



**JACK GARNER  
AT THE MOVIES  
& MORE**

Wonder of wonders! There is a new Chuck Berry album, a disc from rock's founding father. Chuck is not only the first album from the hall of fame guitarist-singer in 38 years, but it comes to us posthumously, following his death at age 90 in March. It's one final gift from the guy who was the poet laureate of early rock and played a guitar like ringin' a bell.

And even better, it's not a patchwork of scattered, cast-off tunes, but an album as honest and entertaining as any he produced over his 62-year career. And three of the tracks — "Big Boys," "Wonderful Woman," and "Lady B. Goode"— are worthy of a place on the same shelf as "Johnny B. Goode," "Sweet Little Sixteen," and "School Days."

Chuck was clearly a work of love for Berry and his family — and he dedicated it to Themetta "Toddy" Berry, his wife of 68 years. The song "Wonderful Woman" is also about her, while "Darlin'" is an ode to his daughter Ingrid, and reflects on his old age.

The personal nature of Chuck continues when the narrator tells a bartender known as the "Dutchman" about the great love of his life, and the album concludes with "Eyes of Man," a tribute to the contributions of women on our lives.

Before that personal finale, there's a "3/4 Time (Enchiladas)," a live ode to things Berry loves — "enchiladas, old Eldorados that shine, old red guitars, rock 'n' roll, nice girls, and wine."

Meanwhile, "Jamaica Moon" is a remake of "Havana Moon" that changes the geography of a long-standing Berry tune. To be honest, wherever the moon arises in the Caribbean, the song is not among my Berry favorites. "She Still Loves You" tells of a useless romance because the woman still loves another. And "You Go to My Head" is a cover of a standard made famous by Billie Holiday, but with a strong blues backbeat.

As I'm sure you suspect — accurately — "Lady B. Goode" is a fun sequel to his greatest song, "Johnny B. Goode," telling of the boy's girlfriend as he rises to stardom.

Still, "Big Boys" is the album's masterpiece, the story of a young boy who desires to party with the big kids.

Longtime Chuck Berry fans will be thrilled to hear all the guitar exploding out of Chuck. It's a great guitar disc, mostly played by Berry, but with additional licks from Tom Morello and Gary Clark Jr. When an important and beloved artist dies, their art lives on. And when even more art surfaces, it's a time for celebration.

**OH SUSANNA**

The Dady Brothers (plus John Dady's talented daughter, Mara) are reprising their wonderful show *Beautiful Dreamer*, with Richard Barry as Stephen Foster. The show is at 7 p.m. June 13-17, and 2 p.m. June 14 and 18 at the Multi-Cultural Community Center, 142 Atlantic Ave.

*Beautiful Dreamer* is a celebration of the life and music of America's first great songwriter. Though there is a narrative, it's also a lovely concert of such memorable Foster tunes, from "Camptown Races" to "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair," "Beautiful Dreamer" to the achingly beautiful "Hard Times Come Again No More."

And the Irish-American Dadys are the perfect Troubadours to play and sing these great examples of 19th century Americana. For information, go to [dadybros.com](http://dadybros.com).



Monty Alexander

PROVIDED



Stephen Foster

PROVIDED

**MONTY AND MARLEY**

One of my favorite pianists — Jamaican-born Monty Alexander — will be at the keyboard three times at the upcoming Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival. He's performing solo at the Lyric Theatre at 4 p.m. June 27, and leading his trio at Kilbourn Hall at 6 and 9 p.m. June 28. And I will certainly be there for at least one of those sets.

Alexander is a superbly versatile pianist — equally capable of straight-ahead bop and big band swing, and everything in-between. But I'm particularly partial to his skillful explorations of the reggae songs of his home, but in the jazz idiom.

Among his several Jamaican-oriented discs I especially recommend two devoted exclusively to the late, great Bob Marley — *Stir It Up: The Music of Bob Marley and Concrete Jungle: The Songs of Bob Marley*. Alexander's interpretations perfectly display the beauty, lyricism, and freedom of the reggae master.

It's no accident that another great Jamaican, Rochester-based dance master Garth Fagan, choreographed his most profound pas de deux to Alexander's version of Marley's "No Woman No Cry."

Who knows if Alexander will play any reggae jazz at the festival, for his repertoire is wide ranging, and whatever he plays will most certainly be excellent. Nonetheless, I highly recommended his Bob Marley interpretations.