

BLUES ROCK REVIEW



NEWS

The Fabulous Thunderbirds announce "Struck Down," release first single with Billy Gibbons

📅 May 3, 2024 👤 BRR Staff 💬 0 Comments 📌 Billy Gibbons, Fabulous Thunderbirds

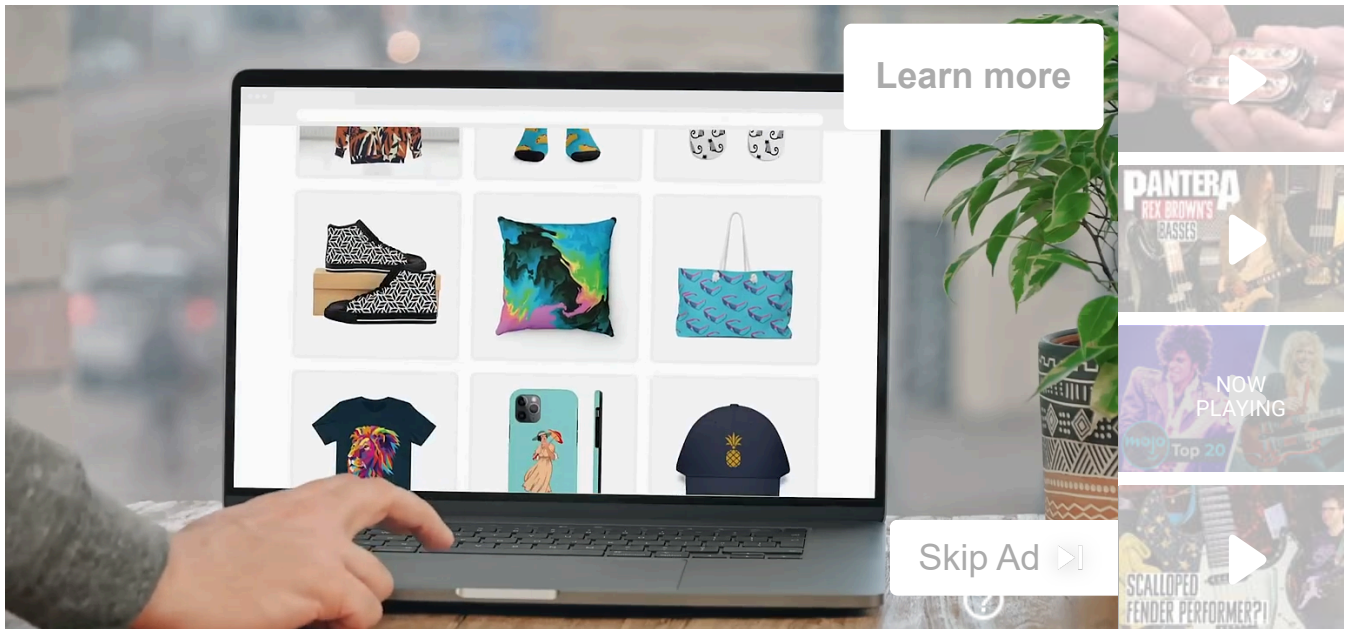
Stony Plain Records proudly announces the signing of legendary American band, The Fabulous Thunderbirds, who will celebrate their 50th anniversary with the release of their first studio album in eight years, *Struck Down*, on June 28th. The album's first single, "Payback Time," featuring Billy Gibbons, is out now.

The album features contributions from Elvin Bishop, Terrance Simien and Canadian blues guitar ace Steve Strongman, who co-wrote with Kim Wilson nine of the album's 10 tracks. The lone

cover song on the album is a scintillating take on Memphis Minnie's "Nothing in Rambling," featuring Bonnie Raitt, Keb' Mo', Taj Mahal and Mick Fleetwood.

Struck Down was produced by Kim Wilson, Steve Strongman and Glen Parrish; recorded in New Jersey and Hamilton, Ontario; and mixed by acclaimed recording engineer Shelly Yakus (John Lennon/U2/Tom Petty). In addition to the searing first single, "Payback Time," other standout tracks include the album's opener, "Struck Down By The Blues," featuring Steve Strongman on guitar; the Cajun-flavored "Don't Make No Sense," featuring Terrance Simien on accordion; "Watcha Do To Me," featuring guitar icon Elvin Bishop; and the wistful closing track, "Sideline."

FEATURED VIDEOS



The catalyst for the recording sessions happened when blues guitarist Steve Strongman hooked up with Kim Wilson on a trial basis to write some songs. Thunderbirds manager Glen Parrish had convinced an at-first hesitant Kim Wilson to give it a try by co-writing with Strongman, who flew down to California from Canada. As a songwriting team, they clicked immediately.

"In the first three days, we wrote five songs," recalled Wilson. *"He came back for another three days, and we wrote 12 songs. I would say there was chemistry there."* Together, Wilson and Strongman wrote 17 songs. They selected nine originals and one cover tune for **Struck Down**.

"Working with Kim Wilson and the Thunderbirds was a very organic process," added Steve Strongman. *"I snuck into a club to see Kim play with Mel Brown in Canada when I was 16 years old, so I have always held him in the highest regard. I could tell we had a mutual respect for each other after the initial writing sessions in California. The songs just seemed to flow naturally, we both had very open minds during the process, and there was great energy in the room while we wrote these songs. He is a true living legend, and it has been an incredible experience to co-write this record with Kim, and to produce this album with Kim and Glen Parrish."*

For the recording sessions, Wilson called a few friends. The first single, "Payback Time," features Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top on guitar and backing vocals. *"Billy is someone I talk to on a pretty regular basis,"* said Wilson. *"He is a dear friend, a great musician, and he knows how to make a record."* Regarding the great interplay on the track between Gibbons' guitar and Wilson's harmonica, Wilson said, *"It was really all him. Being the great musician that he is, he created that conversation."*

The cover of Memphis Minnie's "Nothing in Rambling" is overflowing with talent. *"All of these people I have the utmost respect for,"* said Wilson. *"Taj Mahal was one of my very first influences. He*

is one of the reasons I started playing the harmonica. Bonnie Raitt and I have always been very close. I love what she does. I love her voice. I love Keb's voice. And Mick was kind enough to put his performance on that track as well." "I love the material, the performances, and the sound of the album. It was mixed by Shelly Yakus and mastered by Greg Calbi and Steve Fallone. They are the very best there is."

When talking about the full-time members of the Thunderbirds, Wilson proclaimed, *"The strength of this band has inspired me to be more creative. This band really allows me to do anything I want to do: modern, traditional, anything in between. They are masters of it all. And as for what's next..." "I'm far from finished."*

Formed in 1974, The Fabulous Thunderbirds is a familiar name for anyone into contemporary blues and blues rock. This is the band that created classic albums like T-Bird Rhythm and Tuff Enuff, powered by hits like the title track and "Wrap It Up," Tuff Enuff went platinum, selling more than one million copies. Led by founding member Kim Wilson, The Fabulous Thunderbirds have been nominated for Grammy Awards six times and for Blues Music Awards more than 20 times.

The Fabulous Thunderbirds continue to tour internationally, selling out venues and headlining festivals with the current line-up of Kim Wilson on vocals and harmonica, Johnny Moeller on guitar, Bob Welsh on keyboards and guitar, Rudy Albin on drums and Steve Kirsty on bass.

Payback Time (ft. Billy Gibbons)



Struck Down Track Listing

1. Struck Down By The Blues (featuring Steve Strongman), 3:41
2. Don't Make No Sense (featuring Terrance Simien), 2:47
3. Payback Time (featuring Billy Gibbons), 3:35
4. Nothing in Rambling (featuring Bonnie Raitt, Keb' Mo', Taj Mahal & Mick Fleetwood), 3:55
5. Won't Give Up, 3:35
6. The Hard Way, 4:06
7. Whatcha Do To Me (featuring Elvin Bishop), 3:09

8. I've Got Eyes, 4:07

9. That's Cold, 2:18

10. Sideline, 4:03



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