

RICCARDO GROSSO BLUES BAND

If you think about them as the regular Blues combo, you would be really really wrong.

[UPDATE: JUNE 2018]

The story of Riccardo Grosso Blues Band – four-piece combo coming from Treviso near Venice, Italy – is somewhat strange. It did not started as it is and did not aim to nothing but just play some Blues with a twist, just to pretend to be a little different.

This approach took them in the uncharted territory of the Blues music kicking them back to the Electric Blues refreshed and renewed.

All goes back when Riccardo Grosso, lead man, singer and harmonica ace of the band started to listen to the Blues music before he could even say “mom” and fallen in love with the burning sound of electrified Blues harmonica at age of 16.

This was before the internet era and – luckily – the selection of music was not that wide: Riccardo could only try to listen over and over to the same albums and artists until he digested and memorized those sounds so deep down in his brain to become some kind of natural music to him.



He dropped everything he was doing, lost all attention to living his teenage life, and dived into the 10-hole instrument world and started to digging into the Blues music, discovering James Cotton, then Sonny Boy Williamson II, Junior Wells, then Paul Butterfield, and a lot more about harmonica arriving to Charlie Musselwhite.

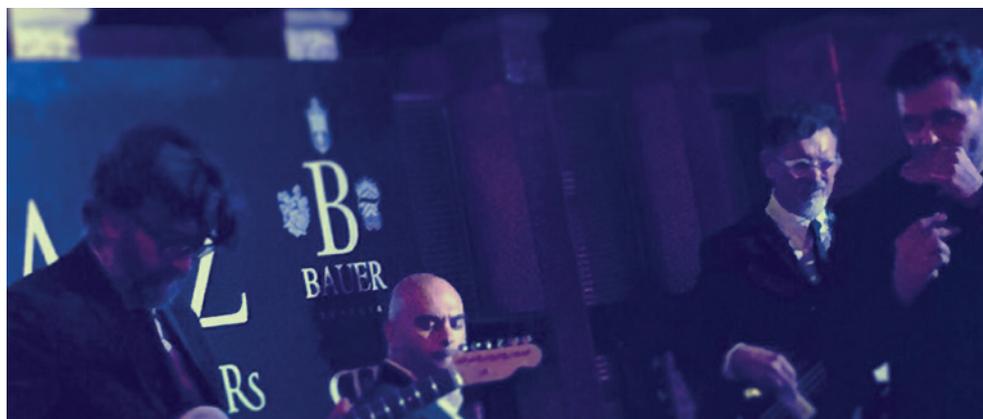
Riccardo met Charlie Musselwhite and spent some time at his home in California, espousing the idea of playing harmonica more as an instrument than a Blues instrument. To explore better this idea, Grosso then moved to New Orleans where he tried to learn as deep as he could all the Funk, Blues, New Orleans Jazz sounds and horn approach and tried to merge that into his way of playing, while performing with Jumpin’ Johnny Sansone and with a band there.

In the meantime an early form of this band was born: a five piece group.

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The new born quintet (with keyboards and called RGBand until recently), played what could be defined as “Latin Blues” – at the beginning they took all that music sounds between Jazz, Blues and Latin Music (we call it Boogaloo) and translated that into a Blues environment, experimenting on new sounds.

Since the beginning, they did not want to sound like their favorite albums or blues band, preferring to be a tight band instead and performing the Blues they love with the sounds they liked.



A big part in the band’s only glue, the groove, was and still is bass player **Massimo Fantinelli**. Among being one of the first bass player in Italy, performing with Guido Toffoletti’s Blues Society and with Alexis Korner, Dick Heckstall-Smith, Paul Jones (recording the double album “Live in Naples”, 1980), Massimo shows a smart approach to the bass lines. He brings up a tight, solid, minimal and mature bass groove suiting every tune and bringing in a little more style to fit the band’s direction.

Becoming around 2013 a four-piece combo due to the leaving of Giorgio Frè the keyboardist, the band had to change its balance and carve a new sound.

Now the harmonica became more prominent, the vocals mature and the band is exploring a new path: the original songs.

While loving to arrange the Blues classics and some obscure gems, the quartet published the first album with just two cover songs in it.

First one the Brazilian Blues “Feel It In Your Heart” by Charlie Musselwhite (this is the tune that started the band’s interest for new territories where Blues can be found).

Second “The Tiki Bar Is Open” by the songwriter John Hiatt – an homage by a genius musician loved by the band and to the area where this band comes from, known as one of the most drinking area of the State.

Nine tunes were original songs about love from a sinner (“Dog me Down”), a liar lover (“Walk Away From Me”), natural disasters (“High Water”), late night partying (“Bunch of Stuff”), useless talking (“Just Your Breath”).

A different lyrical style than the usual “woke up this morning”, that is for sure. Moreover, a willing to experiment with unusual grooves for the Blues music.

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Both the new album and the following live one got reviews and air playing all over the world and the band started to play abroad with their new sound. Since 2016 there is **Andrea D'Ostuni** (touring Italy with Jason Ricci) sitting at the drums enhancing the band style and controlled powerful drive.

Only recently the band acquired a new guitar player: Enrico Crivellaro (top world touring guitarist playing with James Harman, Lestler Butler or Jason Ricci, to name very few)

What keeps this band interesting is they are dynamic. They are not that kind of band keeping on pushing the same old sound. They better like to push to evolve their sound and sharpen music atmospheres – developing while resonating – in the Blues music field.

FEATURED:

Basel Summer Blues (Basel, Switzerland)
Bellinzona Blues Sessions (Bellinzona, Switzerland)
Harmonica Bridge Festival (Torùn, Poland)
Out Of The Blue's (Samedan, Switzerland)
Bitonto Blues Festival (Bitonto, Italy)
Chablues Festival (Monthey, Switzerland)
Opatija Riviera Blues Festival (Opatija, Croatia)
Suoni Di Marca (Treviso, Italy)
Festa D'Estate (Vascon, Italy) – Lorenzo Vecchiato prize
Jazz At The Bauer's (Venice, Italy)
Jazz Club Rorscharch (Rorscharch, Switzerland)

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LINE UP:

Riccardo Grosso – vocals & harmonica
Enrico Crivellaro – guitar
Massimo Fantinelli – bass
Andrea D'Ostuni – drums

QUOTES:

“That's Tremendous!”
Charlie Musselwhite

“An outstanding success!”
Wasser Prawda (DE)

“What Grosso does here
on harmonica is top!”
Eric Schuurmans, Roots Time (BE)

“The band produce a fantastic almost
psychedelic atmosphere”
Podziel Sie, Blues Online (PL)

“The Italian quartet is one of the major
international groups”
Fred Delforge, Zicazin (FR)

“A band expressing at best on stage!”
Soulbag (FR)

