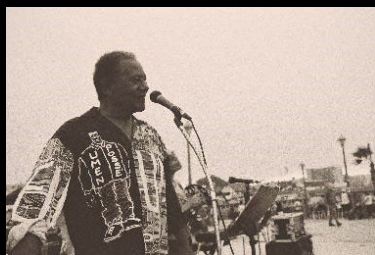


THE MESCAL SHEIKS

A CALIFORNIA SOUTHERN R&B BAND

WITH A MEXICAN ARABIC NAME.

BUT IT GETS WEIRDER THAN THAT. . .



Clabe Hangan



Dean Sterling



Rick Solem



Rick Smith

ALTERNATIVE R&B WITH A MEMPHIS TWIST AND A NEW ORLEANS SHAKE

The Mescal Sheiks are Los Angeles-based musicians and songwriters who first collaborated on various Hangan Brothers projects. Now, drawing collectively from their culturally diverse backgrounds, they have combined a unique blend of ingredients to create their own dynamic gumbo -- sometimes greasy, often funky, inevitably rootsy, and always soulful!

Band member Rick Smith recalls his journey with the band. "For me, it started at the San Bernardino District Attorney's office (don't ask) in 1997. I ran into songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and producer, Jim Shirey, who asked if I was free to drop by his studio that week to play a little harmonica behind a guy named Clabe Hangan, an Arkansas native who had been a big voice in the Civil Rights Movement." Everyone playing in the session had that tingle, knowing that something special was happening inside this unique collaboration. It was the traditional Blues roots material I had always loved. The Mutionic Singers came in to help with vocals on "Just a Closer Walk" and "Motherless Child;" those tracks still bring tears to my eyes. I remember thinking, if I never made another record, I could die happy. In 1998, as The Hangan Brothers, we released *Life Is a Hard Blues*."

The band was gaining momentum, playing gigs throughout Southern California, and selling well. "We decided to do another CD; this time writing most of the material. *Mars Market* came out in 2000.

After *Mars Market*, Shirey went on to other projects and Chicago songwriter and guitarist Dean Sterling joined the band. He also took on the role of manager. "Sterling found Rick Solem, a veteran of Dave Alvin's band and brought him in on keyboards. Solem moved into the role of musical director. It was decided, with Clabe's approval, to change the name of the band to The Mescal Sheiks. We started writing the next record." This *World is Not My Home*, under the name The Mescal Sheiks, was released in 2006.

The band kept getting gigs and one night, at The Mint in Los Angeles, Phil Bloch was on the drums. With the addition of Bloch to the mix, the Sheiks seemed to be on the ascendant. Then the unthinkable happened. Clabe Hangan, the heart and soul of the band and its lead singer, died suddenly of a stroke in 2006, shortly after the release of *This World is Not My Home*. Then death also came to call Dean Sterling a short time later.

How could The Mescal Sheiks possibly recover from so much loss? Well, it took some time, but with heart and passion and will, recording the new album, *Blind Man's Trick* breathed life into the band again. As Phil Bloch noted, "Rick Solem stepped up to handle the lead vocals and no less a Master than Mississippi Magic Terry Evans listened to early mixes and said, "Well, you know, I couldn't really do any better my own self, it'd just be a different voice. Rick's got the feeling of these songs in him and that's the key. It feels right to me." Evans, who contributed vocals, also departed for the Great Beyond before the project was complete.

Fortunately, early in the recording of *Blind Man's Trick*, Clabe Hangan, Dean Sterling, and Terry Evans's voices were captured before each succumbed, and they still have a presence, their voices ghosting into the new record.

As Smith says about his lost friends, "The truth is, even though they're not here, they are. And that's for all down the line. Now, knowing that these songs have come to life, watching them take on breath and a heartbeat, only reminds us to keep moving to the next..."

Finally, after so many moons and too many fellow travelers catching that morning train, some of those musical treasures are seeing the light of day."

Blind Man's Trick was released on December 28, 2022.

FOR INTERVIEWS, CONTACT: SHANNON WRAY

(909)794-6366

EMAIL: THEMESCALSHEIKSBAND@GMAIL.COM

WEBSITE: THEMESCALSHEIKS.COM

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--

ALBUMS

THE MESCAL SHEIKS

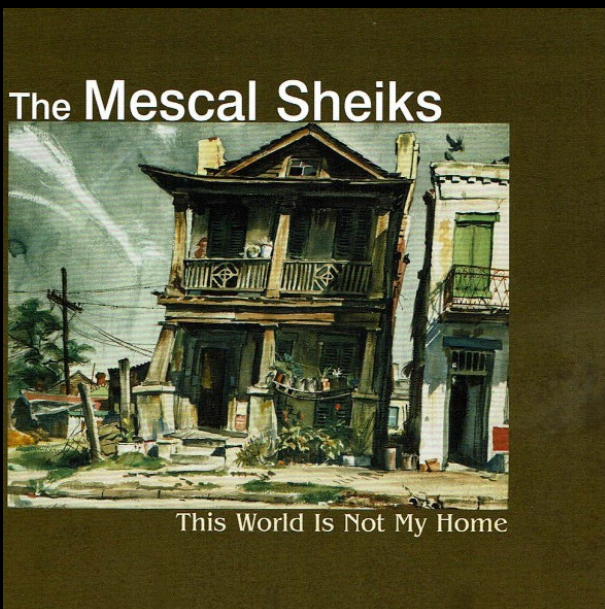
LISTEN TO THE ALBUM



BLIND MAN'S TRICK

Medicine Man
Day to Day
You Bought the Ticket
Blind Man's Trick
Parked on Pizarro
Small Rain

LISTEN TO THE ALBUM



THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME

How Long
It Doesn't Really Matter
Got to Have Me Two
Better Get Ta Steppin'
Fool For You
Honey the Night is Young
Live From the Gates of Hell
Walking to the River
Baby Whatcha Do
Sugar Hoodoo
Looking Out 4 #1
Healin' Love
This World Is Not My Home

Available at



Spotify

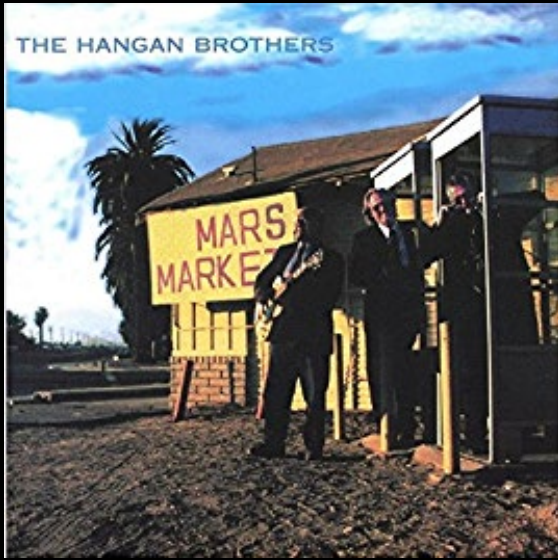
pandora



YouTube

THE HANGAN BROTHERS

LISTEN TO THE ALBUM



MARS MARKET

Slippery Road
Blues for Christmas
Jive-7
Mercy (Might Not Be Enough)
Muddy and the Devil
Don't Take It Personally
Mr. Conductor
I Love the Rain
Cakewalk
Shaded Green Pastures
Asphalt is My Birthstone

The Hangan Brothers

Formed in 1995 as an extension of a 30-year musical relationship between band members Clabe Hangan and Jim Shirey, the critically acclaimed Hangan Brothers were 'thusly named because they worked as a unit, each supporting each other, coaxing the best Blues out of the group as a whole.' Singer-guitarist Clabe Hangan, has been described as 'possibly the best unheralded Blues singer of this generation.' Influenced by Leadbelly and Big Bill Broonzy, he spent the early 60's absorbing everything he could from that generation. Eventually he became a cultural music educator, as well as a solo performer and recording artist. Multi-instrumentalist (keyboards/violin/guitar) Jim Shirey is a veteran session musician and producer, with the O'Connor Band's Grammy-winning "Coming Home" among his many credits. Harmonica/percussionist/lyricist Rick Smith learned his craft in Greenwich Village in the 60's, relocating to Los Angeles working with Big Joe Williams, Van Dyke Parks, and adding his talent to such movies as the soundtrack for the Academy Award-winning 'Days of Heaven.' With the release in 2001 of 'Mars Market' (their second CD) they became a seven-piece band, performing their mix of 'straight Chicago with swing, classy slow blues, zydeco and jazzy standards.'"

Available at

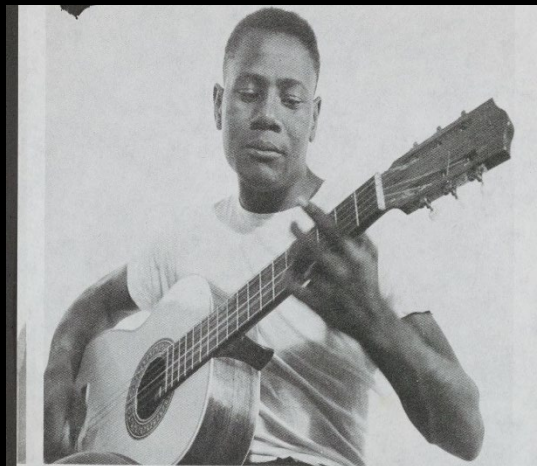


Praise for Clabe Hangan



Clabe Hangan, “the veteran, Arkie-reared songster employs an old-school, country-blues method that recalls such bad studs of yore as Brownie McGhee and Big Bill Broonzy. Like those gents, Hangan seasons his tuff but folksy music and storytelling with a most dignified style and intellect; this is a guy who knows and loves the Blues' history, legacy and societal import as much as he loves the music itself. Hangan's presentation, on the other hand, reminded me of Muddy Waters' legendary performance at the Newport Jazz Fest in 1960 . . . When the spirit moved him just right, Hangan, like Waters, became giddily animated, clearly in the throes of some marvelous rapture that

seemed almost religious in nature. He quaked and quivered, whooped and hollered, trembled and gesticulated, stomped and danced; I half expected him to start speaking in tongues. What Hangan does is tread a fine line between Blues primitivism and collegiate sophistication. For all his earthy, down-home musical charm, Hangan is also a professor (he taught humanities and folk arts in the University of California and Cal State University systems) and a minister, and he has served as a youth probation officer. Hangan is a humble old fella, too; he bills his band as the Hangan Brothers even though he's clearly the star of the show and none of his band mates are actually siblings.” - OC WEEKLY



Clabe Hangan

An ethnic folk artist with a penetrating individual style — his rich baritone voice expresses power, and communicates honest emotion with remarkable strength. Through his sensitive interpretations he provides audiences with a greater understanding of the historical and social value of our folk tradition. Spontaneous sincerity is strikingly evident whether he is singing blues, ballads . . . or blue grass.

PRAISE FOR THE MESCAL SHEIKS

This World is Not My Home

“This one fine, sophisticated and unique hybrid of influences makes this one album not to be ignored. The Mescal Sheiks is made up of a group of musicians and songwriters based in Los Angeles, who first collaborated on various Hangan Brothers projects. Though California they are, not all started out in the Golden State. Points of origin for the diverse crew, made up of Clabe Hangan (on vocals), Rick Solem (on keyboards and vocals), Rick Smith (on harmonica) and Dean Sterling (on guitar and vocals) vary widely, and include New York, Chicago, and Arkansas. All this makes for some powerful and impressive crosscurrents of which they exploit to the hilt. Like a bowl of fruit tossed into a blender, the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Musically, that same principal equals inventiveness, risk-taking and things that are new. The depth of talent on this project is further expanded by bass player Michael Barry, drummer Albert Trepagnier, Jr., guitarist Billy Watts, backing vocalist Elizabeth Hangan, percussionist Billy Sullivan, and the gold standard duo among all horn sections these days, the Texacali Horns- made up of Joe Sublett on tenor sax and Darrell Leonard on trumpet (known for their distinguished work as members of the Phantom Blues Band). Maybe it's the weather, or something else, but there is something unique about a city that can spawn outfits like War and Los Lobos. There is something about both the Hangan Brothers, and now The Mescal Sheiks, that comes from that same fertile soil. This is American music all the way, and it draws life from any number of influences, not the least of which is the Blues. Thirteen tunes. Highly recommended.

George P. Seedorff - Big City Blues Magazine (Apr 15, 2006)

“This group is related to the Hangan Brothers, who we reviewed sometime back there. Clabe Hangan is the singer, and Rick Smith is playing harmonica, but the other musicians are different, and this CD is more of a Soul/Blues/R&B effort where the earlier title was kinda Country Blues. Clabe's [daughter] Elizabeth also sings, giving a Staples Singers feel to some tracks. While the group is listed a 4 piece (keyboards, harmonica, guitar and vocals), extra help is provided by the Texacali Horns and rhythm section players. "Got To Have Me Two" has a nice funky down-home feel. Keyboard player Rick Solem also does some of the singing, as on "Better Get Ta Steppin" with a nice two beat feel. All the tunes are original to the group, with Solem having his hands on most, and guitarist Dean Sterling also having a hand in 9 of the 13 tunes. Harmonica player Rick Smith and Hangan also are involved in the writing. "Fool For You" has a Taj Mahal ("She Caught The Katy") feel. "Honey The Night Is Young" is a nice lazy shuffle. "Walking To The River" returns to that Gospel feel as does the title song. I like the organ on "Baby Whatcha Do" and "Sugar Hoodoo" has that second line feel and may be my favorite track."

Marc Bristol - Blue Suede News Summer 2006 Issue #75