

Celebrate the music of Neil Young and Crazy Horse with Tribe of the Red Horse

Tribe of The Red Horse delivers the guitar tone, harmonies and raw energy that Neil Young and Crazy Horse are known and loved for. Or, as the band's singer/guitarist, Wayne Whitzell puts it, "We don't play dress-up. We play rock 'n' roll."

Since forming in the summer of 2011, Tribe of the Red Horse has performed throughout Northern California at well-known venues such as the Sacramento Music Festival, Miner's Foundry, Sutter Creek Theater, Marilyn's on K in Sacramento, Powerhouse and Creekside Fridays in Mill Valley, all the while steadily growing a fan base that Whitzell says appeals to both boomers and 20-somethings who have also discovered Neil Young's music.



"It is amazing to look out from the stage and see such a diverse group of people all grooving on the same vibe," he says. "It is a true testament to the power and importance of Neil's music." Our set lists reach deep into the archives with a blend of feel-good songs and Young's more political songs. "We consciously chose the 'Live Rust' album as the epicenter of the show because it is a seminal moment for Neil and then we radiate backward and forward from there," Whitzell explains. "We want to take a snap shot in time of different eras and reproduce them with emotional accuracy." Throughout the performance, the band also plays notable audio clips from Woodstock and Martin Luther King to segue way between songs.

On rare special occasions, Whitzell plays selections from Neil's solo acoustic material such as 'Sugar Mountain' and 'My My, Hey Hey.'" "The solo acoustic sets are very intimate and special" says Whitzell, "we don't do it that often and the venue has to be the right place to honor that material appropriately. Of course, our second set is a blazing full throttle set of Crazy Horse material," Whitzell laughs, "We have to shake the building's foundation a little or it wouldn't be Crazy Horse."

When asked about the proliferation of "tribute" bands today, Whitzell replies, "I think if you take it at face value it can be a fun experience for the performers and the audience. I am happy if

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anyone is sharing Neil's music with others, but I think with Neil Young & Crazy Horse, the music absolutely must come first. There are a lot of Neil Young tribute bands that have a guy dressed up like Neil with a wig on or sideburns, ripped jeans and a warbley voice who looks the part, but when it comes time for the music and the tone and the solos, it just falls off a cliff. To me, that misses the whole point of Neil's Crazy Horse collaboration. There are other Neil Young tribute bands, but the major difference between them and us that I have observed is the guitar tone. I've personally spent a lot of time to replicate that sound, and with the help of my guitar tech Don Lopez at Uptown Music in Millbrae, who has customized my guitars, I can come very close."



"I feel confident that if Neil were ever to stumble upon us or see us, I would hope he would realize we're not doing this to imitate him to make a buck — we're doing this out of love and respect to celebrate him and his music and point other people toward his music without being a caricature of him," Whitzell says. "Neil goes 180 degrees when he thinks he's becoming too successful or too patterned. He eschews success to chase his art. I've always respected that. I've always had tremendous respect for his music and tremendous respect for the man. His songs are less about showiness and narcissism and more about creating a wall of sound."

Whitzell, known to his musician friends as "Tex" has spent the last decade playing Texas blues and N'awlins funk with bands such as San Francisco's Bodacious and Sacramento's Cold Sweat. Joining him are Charles Williams on bass, Frank Kenney on guitar and Ernie Belles on drums.

"All of us in the band have songwriting experience and played in 'originals' bands," Whitzell explains, "We've also played every type of blues dive imaginable. I am very fortunate to play in a band with such great musicians who also happen to be beautiful human beings. I am living a life-long dream playing this music live."

When asked why he chose a Neil Young Tribute band, Whitzell states, "After playing blues and funk music for over a decade, I wanted to do something different. I decided to return to my roots. Neil Young was a major reason why I picked up a guitar in the first place. Having gotten a little older, and a little wiser — revisiting this material has brought it to life in ways I never expected."

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