

Jock-a-mo feena hey



Photo by Ryan Hodgson-Rigsbee. This cat knows how to captcha New Orleans.

Apologies for the radio silence, my multitudes. The Writer has been OCD-level consumed with an epic exploration of New Orleans/Mardi Gras/Musical Gumbo since September. It was supposed to be a nice, little article about one of my favorite NOLA bands, The Panorama Jazz Band. In the end...well, let's just say that it took on a momentum of its own and became something a wee bit more...involved. Story gone got hold my chicken wire, put the good foot pumping, let the voodoo loose with the boozy whoop and a fatmouth beer.

Indeed, this ranks as "a very serious, thoughtful, argument that has *never been made* in such detail or with such care." Bonus points to anyone who catches the reference. No Googling! I'm busting buttons here.

Anyway, it's almost done, and it should appear on your nearest Internet device at The Bitter Southerner this coming Tuesday, Mardi Gras Day.

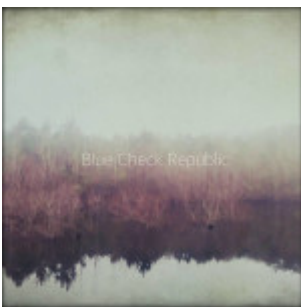
Today, I came across this Spotify playlist from the Rounder Records folks, and it is a cool collection of 18 very diverse tracks that paint a broader picture of NOLA music than most people typically imagine. Give it a spin to get a little *tu way pocky way* vibe going in your world.

Come Tuesday, please check out the very serious, thoughtful etc. magnum opus. I can promise that, even though the words may drive you to drink (you're welcome), the photography is

gonna bullseye hit your cultural g-spot.

Return to regular i2blogging resumes soon. Til then, *mighty kootie fiyo*.

The Blue Check Republic



Good news, my pretties: there's free music in this post to quench your thirsty ears!

Last June, I ambled out to the countryside to Komplex Studio for an afternoon of convivial, improvisatory meanderings by two string ticklers under the watchful eyes/ears of an ace engineer. Shorter: I hung out with cool people and recorded loose jams for a couple of hours.

It was a lovely afternoon that was long overdue. And, thought I, that was that. I had a great time, but nothing I played felt special. Truth: I felt a bit embarrassed by my feeble noodlings.

But my pal Tracy Chow and her hubs Chan had designs. Six months later, I received a message:

Wanted you to hear and give your feedback/approval/disapproval. I can easily take it down or make adjustments.

So I listened. And then again. And I am pretty knocked out by the production T/C put together here. They imagined the larger picture in ways that were invisible to me. And after a dozen or so listens, I gotta say this is one of the most satisfying recordings of my playing I've ever listened to.

And it's available here, for free (or if you'd like, for an optional donation to keep Komplex Studio in tall clover). It falls pretty squarely in the ambient vein, but it has a great deal more structure and definition than I would have expected. All props to T/C for their imagining the greater whole and giving me the gift of golden ears interpreting my work in a way that makes me feel very proud.

And for helping me realize that the thing my playing needs more than anything else – including practice, of which there can never be enough – is collaboration with other people.

So as the year winds down (or up), I'm all about shocking a few new and revived music projects into life for 2016.

Long wished for by tens of people, the Jake Legg Trio is rising from the ashes with some local Tallahassee players. This is long overdue, but look for us soon. Natch, an active local trio also mean the Jake Legg Half Quartet will also be available for service.

As it has for the past 11 years, RoboCromp remains available to active duty. Cromp and I began playing together in 1989, far and away my longest musical partnership. And we're still in love. What does it sound like?

And yet another: an old pal from the glory days of the Center for Creative Aspiration lives an hour or so away, and we have planned some material to work on together. Distance is a pisser for rehearsal and consistent work, but if we can overcome that obstacle, this could raise some neck hairs among

the unsuspecting, innocent listener.

Who knows what else lies in wait?

The Shadow do.

All in all, some good prospects looming. It's a good way to end/begin the year.

Field Tested Fool Proof Granola



Posted this almost exactly a year ago. I've been making at least a batch of granola a week since then, and today finds me making a couple of batches for holiday gifting. Seemed a good time to share this one again. BTW, the Bitter Southerner has a new Best Of list up for 2015. Check it out.

Field Tested Fool Proof Granola

Looking for an activity that'll cure what ails you? Cook something.

Alas, my kitchen chops are just enough to keep me from starving, and to get myself in trouble once in a while, but there are a few go-to recipes that keep me from being a

clichéd, *Leave It To Beaver* era patriarchal putz.<fn>There are plenty of other areas where I qualify, but I'm nearly redeemable on this score.</fn> If you are generally kitchen savvy, this post is likely beneath your notice, save as an opportunity to point and laugh as I wobble on toddler legs through the world of food.

This one is an amalgam of lots of different granola recipes I've made/bungled/burned over the years. I've finally learned the guiding principles, though, and now I can whip this out at a moment's notice, as long as I have all the ingredients:



Oatmeal – 4 cups

Sunflower seeds – 1 cup

Flax seeds – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Coconut flakes – 1 cup

Tupelo Honey – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (any other sweetener will do, but this is my fave)

Vegetable Oil – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Salt – A couple two three pinches

Vanilla extract – A scoche

Then, if you're like me, you'll realize you forgot something, so off to the market to get:



Pecans – 1 cup chopped

Dried fruit – A fistful (cranberries today). DO NOT put the dried fruit in the oven or they will turn to stone.



Mix all the dry ingredients (except the dried fruit!!) in a big pan. You can substitute or add any kinds of seeds or nuts, but if you add much more than I use, you might want to add another cup of oats to keep the granola from becoming too seedy. Add the salt, oil, honey, and vanilla. Then stir like crazy. I use a pan with high side walls because I'm clumsy and spill a lot otherwise.

Put the mix in a 300* oven for 30 minutes. Make another pot of coffee after SOMEONE drank the rest of the first pot.<fn>I'm not naming names.</fn>

At the 30 minute mark, pull the pan out and stir well. Put it back in for another 15 minutes or so. Keep your eyes and nose peeled for any hint of burning.



After 15 minutes, or around the time your kitchen begins to smell like heaven's garden, take it out and stir again. Let cool for a while, stirring occasionally. Once it cools, add a fistful of dried fruit <fn>Exactly, no more or less. Be precise.</fn> and stir it in.

That's it. If I can do it, any prat can make it work. Half a cup of this mixed with a half cup of yogurt makes this My Favorite World.

Today's Music

This morning, Bitter Southerner posted their 25+1 favorite CDs to come out of the South in 2014.<fn>I wrote this last week, so the date's off.</fn> With just a couple of exceptions, I had not heard of the musicians on the list. So I pulled one up to provide the soundtrack for granola wrangling: Curtis Harding's *Soul Power*.

An ATL-based guitarist/singer, Harding serves an updated take on one of my favorite styles – late 60s/early 70s soul and R&B. Isley, Curtis Mayfield, Issac Hayes, Al Green...not that he *sounds just like* any of these folks, but that you can feel the through-line from the pioneers up to more recent R&B authenticos like Prince and Cee Lo. (Harding was in Cee Lo's band for a while.) He also reflects the great blues vibe of Muddy Waters and the like. And then comes "Cruel World" to wrap things up and I'm reminded of Los Lobos and the great guitar of David Hidalgo. All in all, I really love it. Just one more surprise puzzle piece that fits right into MFW. I'm sure it made the granola more better.

And now we're into Amy Ray's *Goodnight Tender*. I've met Amy in passing a few times<fn>Not that she'd have any reason to remember.</fn> and she's truly one of the world's good people. Loving this album, a heaping helping of pure country. And all respect for the incred harmonies that pal Kelly Hogan is dropping here. M. F. W.

I'm looking forward to checking out the whole list, especially the latest Lucinda Williams, whom I adore, yes I do. And if you don't know the Bitter Southerner, get to know them. They provided more than a little bit of inspiration for establishing this here little bloggy vineyard.

The Management Wishes to Apologize



It appears The Writer slipped a fast one past Standards and Practices a few days ago. The Mgmt. wishes to apologize for the overly harsh tone The Writer took when discussing the food of the irresistibly delightful and perky Rachel Ray, whose food deserved better than the snide dismissal she suffered in our last post. We beg the forgiveness of the perkyperkyperky Ms Ray, and of our readers.<fn>Sincerely, we like the perky Ms Ray, and find her food to be perfectly fine, albeit unspectacular. The Writer is an embittered wretch, however, and is prone to unseemly outbursts. Again, we apologize.</fn>



What kind of monster would be cruel to this bubbly sprite?

As penance, The Writer has been chained to our kitchen counter

where he will be forced to create this dessert twelve times a day for the entire twelve days of Chrismakwanzkuh.

And he will be forced to eat every. damn. bite. That oughta learn him.

Sisyphus, upon hearing of this punishment, said "Wow, that's kind of harsh, doncha think?"

No. We most certainly do not.