

BIO



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In a search for life's meaning and looking to discover inspiration as a teenager moving into adulthood, Paul Waring, aka Bad Daddy, found what he was looking for in Chicago's blues clubs. It was in those rooms, like Legends, where he first saw Buddy Guy work a crowd. At Chicago's B.L.U.E.S. it was Magic Slim slicing off those piercing licks. And it was in Chicago where he first felt his heart skip while watching Otis Rush belting out searing guitar lines and vocal phrases. It felt electric, and deep down within Waring knew that at some point down the road he would create his own sound and find his own voice in a world of blues.

"My music is a door opening into my soul," Waring says. "It's like I'm trying to get something off my chest — like I'm gonna tell the rest of the world what I think and how I feel."

Bad Daddy's sound is a geographical brew of Chicago and coastal Maine where he's a celebrated yacht designer. His style is gritty — a crunchy compression of classic blues and dank, sticky roots rock. That sound continues to anchor themes in his new record, "It's a Mad, Mad Bad Dad World" — including its kickoff single, "Pork Pie Hat." A sound like it's different blues and rock elements shaken together in a modern cocktail of feel good, soul-filled tunes that groove and move.

Grooving was a national pastime in 1970 when Waring was born on Oregon's southern coast. His family moved around during high school — attending 3 different high schools eventually landing in Chicago for Paul's senior year. In those years, Waring grew more aware of all the inspiration. In senior year he found a second hand guitar and Waring traded in the saxophones he'd played in school marching bands and jazz bands to buy that guitar. And Chicago's clubs hosted an underaged teenager who had become captivated by the sounds and vibes emanating from seemingly every street corner of his new city.

Waring didn't really discover his musical voice until the 1990s. After Waring moved his young family to Maine to launch a career in naval architecture, he began investing personal time to pair his gravelly growl with the velvety tube-driven shade he'd coaxed from his guitar. In 2005, Waring put a band together and called it The Bad Daddys. Their 2008 self-titled debut collaboration contains nine original tracks written and arranged by Waring and Maine brewer, Al Strong.

By 2019, Bad Daddy had worked a rural-Maine musician's life by night, designing watercraft by day — collaborating on music projects with friends and Maine musicians. And after more than a decade playing live venues and blues festivals around the northeast, Bad Daddy released another personal project, the heart-full and soul-felt *Beautiful Thing*, a single and eulogy for a long-loved friend who died of cancer at age 56.

Bad Daddy's 2022 release is Waring's strongest work to date. His 2010 marriage to a Chicago-based visual artist had meant a new life split between Chicago and Maine. This allowed the adult Bad Daddy that opportunity to reconnect with old musical stomping grounds. The past decade of collaborations in Maine and making rounds at all the pro jams led Waring to his newest aspirations in music. Soon making Chicago musician friends, Waring again felt his soul pounding in a new beat, in a new direction. He crafted the nine original songs on "It's a Mad, Mad Bad Dad World" over four years, and finally went to work on the new record with guitarist, co-producer and engineer, Pete Galanis. The record also contains a cover of Mighty Sam McClain's "Where You Been So Long."

Sitting in Galanis's studio on a cold February day in 2021, Waring realized the pandemic had given him an opportunity to continue creating. It's all about forging that sound he'd dreamed about as a teenager. With live venues shuttered and musicians largely sidelined that winter, the timing was right to record Bad Daddy's latest effort.

"Pete's become a close friend whom I trust and respect," Waring said. "Sitting in that studio, I said to him, 'I got these songs written — why don't I hire your band and you and I make a record together?' It's that bond with Pete and my will to push on into creating something that ultimately got this record made."

It's appropriate that Waring's lead track on the new record is named *Blues at Home*. The evolution of the blues began with the Great Migration of Black Americans north. And Waring's unapologetic tone continues to synthesize those traditions.

His new album is about home in a couple different ways. First, it's the sweet home of the blues itself: Chicago. It's also about Waring's heart and his love for his wife and all the efforts they go to for bringing their previous families together with kids both in Chicago and Maine. But most of all it's from his soul, the place where home is. It's how Bad Daddy has chiseled his unique place in the blues.

"My music is rooted in blues, but it's also rock, soul, and other stuff. What I do today is only made possible by 150 years of blues evolution by creators like those whose music I've loved since sneaking into those clubs as a teenager."

(630 words)