous about what he was doing. I mean let's get real, blues is far more than just playing 3 chords and doing some solos over them and I think it was stated quite well musically.


What truly amazed me about Vivian Campbell was Vivian as a person. Here is one of the world's great guitarists and he's just downright humble. He had nothing but praise for everyone he talked about and his main reference to blues masters was Muddy Waters and how most of the electric blues guitar licks came from Muddy, one way or the other. You can get his bio, tours, etc, right off his website, www.viviancampbell.com, but what you can't get is how sincere this man is about his latest project. This is not just some rock player trying to do something a little different, this is a man dedicated to saying something with his music and I feel he's stated it all quite eloquently on his latest cd.

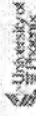
Once again Mr. Campbell (he's earned that title), thank you for the interview and letting us in on some of what makes you tick. If you're ever in Chicago and want to play some blues, give me a call.

In closing, go out and get this cd, it's a jewel for Def Leppard fans, Blues fans and Vivian Campbell fans and will be part of my collection for sure. Don't forget to visit his website and to go out and buy the cd. Once again, it's "Two Sides of If"...get it!

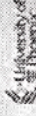
Clyde Richardson - www.ChicagoMusicGuide.com

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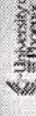





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Def Leppard Guitarist's Blues Solo

Date: 2005-07-26 Artist: Def Leppard Category: Upcoming Releases

Def Leppard guitarist Vivian Campbell will release his first solo album, "Two Sides Of If", on September 6. Campbell will be joined on the blues-oriented album by ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons, singer Joan Osborne, and former Frank Zappa and Missing Persons drummer Terry Bozzio.

"Two Sides Of If" features a collection of Campbell's favorite blues songs, including Willie Dixon's "I Ain't Superstitious" and "Spoonful", Fleetwood Mac's "Like It This Way" and "Willin' For Satisfaction", Rory Gallagher's "Calling Card", and Mel London's "Messin' With The Kid".

Gibbons guests on the two Fleetwood Mac tracks, while Osborne performs on "Spoonful". Bozzio plays drums on the entire album.

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DEF LEPPARD Guitarist VIVIAN CAMPBELL To Record Solo Album –
Apr. 1, 2005

DEF LEPPARD guitarist Vivian Campbell will enter the studio April 11–13 to begin work on his first solo album. The record, which will reportedly contain about a dozen cover songs from blues legends such as Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Rory Gallagher and others, will be released "sometime in 2005" on Sanctuary Records. Recording live, Vivian will be joined by Terry Bozzio on drums, Mark Browne on bass, Michael Fell on "mississippi saxophone" and Tor Hyams on keyboards. Extra guest appearances are said to be "optional." More information will be available soon on VivianCampbell.com.

OCTOBER 2005

REVIEWS OF THE MONTH

VIVIAN CAMPBELL *Two Sides Of It* Sanctuary Records

Many know **Vivian Campbell** from the many bands he's played in or contributed to over the last 20 years. We were first introduced to the young Irish guitarist through **Dio's** Holy Diver who sprang to fame with his fiery solo in "Rainbow In The Dark." Next came the **Whitesnake** years and oh, how we remember those **Vibeos**. For a short stay Campbell hooked up with **Foreigner's** Lou Gramm producing a fine piece of plastic (Shadowking) that was dismissed by critics and burned by the record labels, as was **The Riverdogs** project. Joe Elliot claims to have "hand selected" Campbell for **Def Leppard** after the tragic loss of Steve Clark — and it's in Def Leppard that he remains to this day, 12 years later.

For nearly 25 years none have ventured out on their own from the Leppard camp. They seem a tight machine focused on perfection all the time. However, this year we see two compelling side projects come to fruition from the metal popsters. Phil Collen's **Man-Size** and Vivian Campbell's electric blues record **Two Sides Of It**.

So why a blues record? What does Campbell have to offer one of the greatest (and beloved) traditions in US musical history? For starters he has passion, and that emotion pours out from this 12-track study with nervous excitement and wobbly knees.

"I love my day job," Campbell told us over the phone. "I've gotten to the point where I can play the Leg set almost perfect. After awhile though, I wanted to do something a little less perfect, more emotional, more roots-based." Campbell found his outlet in an exhaustive study of the blues and those that made the genre legendary. On **Two Sides Of It** there is Willie Dixon's "I'm Ready", "I Ain't Superstitious" and "Spoonful," Robert Johnson's "Come On In My Kitchen", Booker T's "The Hunter" and Rory Gallagher's "Calling Card," all delivered with Campbell's own spin and voice.

That's right, he sings — and does so with such conviction that what could be run-of-the-mill standards takes shape in the tones of an Irish boy's first love. "Throaty and raspy comes the rocked up "Messin' With The Kid". Fleetwood Mac's "Like It This Way" scorches a whisky tale, while "Good Or Bad Times" muscled its way to the top of the heap sounding aged and mature. From Campbell's guitar comes the perfect duet, colorful, steady and loaded with texture, elements that embrace his voice.

Surrounding himself with top-notch musicians including Terry Bozzio (drums), Michael Fall (harmonica), Mark Browne (bass), Bruce Cornett (guitar) and Tor Hyams (piano, organ), Campbell keeps the session fresh. Recording the whole disc in just three days not only gives credence to the band's workmanship, but also replicates a work ethic long forgotten. Billy Gibbons of **ZZ Top** and **Joan Osborne** stop in to add their own contribution including Gibbons' original, "Willin' For Satisfaction" penned specifically for this project. The blues has found another hero in Campbell's eloquent playing and vocal interpretation. A musical tradition passed on from generation to generation.

Check out our full interview with Vivian Campbell by clicking here.

Website: [Vivian Campbell](http://www.viviancampbell.com), Sanctuary Records

<http://www.ecutina-edge.net/news.html>



Modern Guitars Magazine

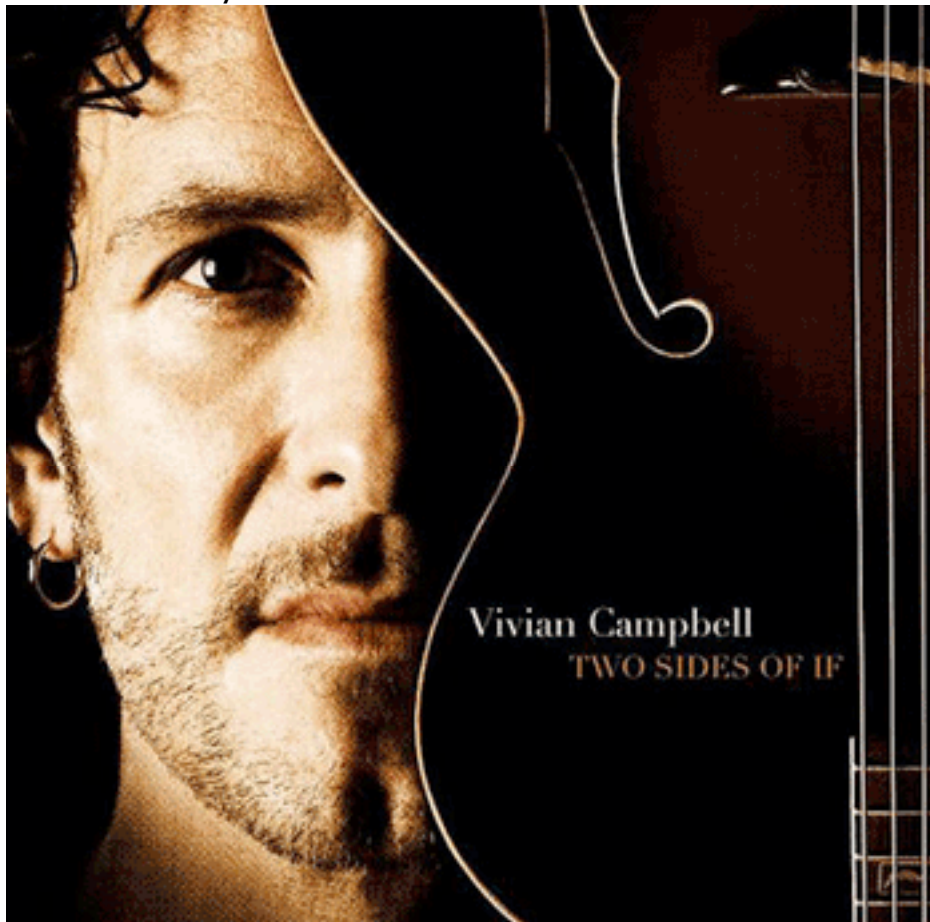
News and information about electric and acoustic guitars

Two Sides of If' by Vivian Campbell (August 25, 2005)

Release date: September 27, 2005

Label: Sanctuary Records

Vivian Campbell's new blues CD, *Two Sides of If*, is an interesting collection of blues standards and a song written for the CD by Billy Gibbons. Vivian's vocals are, to a reasonable extent, reminiscent of both Gary Moore and Rory Gallagher, yet the power and passion he exerts are all his. He's soulful and energetic, and his guitar playing is potent and bluesy.



As you could guess from his recent interview in which he talks about the numerous guitars and amps used on the CD, the tone throughout is phenomenal. The band, as a whole, is precise at getting Vivian's bluesy message across. The two cuts featuring Billy

Gibbons and the one featuring Joan Osborne are mere icing on the cake. The beat man is Terry Bozzio, one of the finest drummers of his generation.

Mel London's 'Messin' With The Kid' gets it all going, alerting listeners to how much of a Rory Gallagher fan Vivian really is. Willie Dixon's 'I'm Ready' is gritty and poignant. Vivian's solo is scorching in this one.

Rory Gallagher's 'Calling Card' is a fine tribute to the blues-rock master. It features a distinctive piano solo by Tor Hyams. Robert Johnson's 'Come On In My Kitchen' is haunting, yet individualistic, as Viv's approach is all over this cover.

The two cuts featuring The Reverend Billy G. are interesting enough in themselves. Both guitarists swap leads throughout Danny Kirwan's 'Like It This Way'. 'Willin' For Satisfaction' starts energetically, in a Canned Heat manner. Michael Fell's harp playing is highlighted here. And though Vivian's vocal prowess fits it like a glove, the song has Billy Gibbons' technique written all over it.

Joan Osborne's vocal in 'Spoonful' is sexy and perfect and Viv's slide work flatters her voice superbly.

Vivian Campbell makes a first-rate entry into blues-rock with his Sept. 27th release, 'Two Sides Of If'. After listening to it a couple of times I realized that it was about time he did a solo album. Blues aficionados, rock fans, and guitarists and musicians alike won't be disappointed. Blues-rock never sounded better.

Two Sides of If Track Listing

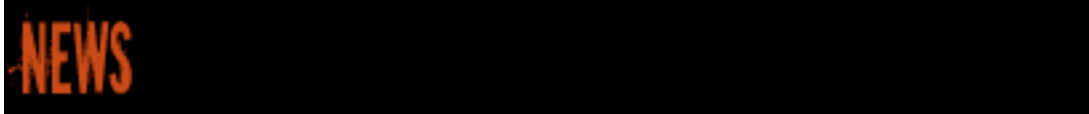
- 1) Messin' With The Kid
- 2) I'm Ready
- 3) Calling Card
- 4) Come On In My Kitchen
- 5) The Hunter

- 6) Like It This Way
- 7) Ain't Superstitious
- 8) Spoonful
- 9) Reconsider Baby
- 10) Good Or Bad Times
- 11) 32/20 Blues
- 12) Willin' For Satisfaction

Vivian Campbell: vocals and guitars
Michael Fell: harmonica
Bruce Cornett: rhythm guitar
Tor Hyams: piano, Hammond B-3
Mark Browne: bass
Terry Bozzio: drums

Billy F. Gibbons: guitar on 'Like It This Way' and 'Willin' For Satisfaction'
Joan Osborne: vocal on 'Spoonful'
Dave Wolff: Vivian's guitar tech

Produced by Tor Hyams and Vivian Campbell
Recorded live at Ocean Studios, Burbank CA.
Joan Osborne recorded at Coyote Studios, Brooklyn, NY



Riff Notes

DEF LEPPARD Guitarist VIVIAN CAMPBELL Explains His Blues
Posted on Thursday, August 25, 2005 at 05:37:51 EST

DEF LEPPARD guitarist VIVIAN CAMPBELL spoke to ModernGuitars.com recently regarding his upcoming solo effort, *Two Sides Of If*, due for release on September 6th through Sanctuary Records. Explaining the motivation behind his first solo outing, Campbell remarks: "

"About twenty years ago, my wife heard me sing. She said, 'You know, you sing like a blues guy. You play guitar like a blues guy, too. Maybe you should do a blues record'. I laughed, and told her to go away and stop being a silly woman. [Laughs] I didn't think much about it, but I always knew that the way I played was more akin to blues than anything else. I let my left hand do most of the work, and I'm basically a down-stroke picker. I fret pretty hard with my left hand, so that articulates the note. So, a couple of years ago I got roped into playing a blues set at my daughter's school fundraiser. You know how it is, when you have kids, you do these fundraiser events. They had a band, and they asked me to do a blues set. So I got up and did four or five songs. That's where I met Tor, the keyboard player. He had put together the little band because his daughter went to the same school as mine. We did the set, and he told me that he thought I should do a blues record. He also said that he thought I sounded like a blues singer. I said, 'Okay. We'll make it happen'. Tor went out and made a few calls and got a bit of interest, so I said, 'why not, let's do it'."

Rock Hard

VIVIAN CAMPBELL Talks About Having The Blues

Posted on Monday, August 29, 2005 at 07:16:08 EST

Classic Rock Revisited founder Jeb Wright recently sat down with DEF LEPPARD/ex-DIO guitarist Vivian Campbell to discuss his solo blues album, Two Sides Of If. The following is a brief excerpt:

Jeb: You have never been one to put yourself in the spotlight yet your name is now in lights with your new blues album Two Sides of If. Why did you decide to do the album now?

Vivian: "I did it because I can – literary, not figuratively. We had a year and a half off between Def Leppard tours. I don't know about the other guys but I feel you are what you do. I am a musician so I have to play music. After being off the road for two and a half months I started going to this Irish bar every Thursday night in Santa Monica and playing with a friend of mine named PJ Smith. I was doing nothing that was paying me a cent but it was fun. After that I started going out to open mic blues jam nights in a couple of different clubs in LA. A friend of mine who is a producer heard me do the blues and he pointed out that when I sing I have this rough, blues thing going on. He asked me to do a record. I told him that if he could go get a record deal then I would do a record. He is a mover and shaker and he made a few calls and he got a deal.

The other thing reason I did it is because, in an artistic sense, I know I can do it. I know that might sound a little strange to you. I have heard rock players do the blues and crucify it. Most rock players cannot play the blues. I would like to think that I can do it."

Jeb: As a guitar player what was the most important thing you learned researching the blues?

Vivian: "The most important lesson I learned was just how important a guitar player Muddy Waters was. He was the guy who took the blues into the electric age. When you listen to certain songs and certain licks that he plays you realize that one is a Jeff Beck lick or a Jimmy Page lick. You hear where guys like Jimi Hendrix were getting their influence. I first heard these licks in the 70's and I never realized that they all came from Muddy. It is not only Muddy. He had Jimmy Rodgers in his band. It was the classic band with Otis Span and Little Walter."

Jeb: You really know your stuff.

Vivian: "I spent a year listening to nothing but the blues. Thank god for Apple iTunes! I would just go off on these tangents. I would hear that someone was influenced by someone and I would be buying it. There is a great radio station in LA called KJZ and every Saturday and Sunday afternoon they play nothing but the blues. I found it to be very educational."