

[Facebook](#)[Twitter](#)[More](#)

BLUES FESTIVAL E-GUIDE MAR 18, 2021 VOL 16 / ISSUE 12

Women of the Blues: Voice of Social Consciousness



By Lynn Orman

"You can't have a movement without the music," Pops Staples

This year people may have been standing far apart, but they have stood closer together in thought and action for the first time since the Civil Rights Movement. Singing their way to justice. Singing truth to power. Women of the Blues are a voice of social consciousness.

MAVIS STAPLES

The Staple Singers gospel-folk performances at marches, rallies and churches, inspired participants to keep them in high spirits. Pops said about Dr. King, "If he can preach it, we can sing it." Their song "Freedom Highway" was about the march. The first song Pops ever taught [Mavis Staples](#) and her siblings was "Will The Circle Be Unbroken," clearly an anthem for today. Throughout her life Mavis Staples has been a champion for civil rights and social justice through her music. This was very apparent when Mavis teamed up with Chicago musician Jeff Tweedy's "Peaceful Dream" on her 2017 album, *If All I Was Was Black*. Released in April 2020, *All In It Together*, has all proceeds going to [My Block, My Hood, My City](#) organization.

KOKO TAYLOR

"I'm A Woman"

Queen of the Blues [Koko Taylor](#) sang as an expression of her deeply rooted connection to her youth growing up in Bartlett, Tennessee. According to her biography, Koko reflected on how a song she had learned from her father in the cotton fields, appeared on her album *Old School*, alongside her own compositions. "She grew up in blues culture, as a sharecropper and learning from listening to other singers, not just to records," said Bruce Iglauer, Alligator Records founder. Koko Taylor has been an inspiration to women around the world.

SHEMEKIA COPELAND

Crowned the new Queen of the Blues, [Shemekia Copeland](#)'s voice defines "an instrument for social justice" — her songs are steeped in powerful lyrics, her voice is a gospel-tinged surrender to a sermon of hope and despair. She belts out sanctified verses that make you feel the power of her music deep down in your soul. *Uncivil War* is her newest project released in October 2020 on Alligator Records during the pandemic and civil unrest in America.



MELODY ANGEL

What's it like living in the world as a Black woman? [Melody Angel](#) (that's her real name) answers that question in her music and her movement. Her new album, *She Black*, defines songs of consciousness like, "Invisible Girl," "Freedom" and "Give The Power To The People." Melody Angel creates blues rock penned with a purpose and penchant to make change as evident in; "In This America," "Keep On Knocking," "A Woman's Blues," and her documentary, *Black Girl Rock* on her [YouTube channel](#). Melody has been on a marathon, not just a march, for justice for Breonna Taylor. She runs every day (3-5 miles) until there is justice. At press time she has run 287 days.

PHOTOS:

*Mavis Staples, Koko Taylor, Shemekia Copeland, photo by Amanda Gresham

*Melody Angel photo ©Jeanne D'Arc Media

RETURN TO THIS WEEK'S: Blues Festival E-Guide

For Gmail users:

By default, emails may get into the Promotions tab in Gmail.

Please check your Promotions tab for the download links and follow these instructions to make sure other important RBA Publishing info is delivered to your main inbox:

In your Promotions tab, drag any RBA Publishing/Reggae Festival Guide/Blues Festival Guide email and drop it over to the Primary tab.

Choose "Yes" to confirm that you never want to miss our news.

For Yahoo!, Hotmail, and AOL users:

Yahoo!, Hotmail and AOL are using overly strong spam-blocking filters that are very likely to stop you from receiving our emails.

Please set up your spam filters to allow mail from the info@BluesFestivalGuide.com and Info@ReggaeFestivalGuide.com to ensure continuous delivery of our important content.

That's it! Now you can stay up-to-date.

Blues Festival Guide • PO Box 920 • Arcata, CA 95518

bluesfestivalguide.com



[Subscribe](#) • [Preferences](#) • [Send to a Friend](#) • [Unsubscribe](#) • [Report Spam](#)

Powered by [MyNewsletterBuilder](#)

