

Online Wednesday, August 06, 2008

The Newport Daily News

(401) 849-3300

Newport, Rhode Island - America's First Resort



ARCHIVES

Neville Brothers have it covered at Blues Cafe

By James J. Gillis
Daily News staff



The Neville Brothers from New Orleans perform Tuesday at The Newport Blues Cafe. (David Hansen/Daily News staff)

essentially are the country's greatest cover band.

No matter the song, they create their own gumbo of funk, soul, reggae and a few hints of jazz. They opened with "Fiyo on the Bayou" and blasted through song after song, little time for chitchat.

Aaron and Cyril handle most of the vocals and also play percussion — it felt as if they all played percussion at some points — while Charles plays sax and Art handles keyboards.

A group of four non-Nevilles is there to bolster the sound.

There is no band that could manufacture anything like this. It comes from the Nevilles' New Orleans heritage and years of perfecting rhythms as tight as rusted lug nuts.

The night was packed with surprises. The Neville Brothers took the played out Steve Miller tune "Fly Like An Eagle" and funkied it up by melding into War's "Slipping Into Darkness."

Aaron looks like a retired middle linebacker for the Saints, but sings in a shimmering vibrato that could melt ice blocks. The group took Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine" and zigzagged into reggae. It tossed some funk into '70s soul hit "Everybody Plays the Fool" by Main Ingredient. The band honored the traditions of old masters like Professor Longhair with "Iko Iko" and "Mardi Gras In New Orleans."

Newport blues singer James Montgomery is friendly with the Nevilles and chatted with them before the show. "They're a major influence on American music from that part of the country," Montgomery said. "I'd include them along with Allen Toussaint and James Booker. They're the real deal."

The real deal kept the dance floor — actually just about ever square foot of the club — packed, with long workouts through "Yellow Moon" and "Jambalaya." Aaron hushed the crowd with his 1966 hit "Tell It Like It Is" with the audience chiming in on the chorus.

NEWPORT — The Neville Brothers took the Newport Blues Cafe stage Tuesday night and never let up for an hour and 45 minutes.

The tiny club holds 355 people, and they packed the house, getting up close and personal with one of America's great bands. Countless people were turned away at the door — the show sold out on Monday — and a few danced on the sidewalk anyway.

The Nevilles — Aaron, Art, Cyril and Charles —



By the time the night ended, the Nevilles held the crowd in sway with Bob Marley's "One Love/People Get Ready," a song played by thousands of bar bands across the country.

A cliché? Nah. The Neville Brothers added juice to it and freshened it up.

New Orleans came to Newport Tuesday on a perfect summer night, providing a terrific bridge between the Newport Folk Festival and this weekend's JVC Jazz Festival-Newport.

If you missed the show, get ready. Your friends who went aren't going to shut up about it anytime soon.

Send reporter James J. Gillis e-mail at Gillis@NewportRI.com.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of newportdailynews.com.

bob mc wrote on Aug 6, 2008 9:35 PM:

" i move . Newport gets jimmy buffett and the Neville bros. im mad. wish i was there. . "

Jennifer C wrote on Aug 8, 2008 6:09 PM:

" I'm with bob mc (above) - relocated to Utah in late April and am soooo bummed after seeing the great Folk and Jazz Fest line-ups this year. To now hear that the Neville Bros. played the Blues Cafe just adds a little salt to the wound. Bigtime bummer as I'm sure it must've been great. "

Submit a Comment

We encourage your feedback and dialog, all comments will be reviewed by our Web staff before appearing on the Web site.

Name:

Email:

(optional)

Comments:

Image Verification:



[Subscribe](#) | [Buy Back Issues](#) | [Email this story](#) | [Print this story](#) | [Return to general interest index](#)

[[Home](#)] [[Local News](#)] [[Sports](#)] [[Obituaries](#)] [[Editorial](#)] [[Election](#)] [[Subscribe](#)]
 [[Classifieds](#)] [[Place an Ad](#)] [[Back Issues](#)] [[Real Estate Map](#)] [[About Us](#)] [[Contact Us](#)]
 [[Finance News](#)] [[Health](#)]

© 2001 - 2009. The Newport Daily News. All Rights Reserved.