

Too Slim and the Taildraggers

The 11 songs that appear on *Free Your Mind*, the 10th studio album from Seattle-based Too Slim and the Taildraggers, are the result of a touring hiatus in December 2007 and January 2008. “It was the first time I actually took time off specifically to write songs,” remembers band leader Tim Langford (AKA Too Slim), “and I’m very pleased with the results.”

The songs on *Free Your Mind* are a slice of American roots music, with blues, Americana and rock influences. “The songwriting process is something that I really enjoy, but it can also drive you a little crazy,” says the lead singer/guitarist. “I always try to write down ideas or phrases that I hear in everyday life that could be song titles. Some songs are inspired by personal experiences and some are just observations of life as I see it. For instance, the lyrics on the song ‘Last Train’ were inspired by reading stories from one day of the *Seattle Times* newspaper. I was actually laughing out loud - and was appalled at the same time - by the articles I was reading. The chorus just came out of me as I was running through a rough draft of the song: ‘Feel like I’m riding on the last train, with cracks in the wheels, headed for a big bang. Feel like I’m riding on the last train and Hunter S. Thompson is the engineer.’ It seemed to sum up the absurdity of the world events on that particular day. I like the variety of the music on *Free Your Mind*. There are songs of love, perseverance, faith, fiction, frustration and the craziness of everyday life,” adds Langford.

Tim Langford worked again with producer Todd Smallwood on the new album. Smallwood also co-produced the band’s last CD, *The Fortune Teller*. “I really enjoyed working in the studio with Todd,” says Tim. “He had great ideas, and has the recording process down to an art. He is an extremely talented producer and musician, and played Hammond organ and 12-string guitar on the recording, too.

Todd’s studio is in the middle of an avocado grove in the Santa Paula area of California. It’s a very nice setting and the sun was shining everyday, which was a wonderful environment in which to record. We recorded at three separate sessions starting in September 2008 through November 2008. I went in the studio with the band (bassist Dave Nordstrom and drummer Rudy Simone) and we ran through all the songs live and got the rhythm tracks down at the first session. Then, I returned on my own the second time for guitar overdubs and vocals. At the third session, Todd and I put the finishing touches on the album. We then left Todd alone to finish the mixes and work his creative magic. We recorded all the guitars straight through a Peavey Classic 50 guitar amp and a Fender Deluxe Reverb in the back room of the studio with no effects. I received a Les Paul Supreme guitar last year on my birthday from my lovely wife and manager, Nancy. Most of the guitar parts are recorded with that guitar. It has a very special tone. I also used my Reverend guitars for all the slide work. I did use a Fender Stratocaster for the solo in ‘Last Train’. We also had the pleasure of working with wonderful singers like Lauren Evans and Paula and Pamela Mattioli.”

Tim “Too Slim” Langford, with his band the Taildraggers, have created an eclectic style of roots-rock, Americana and blues that has become a genre all its own. Too Slim's ever-evolving musical direction cannot be classified into any box or category. The eclectic nature of the band allows Too Slim and the Taildraggers to easily cross-over and appeal to audiences of various musical tastes.

Too Slim and the Taildraggers are headliners at theaters, festivals and concert stages. The band has shared the stage with the likes of Bo Diddley, Brian Setzer, Johnny Lang, .38 Special, Robert Cray, Otis Rush, Jeff Healey, Ted Nugent, Los Lobos, Lonnie Mack, Blue Oyster Cult, Heart, Travis Tritt, Junior Brown, Gatemouth Brown, Neil McCoy, Delbert McClinton, Blues Traveler, Steppenwolf, Johnny and Edgar Winter.

The band’s last CD *The Fortune Teller*, charted as high as #9 on the *Billboard* magazine Top Blues Album sales chart in 2007 and 2008. *The Fortune Teller* was also nominated for “Best Contemporary Blues Album” at the 2008 “Blues Blast Music Awards” in Chicago. This award-winning band has been voted “Best Regional Act” 11 times by the Cascade Blues Association, the largest organization of its kind in the USA. Too Slim and the Taildraggers have received multiple awards from various North West Reader’s polls and other North West blues societies for “Best Band” and “Best Album.” Founding member Langford has won multiple individual awards as “Best Guitarist,” “Best Slide Guitarist” and “Best Songwriter.” Too Slim and the Taildraggers are also in the Hall of Fame of three North West blues societies. Their devoted fan base has grown over the years into a national and international following.

As one reviewer explained the band, “experiencing a Too Slim and the Taildraggers concert is like taking a journey through the history of American music. Too Slim’s musical style ranges from down home blues, funky blues rock, Americana, southern swamp rock and instrumental guitar styles.”

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