

the iguanas

THE IGUANAS ARE (L-R):

RENÉ COMAN: bass, keyboards, vocals

JOE CABRAL: saxophone, bajo sexto, vocals

DOUG GARRISON: drums, percussion

ROD HODGES: guitar, accordion, vocals



What if Americana actually encompassed ALL of the Americas? You'd have the Tejano and Conjunto sounds of the Texas/Mexico border region, as best exemplified by the accordion and bajo sexto, the American South's Blues, Jazz and New Orleans R&B, and the lilting grace and fiery passion of the music of the Caribbean, Mexico and Colombia. You'd also have New Orleans' premier distillers of this musical mélange, The Iguanas.

Taking their cues from all of the above influences and then some, the band's music redefines the notion of Americana, crossing cultures, styles, eras... and even languages. It's as if Rue Bourbon, Muscle Shoals and Plaza México were all within earshot of each other and The Iguanas were the musical conduit between them.

Based out of New Orleans for the past couple of decades -- save for a short, Katrina-imposed exile in Austin — the members of the Iguanas have (collectively or individually) played or recorded with everyone from Charlie Rich, Alex Chilton, and Willy DeVille to Emmylou Harris, Allen Toussaint, and Pretty Lights. Their two-decade ride has taken them all over the map musically and geographically, yet the inescapable patina of their hometown infuses every note they play.

Through eight studio albums, countless tours and Jazz Fest appearances, and a flood in 2005 that did its best to take their adopted city with it, it's a testament to the band's endurance that the same four guys that started playing in the early 1990s are still together. Joe Cabral is philosophical about the band's persistence in the face of challenges that would have felled — indeed have felled — lesser bands. “First of all, this is all we know how to do; we're musicians. But more than that,” he continues, “we respect the power of the band as an entity, and each individual in the band steps up to play his part. When it's good, that's really what it's all about.”

Rod Hodges agrees. “I don't want to get all heady and mystical about this, but it's not really an outward reward we're looking for. We all enjoy playing music, we all get along, and finding a group of people who can say that after all this time is a rare thing.”

<http://www.iguanas.com>