



Brian Kramer & The Couch Lizards

When Brian Kramer from Brooklyn was barely out of his teens he was hanging out with legendary blues men, picking up tips and advice from folks such as Buddy Guy and Junior Wells when they would visit his hometown in New York. Junior took a particular liking to Brian and paid careful attention in showing him the right moves and how to play from the heart.

In 1989 Junior would join Brian on his first recording Win or Lose by Brian Kramer and the Bluesmasters, featuring Junior Wells. Junior backed Brian up on almost every track and Brian backed Junior up on four of his songs. Former Rolling Stone, Mick Taylor was also part of these sessions as well as a gathering of the finest and most respected sidemen in the US.

Throughout the 90's Brian toured and continued to be a fixture within the New York club scene until re-locating overseas, seeking a broader range of opportunities.

In 1998 Brian was asked by internationally acclaimed artist Eric Bibb to join up with him and perform on the road. Over the next two years, he accompanied Bibb on four successful coast-to-coast tours of the US and Canada; also throughout England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, Scandinavia and Japan.

Brian is also featured on Bibb's W.C Handy nominated, worldwide release Home To Me, where from the opening notes of the very first track till the final riff of the last cut, Brian's National slide guitar is like a thread in the tapestry on some of Bibb's most important and diverse music.

One of the strengths of Home To Me is Bibb's original blues tunes, such as the bodacious, struttin' New Shoes, co-authored with Brian Kramer.

- CD NOW

Brian's slide guitar can also be heard on Eric's collaboration with his dad, the 60's icon & folk singer Leon Bibb, called, A Family Affair.

In 2000 he recorded, Brian Kramer Trio and Friends, Live at the Folklore Center, an intimate, all acoustic recording. This recording has caught the attention of renowned writer-producer Sam Charters who has praised the music saying, this is wonderful, spirited music, I am a sucker for that kind of blues. The recording has received great reviews from various publications worldwide.

In 2001 following the success of their Scandinavian tour, Brian & The Couch Lizards were invited to the UK by Armadillo to record with legendary blues man Larry Johnson for the CD, Two Gun Green (now available internationally). Sam Charters, who wrote extensive liner notes for the project once again, praises Brian & his crew, writing,

The group working with Larry on this album reflects some of the new realities of the blues were deeply fortunate he's here with Brian and the Couch Lizards to lay it down for us. Kramer delivers some fine acoustic slide (sounding a bit like Muddy Waters) with his steel bodied National and he's just as focused everywhere else on the CD.

- US Living Blues Magazine

In 2002 Brian, in collaboration with label Armadillo records, released the CD Everybody's Story to positive reviews.

Everybody's Story is executed with magnificent picking and always a merry rhythm, once is definitely not enough. The guitar, slide rather, is to be honoured and demonstrates that the blues is not necessarily gloomy.

- La Gazette de Greenwood, France

Brian Kramer's new CD is a record of blues based music that makes you happy while listening to it. Depression blues is nowhere to be found, this is music for the party, good love and happiness. It's a record full of solid and good lyrics plus superb musicianship. **RECOMMENDED!**

- Jefferson Magazine, Sweden



Brian has a clear bright style, full of sensitivity and very good taste present throughout this CD's eleven songs, all performed with a deep feeling that gets inside blues lovers hearts-GREAT!

- La Hora Del Blues, Spain

Armadillo Music released Brian's CD, No Regrets, recorded in the UK to wide distribution in February 2004.

Brian was awarded a culture prize, by the Tavla Foundation, for recognition of using his music in the environment for positive purposes. When Brian's not touring you can find him every Saturday afternoon at a dub called Stampen in Stockholm, where he hosts his famous jam session. The dub is packed tight each week and the jammers won't let Brian off the stage because they all want to trade licks with him. These jam sessions have also proven to be very fertile ground, nurturing Sweden's hottest new young blues talent.

On the anniversary of Stampen's Blues Jam, each year since 97 Brian awards a prize to young teenagers whose growth, talent and enthusiasm has stood out. Many of these young recipients have gone on to become professional recording and touring musicians, with Brian setting the stage for them to blossom.

Brian has been an active part of Scandinavia's club and festival scene, often appearing at Club Fasching, also the Stockholm Water Festival and Stockholm's International Jazz and Blues Festival. Other international events include The Cambridge Folk Festival, Bull Durham Blues Festival, Chicago World Music Festival, Notudden Blues Festival etc.

In addition to recording with Junior Wells, Eric Bibb & Larry Johnson, Brian has contributed tracks to: Cyndee Peters, Derrick Big Walker & others. Including a children's recording, released in the US on the Grammy winning, Music for little people label.

He has also sat in the producer's chair on a number of projects recording some of Sweden's most unique, talented, blues artists.

Brian has opened shows as special guest artist for Taj Mahal, John Mayall and has shared the stage & traded licks with Alvin Youngblood Hart, Bernard Allison, Bob Brozman, Bobby Rush, Eugene Hideaway Bridges, Steve James, Sven Zetterberg, Michael Barretto (of Taj Mahal's Hula Blues band), Otis Grand, Jimmy Dawkins and many others.

Brian also conducts workshops and performs benefit concerts. Whether he's with his full band, acoustic trio or just by himself with his steel guitar, Brian will no doubt leave you with an unforgettable impression. His desire is to lift the spirits of his audience, connecting life to life through dynamic music.



Discography



Title: NO REGRETS
Catalogue No:
ARMD00019
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Armadillo Music Ltd

I Want My Illusion © BKB 0003 2006

Everybody's Story ©BKB 001 2002

Larry Johnson Featuring Brian Kramer & The Couch Lizards – Two Gun Green © ARMD00013 2001

Brian Kramer Trio and Friends - Live at the Folklore Center © LTFLC 2000

Eric Bibb - Home To Me © 1998

Kramer and the Bluesmasters featuring Junior Wells - Win or Lose © 1989