

Paul Asbell



From his early years, playing blues on Chicago's South Side, to his present multi-faceted career based out of northern Vermont, Paul has earned an underground reputation as a true "musician's musician". He has played and recorded with **Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Howlin' Wolf, Lightnin' Hopkins, Otis Rush, Magic Sam, Earl Hooker, Lightnin' Slim, Paul Butterfield, Sam Lay, Pops Staples, Donny Hathaway**, and numerous others while in his hometown of Chicago, Ill.

Paul moved to Vermont in the heady "back-to-the-land" days of 1971, where he still lives. He soon started playing with a head-spinningly diverse array of artists, including **Big Mama Thornton**, singer-songwriters **Paul Siebel, Jim Ringer, Mary McCaslin**, and **Rosalie Sorrells**, jazz greats **Jon Hendricks, Bobby McFerrin, Sonny Stitt**, and **Nick Brignola**, and many others. In 1978, seeking an outlet for more personal musical visions, he formed **Kilimanjaro**, and recorded 2 award-winning albums for **Philo Records** which led to several appearances at the **Kool Jazz Festival** at SPAC, the **Atlanta Jazz Festival**, the **Montreal Jazz Festival**, the **Montreux Jazz Festival** in Switzerland, the **Roskilde Festival** in Copenhagen, and numerous national tours and concert dates.

In 1981, he and other members of Kilimanjaro joined forces with a legendary saxophonist/blues singer to form **Big Joe Burrell and the Unknown Blues Band**, which remained a Northeast regional favorite until Big Joe's passing in 2005.

Performance/recording credits in recent years include **David Bromberg, Paul Butterfield, Betty Carter, Joshua Redman, James Carter, Kermit Ruffins, Michael Ray**, the **Sun Ra Arkestra**, **The Wild Magnolias, John Stowell**, guitar wunderkind **Julian Lage**, and ex-student **Trey Anastasio**.

He has also taught guitar for over 40 years. Private instruction remains a favored format, but Paul has also taught for many years on a university level, including positions at **Dartmouth College, Skidmore College, St. Michaels College, Johnson State College**, and presently at **Middlebury College** and the **University of Vermont**.

Since 1994, Paul has been reconnecting with his original folk-based roots in enthusiastically received festival shows and solo concerts. Recent appearances include **Healdsburg, Woodstock (NY)** and **Newport Guitar Festivals, MerleFest**, and numerous acoustic venues across the country. His 2 solo acoustic CDs, "**Steel-String Americana**" and "**Roots and Branches**", received rave reviews in **Acoustic Guitar, Guitar Player, Sing Out, Downbeat, Blues Revue**, and other mags for their highly individualized twists on blues and jazz standards, old-timey country-based themes and original pieces from the "american roots" tradition. The **Flynn Theatre** called them "A genre-blurring, virtuosic waltz through the deep heritage of American folklore, where styles of Robert Johnson, Doc Watson and Dr. John rub elbows with those of Joe Pass and Bill Frisell."

Notable recent projects include the release of his 3rd solo CD, "**From Adamant To Atchafalaya**", an award-winning CD "**Homecoming**" with jazz-fusion group **Kilimanjaro**, and a feature article in the April, 2010 issue of **Acoustic Guitar** magazine.