

CD REVIEWS from page 3

Egan's slowdown "Blues How They Linger" stands out for its meaningful lyrics and its quiet passion. Here, Egan's piano accompaniment and McMahan's quiet guitar asides cause the mood to settle down comfortably. A similar experience occurs with "The Outside," where Egan uses soul power to express a simple message.

Much of the program romps with a proud southern Louisiana charm where music serves as conversation. "One Foot in the Bayou" and "Dead End Friend," for example, let Egan celebrate with his musical partners on a roll that continues as if the party would go on till dawn.

-- Jim Santella



IDLE HANDS *Sunday Morning* Stingray Records

With singer Megan Geraghty, guitarists Vince White and Paul J. Van Duine, drummer Jon "Bermuda" Schwartz and bassist/multi-instrumentalist Larry DiPeppe coming together for their second CD of powerful blues/rock, Idle Hands pushes the music hard. The band's name, a slapdash of irony, stands a far cry from the over-the-top action that spews forth throughout most of the session.

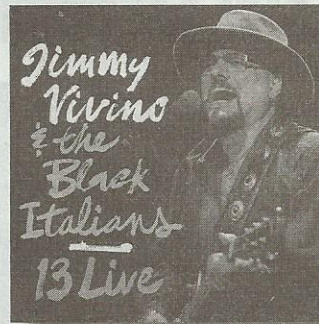
Geraghty and the rest

of the band give their title track an unusual twist as the lyrics let them discuss the "fine line between Saturday night and Sunday morning." Here and elsewhere, DiPeppe adds interesting color on trumpet that complements the lyrics. Most of the program rocks hard with plenty of rhythm carrying the ball. Slower numbers, such as "Everybody Gets the Blues Sometime," offer a different feeling that lets the band communicate freely. White's soulful guitar belts out powerful lines that keep things moving. Faster songs let the band swing with a laid-back spirit at times and push much harder at other times. "White Trash Woman," for example, finds the band stepping out forcefully and taking their message by the arm with muscle. Up-tempo works good for the band as they force action around interesting lyrics and push hard with plenty of rhythm.

-- Jim Santella

JIMMY VIVINO & THE **BLACK ITALIANS** *13 Live* Blind Pig

Recorded before a live audience at Woodstock, NY, this session of 13 songs couples the standard repertoire with new and original material. No stranger to live audiences, Vivino and his blues band tout their vocals, guitar thrills, harmonica blues, and much more on a frequent basis to large audiences all the time. His work with Conan O'Brien opened a door, but there has been success in Vivino's career for decades. It's a familiar story: come from a musi-



cal family, study the music that you like, work where you can every day, and keep moving up.

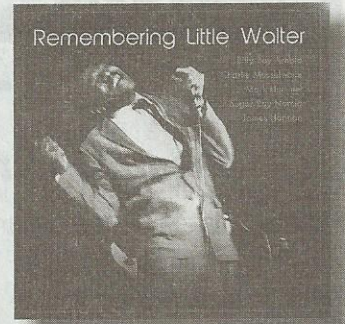
With songs by Johnny Winter, James Brown and Bob Dylan, the concert has roots; Vivino supplies four original songs, and there are plenty more. As Catherine Russell sings the slow ballad "Fool's Gold," you can feel the blues reaching out. She's got that kind of magnetism. When Vivino sings "Fat Man," the room feels alive through his communication ease. The message comes around clear and complete.

Band member Felix Cabrera lends credible harp accompaniment and solo work to the session, keeping the blues aura up close and true. Vivino's stellar blues guitar work, his strong vocals, and Russell's powerful vocals give the listener a reason to reach out and enjoy more of Jimmy Vivino's creative ventures.

-- Jim Santella

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Remembering Little Walter* Blind Pig Records

Featuring five great, contemporary blues harmonica masters performing two songs each with band, live in concert, this tribute to Little Walter Jacobs works wonders. The feeling



comes through handily as a blues giant is remembered through his songs and honored by such talent. Charlie Musselwhite, Billy Boy Arnold, Mark Hummel, Sugar Ray Norcia and James Harman sing and play harp with the same kind of enthusiasm that stirs memories. Not only do they each step forward for their two songs with band, but at the close of the concert, they all get together for "My Babe," which finds them working together and taking turns in the solo spotlight. What's more, the band's guitarist, Little Charlie Baty, switches to harmonica for one of those solo spots near the end of the show.

Billy Boy Arnold evokes a comfortable, country feeling. Hummel brings in a hot and heavy element. Harman keeps it cool, swinging, and smooth. Musselwhite pours on the heat with passion. Norcia takes it down with soulful passion. And the band keeps things moving throughout: Baty on guitar, Nathan James on guitar, June Core on drums, and R.W. Grigsby on bass. Together, this cast of harmonica greats honors the memory of Little Walter in concert with enough spirit to make sure that his flame never goes out.

-- Jim Santella