Tim Richard - Drummer and Vocalist for the JC Smith Band

Although originally from Arkansas, Tim Richard grew up in San Jose and attended San Jose High School. Tim describes himself as a self-taught drummer. He listened to records and emulated what he heard, he “has a good ear”. His cousin had a band and at rehearsal when the band went on break, he would get behind the drums and play what he heard. He started playing in bands in Junior High school. His first gig was at the USO in downtown San Jose with “Pacific Soul”. This lead to picnics, parties, to high school dances to clubs and bars. As word of his talent spread, Tim became an in-demand musician, performing with a wide variety of bands and earning a reputation for his exceptional musicianship.

NBC Booking Agency approached the band, under a new name, “Underground Railroad” to manage them and other bands in the area. “Typewriter”, “1843”, “Stoned Brown”, “All These People”, “Roadshow”, “Blitz”, “Sweet Arrival”, and “Inner City”. Tim had the opportunity to play with all these bands while with NBC Booking Agency.

In 1981, on Monday June 8th, Tim got a call from John Lee Hooker asking questions like “do you know who I am, I’m the Boogie Man and I’m in need of a drummer and are you interested?” When Tim said yes John Lee told him we are leaving tomorrow “is that a problem?” Tim said no. John Lee replied “I want nothing but the best and later for the rest”. Tim listened to John Lee’s music from San Jose to Omaha and played his first gig on June 12th.

From 1981-1989 he toured 14 countries and 43 states and 7 Canadian provinces in John Lee’s Coast to Coast Blues Band. He recalls many great festivals such as Montreux Jazz Festival, Delta Blues Music Festival, New Orleans Jazz Festival, Chicago Blues Festival, London Blues Festival, Detroit and Winnipeg Folk Festivals, and more. Backing artists such as Robert Cray, Charlie Musselwhite, Elvin Bishop, the late Steve Cropper, Carlos Santana, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Robert Jr. Lockwood, David Maxwell, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, Jimmy Vaughan, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Clarence “Gatemouth” Brown, the late Alan Toussaint plus many others, Tim had the opportunity to work alongside some of the greatest musicians of their generation. These experiences gave him a firsthand connection to the legendary artists whose influence helped shape the music we know today.

In 1986, he recorded on John Lee Hooker’s two-time Grammy-nominated album “Jealous”. He also participated in three W.C. Handy Awards and performed at Carnegie Hall on three occasions.

It has been said that Tim “is able to work miracles with the simple snare and high-hat tempo-keeping that can weigh down most blue players, his cymbal work is so subtle it is difficult to determine what beat he is working”. “He is the driver of the band, pounding out the beat”. Tim’s “drumming gave a solid push that charged up the band”.

Tim, along with bass player Larry Hamilton, found a unique groove and feel for the blues that was “uninhibited by self-consciousness” evolving the music to expand to wider audiences.

He continued to provide steady rhythms for local musicians. The Gary Smith Band, Byrd Hale, Joyce Walton, Andy Just, the late Sam Varela, Dave Hydie, Hubert Tubbs, Isis and the Cold Truth, and more.

Currently, Tim is a valuable member of the JC Smith Band, serving as drummer, vocalist, and contributor to the musical direction along with his talented and charismatic bandmates. The band has performed as the backing band for Amy Allen and Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne. The band performs at the Monterey Jazz Festival and Tuesday’s Bluesdays, an annual event at Olympic Village in Palisades Tahoe, CA. The band also performs annually at the Tobin James Cellars in Paso Robles, CA.

In addition to his dynamic drumming and vocals, Tim is a skilled musical director with a talent for leading bands and bringing out the best in every show.

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