

Why Rhythm and Blues?

Why Rhythm and Blues and Rhode Island? That's a good question, and it deserves a good answer. First, they make a great pair. Rhode Island, the final stop on the Rhythm and Blues circuit during the era of the most influential blues style music, is a great place, and Rhythm and Blues great music. Rhode Island introduced freedom of religion to the world, and that alone makes us stand out. We also held out until the bill of rights was added to our Constitution and that ain't too shabby either. Rhythm and Blues introduce indigenous black music, first to the United States of America and then to the rest of the world. That ain't too shabby. Rhythm and Blues and Rhode Island are a good match. They are little things that made a big difference.

The human spirit yearns for freedom. It yearns to believe or not believe and wants the freedom to practice that. Rhode Island played more than a little part in allowing that hope to bloom on the planet. Everybody, everywhere, loves to dance. Rhythm and Blues taught us all how to feel the music and dance to it together. Everybody, everywhere, know how to boogie, or shake their booties... At least everywhere that the music is allowed to thrive. Freedom is a little like that, too it will thrive everywhere that it is allowed. If either the music or freedom doesn't thrive, it ain't Rhode Island's fault; because we take full advantage of both.

Rhode Island's diverse population speaks for itself. We came here because we chose to live here. The fact is we love living here. Rhode Island's propensity to perform and experience live Rhythm and Blues speaks for itself, too. We do it because we want to do it. The truth is we love it.

Chan's, Home Of Eggrolls, Jazz and Blues is one of Rhode Island's favorite eating places. Mr. Chan, however, opens it up two or three times a week and invites us in to listen to fine music highly influence by Rhythm and Blues infusion. We listen as we also enjoy fine dining. This restaurant, in little old Woonsocket Rhode Island, was canonized by the Blues Foundation as one of the best music hot spots on earth. All of this can be attributed to the owner's Mr. John Chan, fine taste. He has a stable of fine performers and every week he showcases them for us here in Rhode Island. It is altogether a wonderful experience for us, Rhode Islanders. Everybody who hangs out with John Chan is going to have a good time, and that is why we all hang out with him... All the time.

Paul, Sweet pea, Williams is, without a doubt, one of Rhode Island's finest. He is also one of Rhode Island's busiest. He is a true traveling-man; and, if you sit still, he will stop by wherever you are at some point. He brings with him the Sweet pea blues band, a delightful bunch, who know how to make beautiful sounds. Sweet pea, an original member of the Rhode Island Rhythm And Blues Preservation Hall Band, has a host of hip Rhode Islanders following him around; and, once you hear him, you may want to join that crowd. He probably won't mind.

What about Westerly? Westerly has the Knickerbocker, a class a venue for Rhythm and Blues. The Knickerbocker, for decades has been a prime venue for the music and the home of what might be called the Westerly sound. That is, of course, the magnificent Room Full of Blues and everything else that grew out of that. The Knickerbocker has served Rhode Island well, and I'm sure it will continue to do that.

She has a silk voice; she has a mellow voice, or a sultry bedroom-voice. She is none other than Ms. Tish Adams, Rhode Island's designated jazz ballad singer. What a fine job she does with that, too. One can also hear her intoxicating voice as she DJs on the University of Rhode Island's WRIU. She is classy, sophisticated and refined. She fits perfectly within the legacy of America's classy women jazz singers. Ms. Tish has another side, however. She loves and embraces the heart of rhythm in her style, too; and she knows how to deliver the classic feeling of soul when she feels like it. On some nights when the moon is full, Ms. Tish and four of five of Rhode Island's finest musicians get together and morph into a groovy group called Bluz You Can Use, and then proceeds to rock the night away. They love to make people feel the music and dance to it. You don't want to miss Ms. Tish as they transforms the classy sophisticated lady into a sweet rocking mama. They know exactly what to do with Rhythm and Blues and sweet soul sounds.

Many Rhode Island's rely on the Narragansett Café In Jamestown to get there fix of the popular music influenced by Rhythm and Blues, and the Narragansett Cafe does fine job of providing it for them, too. It is indeed an area institution. It is a cozy place with good vibes; and on weekends, they provide sweet soul sounds for its Rhode Island clientele. That's what they're supposed to do, and they do it well.

Jan Schmidt, a little lady with a big, big voice and a blazing delivery. You can find her at the 133 Club, the Hometown Tavern, and other Rhode Island venues. Many of our local venues. Caution is advised when you check out this lady. You may find some of her audience carrying fire extinguishers. They do that because sometimes, when she gets a little carried away and really fires up that big, big voice, things spontaneously combust. Sometimes, it's even members of her audience. Everything does not catch fire, however, somethings just melt. Jan knows how to provide Rhode Island with her share of its allotment of Rhythm and Blues, and she does it with plenty of style and energy. Jan loves the music, and the music loves her back. It is a relationship made in heaven.

The Pub on Park Avenue is one of the places that Rhode Islanders go to dance or watch other people dance. It is one of the friendliest places on earth. Everybody has a good time there, and everybody is also welcome there. The music is ably provided by the Vintage Rhythm and Blues Ensemble and distinguished guests are also routinely on the bill. This is one of the best examples of how Rhode Islanders provide, for themselves, high-quality cultural experiences; and this one is augmented by some of the best Rhythm and Blues this area has to offer.

The Rhode Island Rhythm And Blues Preservation Hall Band is the real deal. The members of this group are vintage players who were around when Rhythm and Blues was young. We have preserved them with our own special secret concoction, all for the pleasure of Rhode Islanders. They were here when it began and they haven't forgotten anything. You can catch us touring our local libraries and community centers. You can also hear us at local Rhythm and Blues festivals. This group is full of wonderful music and also great tales of their experiences growing up playing the music. They are a warm, friendly bunch who are full of wonderful anecdotes and happy to talk to people who are interested in the history of their music.

This is a list of just a few of the people and places that satisfied the cravings that Rhode Islanders have for Rhythm and Blues music or popular music infused with the good feelings of the Rhythm and Blues

sound. Rhode Island is the little state that could. We have a reputation for serving up great food and great music all touched and seasoned by Rhode Island's heart and soul. It can get a little habit-forming But, **That's the Way, Uh Huh; We like It, Uh Huh.**

Who are we? In short. Rhode Island Rhythm And Blues Preservation Society is a cool group of people who celebrate and preserve Rhythm And Blues and its history. Like other Rhode Island nonprofits, we cherish the best in our state and do our best to see that others get a chance to experience it. One of our projects that helps others directly is our Instruments for Children Program. We supply musical instruments for schoolchildren who want to participate in school music programs but don't have the financial resources to buy the instruments. This program came into being at the birth of the organization and has been going strong since then. We have witnessed the success of this program when we see the accomplishments of the students on these instruments. It is an axiom somewhere that says whoever works with children is doing God's work.

Cleveland Kurtz

President,

Rhode Island Rhythm & Blues Preservation Society

Personal Note:

The light bulb, the telephone, the assembly line, recorded music, are all American creations of which we can proud. The whole world is a better place because of our creations. Rhythm and blues fits in that category, too. It is American born and breed, and every time we celebrate it, we celebrate ourselves. It has brought some portion of harmony to the world. It makes us sing and dance.

Calamari, our state dish, and Rhythm and Blues go to gather perfectly. I found this out on a Sunday evening at the 133 club in East Providence. As I listened to their band cook up wonderful sounds, I ordered from the kitchen, Calamari. The wonderful music and the wonderful Dish made a wonderful evening. I recommend it. Every Rhode Islander should try it. It's the way our founding fathers meant for it ti be.

<https://bluespreservationsociety.org/>