Audio Log: mj_interview_caldwell_david_audiolog

Interviewee: David Caldwell

Audio Log created by William Harris

00:00-09:32

- Introduction, owner of Aikei Pro’s Record Store, he feels that the music is distinct because the artists were uneducated, learned the music by ear, and that the music is also played in a four beat style. He also says that during the days of slavery, the slaves would use music to communicate between each other.
- He believes the fife and drum bands were another means of communication and that it came from Africa, and that they would try to imitate sounds that they heard in everyday life. Caldwell thinks that because most of the people who came to North Mississippi came from Africa, and that is why Hill Country Blues is similar to African music.

09:33-19:02

- He feels that the White culture has tried to differentiate the different types of Blues, he feels that there is no appreciable difference between Hill Country Blues and Delta Blues and that White culture is stealing Blues music.
- David talks about Beale Street and Memphis, and points out that the people communicated there with their music. He states that you have to live the Blues to be able to play Blues.
- Talk on instruments uncommonly played by Blues musicians.

19:03-27:41

- Caldwell says that he did not grow up in Mississippi. He believes that living conditions in the hills were better than in the Delta due to better education. Caldwell states that people who left the Delta to go to school in the Northern Hills stayed because living conditions were better.
- He feels that Blues musicians from the Mississippi Hills like the Burnsides and Kimbrough’s did not go north to major cities because they still had poor education.
- Caldwell was born in Wichita, Kansas. He feels that the White man took away Blues music because he wanted to learn it but could not.
- He states that he moved to Mississippi because he felt comfortable there.

27:42-34:18

- Caldwell states that a class in Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi is responsible for the study of Mississippi Blues and helping to understand the conditions of African Americans.
- He states that African Americans have become a commodity to the State of Mississippi and for private owners.

34:19-39:37
• He believes that music was one of the few things that helped integrate Whites and African Americans during the early days of Blues. He says music such as Jazz showed the mixture between White and Black musical styles, and that both Black and White musicians were respected such as Elvis and Charlie Pride.

39:38-45:55

• Caldwell feels that the younger Black generation does not listen to Blues, but Hip-Hop and other styles, he also feels that younger African Americans are trying to distance themselves from the image of slavery in Blues.
• He says that the children in the Burnside and Kimbrough families play similarly to their father, despite their influence of other genres.
• He says that perceived differences in the music for certain audiences are generational, and that they did not play differently for White or Black audiences.

45:56-53:35

• Caldwell believes that Fat Possum records started out with the same attitude of the class from the University of Mississippi, with a desire to study Black culture. He says that he talked differently from others when he came to Mississippi and that he used to be a porter for a White family.
• He says that artists like Junior Kimbrough played mostly because they wanted to play. Caldwell believes that people saw their music as an opportunity for money.

53:36-1:03:

• He feels that Blues tourism will give no money to the Black population in Mississippi. He believes that programs and shows like the King Biscuit Flower Hour helped promote Blues.
• He said that he predicted that Black local officials would be elected, and that the prediction came true because of it, he believes that it is the fulfillment of the Bible. He said when the black officials were elected, they did not treat the White people in the same manner that they had treated the Black population.
• He believes that Blues tourism is progress.