

JOHN FOGERTY
REVIVAL

John Fogerty considers himself a lucky man. His fans know well the saga of his career after the break up of Creedence Clearwater Revival. At a certain point he became as well known for his troubles as he was for his music. The man who wrote “Proud Mary”, “Fortunate Son” and “Bad Moon Rising” also became known as the man who had to play his music in a courtroom. But as he concentrated more on his happy life as a husband and father and less on music, a funny thing happened. Music came pouring out of him. With a healthy new perspective on his past and a renewed sense of optimism for the future, Fogerty created a new album that could only be called Revival.

As the album title tantalizingly suggests, Revival reveals Fogerty’s renewed musical spirit and command. The record incorporates all the best elements of a career that has resonated deeply with generations of music fans and the many artists that John has influenced.

“It just seemed like all the records I’ve made since Creedence Clearwater Revival have all been sort of pushed off center,” he says. “As I got better as a musician, I would tend to stray off to the left and stray off to the right and go on tangents. Those were fun for me, but it was a bit of a distraction and even confusing, perhaps, to my fans. I vowed to not let that happen this time.” Instead, Fogerty says, he made an album that is “right in the middle, right where rock and roll is. I wanted this one to be a lot more fun than some of the past records have been. It’s a refreshing reminder to me. It’s really where my career started.”

And the Grammy winner certainly knows a thing or two about rock and roll. He’s written some of the most iconic, authentic tunes in America’s songbook; from “Proud Mary” to “Bad Moon Rising,” “Travelin’ Band,” to “Centerfield,” “Rockin’ All Over the World,” to “Born on the Bayou,” and “Fortunate Son” to “Who’ll Stop the Rain,” just to name a few.

Revival represents a return to a process from the CCR days, “when the band rehearsed and I had the songs all together before I even went into the recording studio.”

Once they got into the studio, Fogerty’s ace band, which includes Kenny Aronoff on drums, Hunter Perrin on guitar, David Santos on bass and guest Benmont Tench on keyboards, laid down the basic tracks in just 12 days. “A lot of times on prior albums, there are those moments where you’re in the studio

or rehearsing and you're going through this agony; you're very unsettled or anxious because you're not completely sure it's going to work," Fogerty says. "Even in rehearsal this time, I knew it was all going to work."

That confidence and joy shines through on Revival from the opening notes of the wistful, infectious "Don't You Wish It Was True," to the Sun Records, rockabilly tilt of "It Ain't Right" and from the blistering indictment of the Iraq war on "I Can't Take It No More" to his further thoughts on the current administration in the rollicking, biting "Long Dark Night." "It's no secret what my personal politics are," Fogerty says. But he stresses he's on a musical mission, not a political one. "There was an album I made long ago called Eye of the Zombie and there were a couple of songs on there that a year or two after the release, I said, 'Boy you sure got up on a soapbox there.' I don't like that place, being too preachy."

Revival's emotional center is "Broken Down Cowboy," an intensely personal song that still chokes up Fogerty when he discusses its creation. "When those words came out of my mouth, that just floored me. It was a great big punch into the solar plexus. I knew that was the place where rock and roll is at its best, when it startles you with some kind of freshness either in the way the music is or the turn of the chord or the way a word is phrased." Commenting on the song's personal meaning, Fogerty said, "I know exactly what a broken down cowboy is. As I got into the song it became apparent that the character was me. I'm much luckier than that poor dude but he's familiar enough to me at least that I could write about him with the knowledge that only comes from having lived through it and survived."

Unlike several of his contemporaries, Fogerty also survived the 1960s. "Summer of Love" - already a highlight of John's live concerts - is his musical homage to that magical time and to some of his favorite guitar players, with a particular tip of the hat to Cream and Jimi Hendrix.

He references his own illustrious past on the deliciously swampy "Creedence Song," on which he correctly and humorously assesses: "You can't go wrong/if you play a little bit of that Creedence song." It's a message to his fans that the decades of protracted legal battles with Fantasy over his catalog are finally behind him. "It's a very cathartic moment for me. There's a lot of closure in being able to think about the whole situation, no matter what has happened to me for forty years, and just deflect all that and turn it into the pure joy of making music and be able to write songs - which is a gift from God - and having rediscovered that, or perhaps being given that gift a second time. The place I am with my career and life in general is a very happy, comfortable place that feels very good to me," the Rock & Roll Hall of Famer says. "I'm not bitter or angry and I don't sit around using up lots of emotional energy worrying about water under the bridge, so 'Creedence Song' was my way of blowing open that door to say, 'Look, I'm fine. Everything's really okay.'"

Fogerty wrote the songs for Revival the same way he always has. "I'm fiddling with a guitar 99% of the time just trying to get inspired and different guitars make you do different things." He pulls out a notebook-- the same one he's

kept since 1967 when the first entry was “Proud Mary”—that contains song titles or intriguing comments he overhears and that can provide inspiration. But more often than not, “a mood hits me and, you know, then it just comes out.” And the songs are birthed fully developed. “I hear what the record should sound like. That’s far beyond just writing the song.”

Fogerty produced **Revival** himself because, as he says, he knows better than anyone the sound he wants. “When it comes to putting my name on a record, all my little helpers—some would say gremlins—pop up behind my ear and say, ‘You want that drum to sound better than that; that guitar over there doesn’t have a nice tone.’ The minute you’re doing that, you’re producing.”

Revival is Fogerty’s first album of new material on Fantasy in more than 34 years and follows his last solo album, 2004’s Deju Vu. Concord Music Group’s purchase of Fantasy Records in 2004 paved the way for Fogerty to be reunited with his classic material. It also led to the first complete retrospective of his career, The Long Road Home, which came out in late 2005. Fogerty, who was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame two years ago, says seeing the Fantasy logo on his new record is nothing short of “surreal.”

At a time when artists with such a rich legacy would be content to rest on their laurels, Fogerty is suiting up. “I think there’s so much left to prove. I always felt that I had the rug pulled out from under me when I was 25,” he says, referring to the years of lawsuits. “So right at the moment when I had it all together and knew how to do it, then I got the door slammed in my face. But now, I really do feel that I’ve gotten back there. Every time out, you need to write fresh and wonderful songs and that’s what I’m trying to do. I feel like a baseball player in his early 30s,” says Fogerty. “Now he’s got the wisdom, but he’s still got the chops; the physical abilities to go on and hit another 300 homeruns. I can’t stress enough what that feels like. I feel good, I feel healthy.”

Revival is a triumph, with a sound that is at once timeless yet urgently rooted in this current time and place. The lyrics recall a continuous conversation with America, a reminder of John’s unmatched ability to resonate with people from all walks of life. With an iconic voice that can cut glass, and a band that sounds like it came to tear the roadhouse down, **Revival** is not just a great John Fogerty album --and a great rock album—it’s an essential musical work by an artist without peer, that will certainly stand as once of the most compelling albums of 2007.