

Bio information: **THE SPELLCASTERS**

Title: **MUSIC FROM THE ANACOSTIA DELTA** (Cuneiform Rune 445)

Format: CD / DIGITAL

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FILE UNDER: **ROCK / AMERICANA / JAZZ**

***MUSIC FROM THE ANACOSTIA DELTA* Sees
Five Incredible Musicians with Links to Washington, D.C
– Anthony Pirog, Joel Harrison, John Previti, Dave Chappell and Barry Hart –
Join Together As THE SPELLCASTERS to Pay Tribute to the Legendary D.C. Guitarists
DANNY GATTON and ROY BUCHANAN
Whose Unique Blending of Rock ‘N’ Roll, Hillbilly, Jazz and Country Music
Cast an Influential and Lasting Musical Spell Over the Ensemble**

It all started at the legendary Northern Virginia roadhouse JV's. D.C. born guitarists **Anthony Pirog** and **Joel Harrison**, musical soul mates, and now doing their first gig together, tore into a set of jazz-amped honkytonk songs before a stunned crowd. But two Telecasters wasn't enough. The bassist for the show, **John Previti**, who backed up guitar legend Danny Gatton for twenty years, had invited acclaimed local guitar slinger, **Dave Chappell**, to sit in. Soon *three* Telecasters were blazing away, exploring shared history and new frontiers. **The Spellcasters** were born.

The Spellcasters specialize in music made by and for that unique and marvelous American invention, the Fender Telecaster. **Two "Telly" masters who have particularly inspired the band are D.C. legends Danny Gatton and Roy Buchanan.** The repertoire includes Harrison's transcriptions of two of Danny's lesser known compositions, as well as covers from Danny's repertoire, "Harlem Nocturne" and "Rock Candy." The band also does "Sweet Dreams," a song that Roy Buchanan often played. As much as they celebrate these mentors, though, The Spellcasters have sought their own identity, which is a crossroads of styles that straddles the Mason-Dixon Line, where jazz, rockabilly, R&B, country, and rock 'n' roll are one. This is not so much a band of soloists as it is a guitar orchestra. It could be argued that The Anacostia Delta, comprising D.C., Southern Maryland, and Northern Virginia, has its own regional sound. If so, this group is devoted to exploring every corner.

There are tunes where each guitarist speaks his piece, and those where there is no soloing at all; rather, a contrapuntal weave where a listener might not know where one axe stops and the other begins. **Anthony Pirog** is the youngest member of the tribe, an avowed experimentalist, and yet an old soul with deep knowledge of tradition. He's part of the renowned duo **Janel and Anthony** as well as **The Messthetics**, which he co-leads with members of the punk group **Fugazi**. Anthony has a solo release, *Palo Colorado Dream*, on the Cuneiform label and he is a participant on the album *Five Times Surprise*, released by Cuneiform on the same day as The Spellcasters debut. **Dave Chappell** has played with countless D.C. musicians, and leads his own "take-no-prisoners" group that rocks, wails, and twangs all over town. He took lessons with Gatton in the early 80's and performed some with him. **Joel Harrison** is a fearless adventurer based in Brooklyn, NY with 20 albums of original music and genre-bashing covers under his name (including two previous releases on Cuneiform, *Holy Abyss* and *Mother Stump*). For him the Spellcasters is a road back to his roots. Harrison grew up in D.C. following Gatton around like a stray dog.

Anchoring all this is a rhythm section that defines an era. Bassist **John Previti** and drummer **Barry Hart** have intersected with a broad swath of D.C.'s finest since the 1970's. They've backed up Gatton, **Evan Johns**, **Rick Whitehead**, and members of **The Nighthawks**, toured together in Danny's group *Fun House* in the late 1980's. Their chops have been honed by thousands of gigs from the White House to The Crab Shack, from the Birchmere and Blues Alley to Bertha's Mussels.

The Spellcasters is very much a live band, and they built their chemistry over two years of gigs in the D.C. area. In that spirit six out of the eleven songs on the album were recorded in concert in Takoma, D.C.. at Rhizome. It's got a fun, loose vibe, but is also full of well-considered arrangements such as Harrison's close-voiced slant on Monk's *Bright Mississippi*, the lovely give and take on Bill Frisell's *That Was Then*, or the swinging chimes of Chappell's *Jax Boogie*. A 12 bar blues might fly off into the wild. Each guitarist contributes original compositions that are remarkably different, yet connected to the whole.

The Spellcasters' *Music from the Anacostia Delta* is a love letter to The Telecaster, and its greatest exponents, legacies Jimmy Bryant, Roy Nichols, Jerry Donahue, Buchanan and Gatton, Jeff Beck, Frisell, and beyond. The Spellcasters make those slabs of maple bark, burn, laugh and cry.

For more information on The Spellcasters:

<http://cuneiformrecords.com/bandshtml/thespellcasters.html>

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS

Please credit photographer: **Scott Friedlander**. Digital [High-Resolution] images available at:

<http://cuneiformrecords.com/bandshtml/thespellcasters.html>



RECORD RELEASE SHOWS

May 8 - The Bitter End - 147 Bleecker St, New York, NY 10012 [Album release show!]

May 9 - 49 West Coffehouse & Winebar - 49 West St., Annapolis, MD 21401 [Album release show!]

May 13 - Blues Alley - 1073 Wisconsin Avenue, Washington, DC [Album release show!]

May 14 - Keystone Korner - 1350 Lancaster St - Baltimore, MD [Album release show!]