



**ALIAS
&
SMITH & JONES**





Hit & Run:

“ ..funky, raw, sultry blues... powerful, soulful ...hypothermic, vocals... cutting guitar riffs, soaring harmonica solos... A great debut mix of raw blues and a soulful sound.”

–Bluestown Music Magazine

Who are **Alias Smith & Jones**?

Sal Carolei has played with the Eliza Neals band, The Travis Miller Band and Gabrielle Aparicio in New York and in Florida. He also performed with the late Floyd Lee, (aka Ted Williams), Sal can be heard on recordings for producer Cass Dillon. Sal has shared the stage with C.J. Chenier and Steven Tyler of Aerosmith as well as jamming with Eddie Cotton, Jr. at the 2018 Chicago Blues Festival. Sal also was a composer/musician with Reneé & The Derelicts, a grassroots, blues/rock band.

Reneé Flemings started out singing at open mics at the Village Gate, Cornelia Street Café and Rose’s Turn. Reneé also performed in cabaret clubs throughout NYC including The Duplex, 55 Grove St.

Sal and Reneé recorded three CDs comprised of original and cover songs as **Reneé & The Derelicts**, receiving airplay in Italy, France and across the United States. They have performed at Terra Blues, P&G Bar, 78 Below, Dinosaur Bar B- Que, Pianos, Silvana, Metropolitan Room and Kenny’s Castaways. They were featured on the Joey Reynolds show and as part of Battle of the Bands, NYC. As Alias Smith & Jones they have played at The Shrine and as guest artists at C-Boys Heart and Soul (Austin, TX w/Paul Ocher), B.B. Kings (New York and New Orleans), The Iridium, Winston’s (NJ), The Blue Note, City Winery (NYC) and The Red Lion.

The Button Men (a rotating group of AMAZING musicians) featuring: Jerry Dugger, Michael Hill, Paul Bauman, Barry Harrison, Shu Nakamura, Doc French, Michael Fox, Will Saint, Mike Berman, Chris Sutherland and John Whitehead.

For links to songs/EPK and current videos visit our site:

<https://www.aliasmithandjonesnyc.com/>



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Hit & Run:

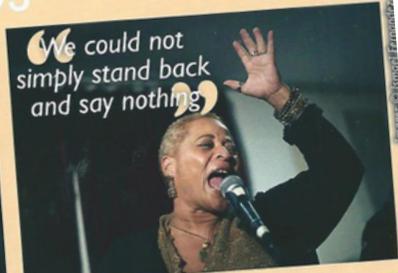
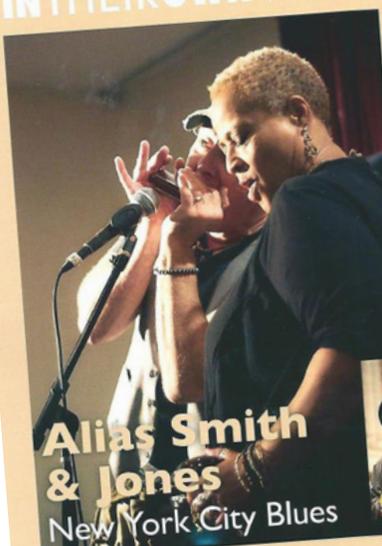
"..funky, raw, sultry blues...powerful, soulful...hypothermic, vocals...cutting guitar riffs, soaring harmonica solos,...A great debut mix of raw blues and soulful sound." – BLUESTOWN MUSIC MAGAZINE

Hot Box Boogie

"Hip-shaking, toe-tapping, head-nodding. This is the Holy Trinity of New York's ALIAS SMITH & JONES. Following in the footsteps of the great bluesy rock and roll icons, underground legends Renée Flemings and Sal Carolei unleash their latest take on a classic rootsy rocking cocktail. This is a glorious and swashbuckling homebrew full of soul, rhythm,

groove, and hard-edged funk. Exquisitely captured on 2020's *Hit and Run*, a record that also allows for an exceptional snapshot of Alias Smith & Jones' timeless and adrenaline-fueled sound. Whether it be ferocious boogie rock, a heart-rending ballad, or the good ol' blues, this New York duo has it covered and then some."

IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Alias Smith & Jones
New York City Blues

"We could not simply stand back and say nothing"

"Hit it and quit it!"

Alias Smith And Jones was an American Western series, that aired on ABC in the USA in the early seventies (appearing subsequently on the BBC), starring (initially) Pete Duel and Ben Murphy as two outlaw cousins trying to reform. No reformation's necessary however for Renée Flemings and Sal Carolei: the duo live in New York City, working in film, theatre and music, and their latest musical incarnation, the funky, soulful blues band, Alias Smith & Jones, released the powerful *Hit & Run* in 2020 and is now set to release a second album in the spring of this year. John Mitchell talks to them both.

Renée: I grew up in Michigan. I always sang (according to my family!) and wanted to act. After a bad experience with a record producer, I came to NYC to concentrate on acting. I met Sal when he was working in a video store I visited. He suggested some titles and I realised that he actually knew what he was talking about! I asked him out, rather than the other way round, mainly because the cast of a show I was in had an evening dinner celebration and I did not want to go solo.

Sal: I went to film school and after that I was playing harp in my cousin's band, paying my way by working jobs (like the video store). After Renée and I got together I encouraged her to start singing again as I was aware that she had a great voice from seeing her perform in musicals. Renée wrote a solo show with singing parts called *From The Front Porch* and then we started working together in small clubs around NYC. Back in the late nineties, there were lots of places to play but that has reduced a lot now, mainly due to high rental costs. We were fortunate to have those opportunities at the start of our musical journey.

Renée: Our first band together was called Delta Steel and that eventually morphed into Renée & The Derelicts. We had a guitar player called Darryl and he would take a familiar tune and transform it into something entirely different, a process we came to call 'Darrylification'. We started calling the band The Derelicts, with my name up front as the singer.

Sal: We worked pretty regularly for almost a decade but folded the band in 2016 when opportunities to play became too infrequent. For a

couple of years we just went to jams, met a lot of great players through that, so when we came to the point where we had material we wanted to record, we had a wonderful group of people we could call on.

Renée: I definitely did not want my name up front again and Sal and I love old TV shows and one night we were watching that old '70s show and we just looked at each other and decided, there and then, that Alias Smith & Jones would be our name going forward...

Sal: There is a great live feel to the *Hit & Run* record. We love playing live, that vibe of being together on stage, playing our music, you just can't beat that feeling. When we recorded we tried to keep it as live as possible. We all played together. Renée did a scratch vocal live so that the other musicians knew exactly the feel we were looking for.

Renée: Most of the album was pretty up tempo, about half originals and half covers. The Mississippi Fred McDowell tune 'Going Down To The River' is an exception, just our friend David French on slide guitar. Sal on harp and my voice, rather like our early days as an acoustic duo.

Sal: Back in the day, I used to play in the subway with the late Floyd Lee on guitar and vocals, me on harp. 'Going Down To The River' reminded me of that experience. The angriest song on the album is definitely 'You Ain't The One'. We're generally not very political, but late 2019 was such a divisive time for our country, we could not simply stand back and say nothing.

Renée: I write most of the lyrics, Sal usually comes up with the core riff and we work it up together. In 2019, I was angry about the way the

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

country was being divided. In NYC, we are well aware of Mr. Trump's reputation, he and his family have been based here for decades. The lyrics just flowed out!

Sal: We wanted to give our backing musicians a name, and they opted for The Button Men, a name that evokes gangsters and hit men. Quite appropriate, as they come into the studio, give us their best and then head off again - hit it and quit it!

Renée: For the new album, we wanted to go back to that notion of radically adopting a tune (that old 'Darrylification' thing again), so we've worked on a version of 'When The Levee Breaks' that starts with the Memphis Minnie original before going somewhere else, but not the Zeppelin route. We also do a blues version of the T-Rex hit 'Bang A Gong/Get It On': we always want to do something new and interesting with a cover, try to add a blues element for sure. We're looking at an old Beatles tune, 'You Can't Do That' (the B-side of 'Can't Buy Me Love' in 1965). These are all songs we love, we just want to personalise them and add something new...



"There is an enormous pool of talent here in NYC, but the blues scene gets under-valued."

Sal: Several of the guys we used last time are on this one too, but everybody has a second job, so when we have a session booked not everyone is always available. There is an enormous pool of talent here in NYC but, because we don't have the network of venues any more, the blues scene gets under-valued.

John Mitchell
aliasmithandjonesnyc.com
Hit & Run is out now on As In The Ear Records, with its follow-up due in Spring 2023

-Blues In Britain