

BOB CORRITORE BIO

Bob Corritore is one of the most active and highly regarded blues harmonica players on the scene today. His style passionately carries forward the old school of playing that Corritore learned as a young man directly from many of original pioneers of Chicago Blues. His sympathetic, yet fiery harmonica playing is featured on over 25 releases to date, on labels such as HighTone, HMG, Blue Witch, Blind Pig, Earwig, Putumayo, Random Chance, and the Vizztone Label Group. Many of these acclaimed releases have been nominated for various Handy, Grammy, and Blues Music Awards.

Bob is also widely recognized for his many roles in the blues, as band leader, club owner, record producer, radio show host, arts foundation founder, and occasional writer. His amazing website www.BobCorritore.com and his weekly e-newsletter reflect a life thoroughly invested in the blues.

Born on September 27, 1956 in Chicago, Bob first heard Muddy Waters on the radio at age 12, an event which changed his life forever. Within a year, he was playing harmonica and collecting blues albums. He would see blues shows in his early teens, including attending a Muddy Waters performance at his high school gymnasium. He would cut his teeth sitting in with John Henry Davis on Maxwell Street until he was old enough to sneak into blues clubs. He hung around great harp players such as Big Walter Horton, Little Mack Simmons, Louis Myers, Junior Wells, Big John Wrencher, and Carey Bell, and received harmonica tips and encouragement from many of them. He would regularly see the Aces, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Billy Boy Arnold, John Brim, Sunnyland Slim, Smokey Smothers, Eddie Taylor, and in many cases became personal friends with these blues veterans. Corritore worked with Tail Dragger, Big Moose Walker, Willie Buck, Louis and Dave Myers, and Eddie Taylor in the late 70s and early 80s. He also produced his first recordings during that time, taking unheralded harmonica greats such as Little Willie Anderson and Big Leon Brooks into the studio to produce their now classic debut albums. In 1981, Bob ventured southwest to live in Phoenix, Arizona. Within months, his Chicagoland friend Louisiana Red joined Bob, and the two played together around Phoenix for about a year until Red went to live in Germany. Bob quickly joined up with Big Pete Pearson, who was and is the reigning King of Arizona Blues in a musical relationship that continues to this day. He also worked around the southwest with Buddy Reed, Tommy Dukes, Chief Schabuttie Gilliame, and an emerging Janiva Magness in one of her earliest bands. In 1984, Bob supplemented his performances with a blues radio show called Those Lowdown Blues on KJZZ, which is still going strong. In 1986, former Howlin' Wolf drummer Chico Chism moved to Phoenix at Bob's invitation to start a 20 year partnership that lasted until Chico's passing in 2007. In 1991, Bob opened the now famous Blues and Roots Concert Club, The Rhythm Room. Having a club created yet another catalyst for Bob's musical projects. Often he would invite great artists to come to Phoenix, and Bob's band, the Rhythm Room All-Stars would back them on shows and in recording sessions. Bob's archives of these sessions are now famous, and include sessions with Bo Diddley, Little Milton, John Brim, Jimmy Rogers, Henry Gray, Pinetop Perkins, Henry Townsend, Honeyboy Edwards, Big Jack Johnson, Ike Turner, Smokey Wilson, Lil' Ed, Willie "Big Eyes" Smith, Nappy Brown, R.L. Burnside, Robert Lockwood, Jr., Sam Lay, Barbara Lynn, and numerous others. In 1999, Bob released his first CD as a national recording artist, combining some of the highlights of his vaults. The CD was called All-Star Blues Sessions, and was released on the HighTone record label to great fanfare. This momentum created a long series of CDs on HighTone with Bob in the harmonica player/producer role. Bob started breaking into the national circuit in festival appearances with Henry Gray and Louisiana Red. In 2005, Bob brought the Rhythm Room All-Stars Featuring Big Pete Pearson to The Marco Fiume Blues Passions Festival in Italy, which opened a whole new world of European interest in Bob's harmonica artistry. This led to return visits to Europe for various festivals and performances, as well as an ever-growing world-wide fan base. In 2007, the Mayor of Phoenix officially proclaimed September 29, 2007 to be "Bob Corritore Day" in honor of Bob's musical contributions to his community. Also that year, Bob received a "Keeping The Blues Alive" award from the Blues Foundation. Bob's 2007 collaboration with Dave Riley, Travelin' The Dirt Road, was nominated for a Blues Music Award. Bob also contributed harmonica work on the 2008 Grammy®-nominated CD/DVD by Pinetop Perkins, On The 88s. Bob's prolific activity with the Blue Witch record label as label producer/harmonica player has garnered him additional notoriety. Bob performs regularly with The Rhythm Room All-Stars Featuring Big Pete Pearson, and numerous side projects with Dave Riley, Louisiana Red, Henry Gray, Sam Lay, Tomcat Courtney, Paris James, and others.

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