

Rocky Athas Extended Biography

When Rocky was asked by John Mayall, the iconic "Godfather of British Blues", to take the lead guitar role on his 2009 album, *Tough*, Rocky was honored.

Being recognized for his guitar skill and asked to join forces with the creator of the legendary outfit, The Bluesbreakers, that featured a revolving cast of musicians that achieved rock royalty status including Eric Clapton, Peter Green, Jack Bruce, John McVie, Mick Fleetwood, and Mick Taylor, was exhilarating. Within weeks of the call, Rocky was in the studio working on *Tough*.

Guitar Player Magazine reviewed *Tough*, Rocky's first album with Mayall, and called Rocky "a veteran Texas gunslinger with a wicked tone and a thriving solo career of his own."

In fact, before joining Mayall, Rocky's first worldwide release *Miracle* was prompted by his friendship with Grammy Award-winning producer Jim Gaines (Santana, Steve Miller, Journey, Stevie Ray Vaughan), which was forged while working on *The Bluesberries* with Buddy Miles (Jimi Hendrix, Electric Flag and Carlos Santana). Rocky was thrilled that Jim, named Blues Producer of the Year in 2003, produced his solo albums.

At the beginning of his career, Rocky was the creative vortex behind Lightning, one of the biggest draws in Texas nightclub history opening for national acts. By the age of 23, the Oak Cliff, Texas native, was named one of the first and youngest, TEXAS TORNADOS in Buddy Magazine's now legendary list of Top Ten Guitarists. The list of Texas Tornados later went on to include Eric Johnson, Jimmie and Stevie Ray Vaughan, ZZtop's Billy Gibbons, and Johnny Winter.

After Lightning, Rocky moved on to be showcased as lead guitarist with national acts, including the southern rock one-of-a-kind Jim Dandy and Black Oak Arkansas writing/performing on "Ready As Hell" and "Wild Bunch" which were included on their greatest hits album.

Throughout his career, Rocky has been asked about his friendship with Stevie Ray Vaughan and is extremely proud of his Oak Cliff roots which he shares with Steve. You can open the pages of *Stevie Ray Soul To Soul* by Kerri Leigh and read Rocky's recollection of childhood memories.

Six years into the collaboration with Mayall, the album, *A Special Life*, featured stellar guitar performances by Rocky that prompted Neil Spencer of *Uncut Magazine* to highly praise the new work "whose guitarist

Rocky Athas, recalls the young Eric Clapton."

With the mutual admiration society nurtured by thousands of miles on the road together rockin' the blues around the world, Rocky was proud to stand next to John Mayall blazing a fresh, new, innovative sound with the veteran bluesman bringing back his glory days of the original guitar gods - Clapton, Green and Taylor.

Even with the heavy touring schedule, Rocky has continued to release his own work. Let My Guitar Do The Talking...with my friends is an all instrumental album released in 2014 that features a wonderful authentic Texas shuffle with close friend, Smokin' Joe Kubek.

Sadly while working with Mayall, one of Rocky's singers, Larry Samford was killed in a tragic motorcycle accident. It was a shock and a wake up call that prompted Rocky's desire to return to his solo career with his life long band of Texas musician brothers.

Before assuming the coveted guitar position with the legendary Bluesbreakers, Rocky released and toured several albums produced with Grammy award winner, Jim Gaines and Larry Samford. Now The Essential Rocky Athas – Volume I which includes highlights from those recording sessions and new never before released material is available with Volumes II and III to follow.