

After dark blues at the MO with the Daniel Castro Band

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Posted: 06/04/2013 05:06:44 PM PDT

Saturday night, the Daniel Castro Band is back on stage at Pacifica Performances Mildred Owen Concert Hall (the MO). Castro, a singer, blues guitarist and composer, describes his own style of blues as "mostly" a combination of B.B. King, Albert King and Albert Collins. His band travels with equal ease, a road that stretches from raw Chicago blues to hard-driving, down-home boogie. This marks Castro's fifth return to the local concert hall in as many years. He could return five times in just one year and for the musician's legendary long list of fans, it would still not be enough.

Members of the Daniel Castro Band are Castro on Fender Telecaster and vocals, Johnny Yu on bass and David Perper on drums. Just out of the recording studio with "Desperate Rain," the band will be presenting quite a number of the tracks from this not-yet-released CD (available mid-July). They will have a five-song EP available at their Pacifica Concert.

"We are very excited to see what the audience thinks," Castro said.

The left-hander, who learned to play right-handed, was 12 years old when he used to "borrow" his sister's Stella guitar. That same sister, Jypsy, took the time to introduce her kid brother to all the greats from her record player — which included Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin. But it was the night that Jypsy put B.B. King on the turntable, that her little brother felt the sound of those notes, right to his core. Daniel started working on the standard 12-bar progression until his "hands cramped and his fingers bled." One day he heard "that" sound coming off of his own guitar from his fingers.



I don't remember the song I was playing, but I sure do remember the sound," Castro said. —I heard that distinct vibrato that B.B. has when he plays. That hit me like a bolt of lightning."

By age 15, the guitarist was backing a singer from the Johnny Otis Show named 'Loud Mouth' Delmar Evans. Still in high school, Castro was backing up all kinds of legends, including Little Esther Phillips and Pee-wee Crayton. And since those early days, the life-long musician has shared

his stage with a great number of headliners, including John Mayall, Joe Louis Walker, Walter "Wolfman" Washington, The Staple Singers and Long John Hunter.

Castro admitted that every chance he gets, he sneaks in the time to play the blues just for himself. "Usually every night about three or four in the morning, no one else is up."

"Every day I play guitar, I'm amazed by the endless possibilities of the instrument," the bluesman continued. "It's a journey that never ends. If I had five lifetimes to live, I couldn't come close and that's part of the beauty of it all."