

Julien Kasper Band



Julien Kasper Biography

"Soul, groove, melody, tone, and the element of surprise are my priorities as a composer and an improviser... as a guitarist I am coming equally from the schools of rock, jazz, and blues." (Guitar World, October 2007) The subject was Julien Kasper's 2006 CD *The New Imperial* and with the release of his latest effort *Trance Groove*, Julien has upped the ante while remaining true to his vision.

As with *The New Imperial* (Nugene Records, 2006) and *Flipping Time* (Toulcat Records, 2003), on *Trance Groove* Julien's guitar is the nuanced, expressive singing voice of this all instrumental journey. Funky grooves, catchy melodies, psychedelic soundscapes, soulful gospel blues, epic rock guitar, and a stunning acoustic ballad coexist with rare, natural continuity.

Trance Groove features a guest appearance by Hammond B3 organist T Lavitz of the Dixie Dregs, Widespread Panic, and Jazz is Dead. Live and on record Julien's choice of rhythm section reflects his aesthetic of groove and group interaction. Bassist Jesse Williams and drummer Zac Casher have, between them, performed and/or recorded with a who's who of American roots and groove masters: Johnny Adams, Duke Robillard, Mighty Sam McClain, Immani Coppala, Mighty Sam McClain, D'Angelo, Jay McShann, Henry Butler, and countless others.

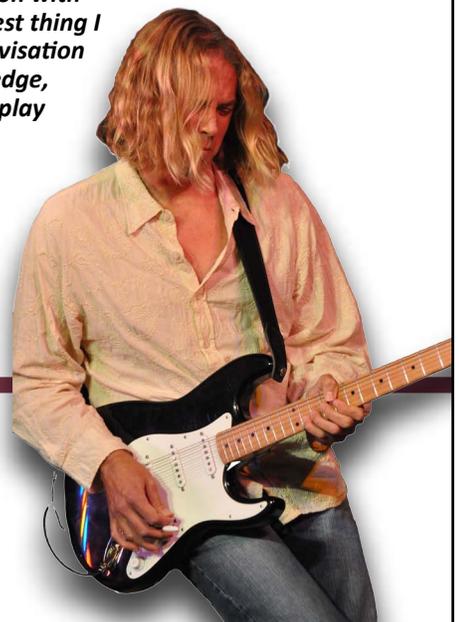


The international community of blues and jazz fans became aware of Julien through his work with pianist and Hammond B-3 organist Bruce Katz on their extensive tours throughout the US and Europe. He recorded two CDs with the Bruce Katz Band on Audioquest: *Mississippi Moan* and *Three Feet off the Ground*. Julien has also recorded with Mighty Sam McClain: *Journey* and *Soul Survivor* on Telarc.

Julien was born in France in 1962 to American parents and spent his youth as an army child moving around the American south. Inspired by Bob Dylan and the Beatles, he took up the guitar at the age of eight. In 1978 at sixteen, while living in Tallahassee, Florida, Julien began touring with the legendary blues/rock band Crosscut Saw featuring harmonica virtuoso and singer Pat Ramsey. After several years and one album (recently reissued on

Akarma), Julien decided to seek more challenging musical terrain. He moved to the fertile music town of Austin, TX where he gigged constantly, honing his skill among the city's heavy hitting players for four years. Despite the great musicians in Austin, Julien was frustrated by the lack of a vibrant jazz scene so he accepted a scholarship to attend the jazz program at the University of Miami. He put himself through school playing with IKO IKO, the house band at Tobacco Road, Miami's blues and roots mecca, which allowed him to share the stage with a who's who of blues legends and touring artists. An improvisational blues/jam band, IKO IKO gave Julien the opportunity to develop and organically integrate the advanced concepts he was learning in school into his virtuosic blues/rock sound. After graduating from UM Julien received another offer too good to refuse - a jazz guitar fellowship at University of North Texas - which brought him back to Texas in 1992 to complete his Master's degree. While in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area Julien expanded his musical boundaries by gigging in country, blues, rock, and jazz groups and launching the first edition of the Julien Kasper Band with drummer Keith Carlock (Steely Dan, Sting, Wayne Krantz).

Julien is now based in Boston, Massachusetts where, in addition to writing, performing, and recording his original music, he is a professor on the guitar faculty at Berklee College of Music and an avid all-season surfer. **"The Berklee gig is ideal in that I can impart my values and extensive performance experience to younger generations of talented musicians while interacting with a faculty of renowned international artists. The school encourages me to tour and record as my professional profile serves to enhance the reputation of the college and my own artistry. Surfing brings me into elemental contact with nature. Riding a wave is interaction with pure energy and the closest thing I can find to musical improvisation in that technique, knowledge, and experience all are at play but, ultimately, one must improvise and react to the purity of each passing moment."**



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