

Poppa Dawg gets blissed on the blues

Written by Richard Amery

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The blues is right up my alley, and Kelowna bluesman Poppa Dawg was happy to deliver at the Slice, Sept. 13.



“All I ask is that you dig the blues,” he told an audience of about 20 people. They were listening as most of them hung on every word and note.

Richard Arthur Halisheff, aka Poppa Dawg, was lost in his own world, beaming as he caressed the neck of his Stratocaster in a “Strat-tastic” set of beautiful blues music including original music from his latest CD “What You Got,” as blues classics including an exceptional version of Hound Dog Taylor’s “Give Me Back My Wig.”

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One of the highlights was a new song “What is the Matter With You,” which he hadn’t recorded yet.

Another highlight was a superb version of Duke Robillard’s “I May Be Ugly, (But I Sure Know How To Cook.)

His drummer, Brian “Skip” MaGuire sang a stellar version of the Fabulous Thunderbirds’ “Why Get Up” while singing excellent background vocals.

Poppa Dawg shone on his own material, with down to earth lyrics and catchy “call-back” choruses. He sounded like Doug and the Slugs singing upbeat blues music.

His second set was just as intense though the audience had begun to trickle away by then. He began by tackling rockabilly standard “Mystery Train.”

He caught everyone’s interest with a cool version of Lonnie Mack’s’s “Oreo Cookie Blues.” and sat on the edge of the stage to take a soulful solo.

He also played a couple tracks from his latest CD including “Blame Yourself,” and “Deepest Shade of Blue.”

He joked about his ex-wife before playing one of the CD’s highlights “I Ain’t Complaining (I’m Just Explaining).

— *By Richard Amery, L.A. Beat Editor*