

"I HAD THIS CRAZY IDEA TO GO PLAY THE MOST REMOTE BARS IN THE WORLD THAT ARE SORT OF TUNED INTO JIMMY BUFFETT MUSIC."



Jimmy Buffett is back at it again, playing another farewell tour.  
Sort of.  
"I don't know this time, I don't know," Buffett says, laughing and following it up with a long pause for effect.  
Then, he spills: "No, it won't be my last tour by any stretch of the imagination. But, I've been threatening to take just a year off for about five years. I haven't had a summer off in 20 years. I may just take a summer but I'll certainly be back after that. I used to threaten to retire, but I don't want to retire. I just want a little time off."

Buffett, speaking by phone from Denver, says the 46-date, 32 city **Outpost Tour** combines music-recent and old, a lot of old, "some of which you haven't heard for a long, long time"- with theatrics. He's drawing raves and full venues.

Outpost is Buffett's for-the-meantime way of living an idea that has yet to be fully developed.

"It was just sort of an imaginable thing...I'd had this crazy idea to go play the 10 or 12 most remote bars in the world that are sort of tuned, or are a soundtrack, to Jimmy Buffett music."

But he's not packing bars these days.

Buffett, according to *Billboard* magazine, for which he once worked, annually is among the top five grossing acts of the summer concert season. Buffett is living proof that you can always get what you want, and longevity is part of it.

"What keeps me going is I fortunately have a job that I love to do, I've always been addicted to live performing. I think that has a lot to do with the popularity and the fact that there are *not* a lot of people out there-even in successful terms-that are really that hooked into their audiences. Most people are forced into this marketing, kind of record company theory that you're forced into having a video and doing things that, to me, are for a very short-circuited career. Mine has been a long-circuited career."

"I've been fortunate, as it happens, to bring a younger audience with me; that's the real survivability key. I also have fans that are my age [44], but then I look out at the audience and there are 18 year-olds. I think they're looking for something that is fun, that is like it used to be, that you can go and have a great time and not be at the mercy of machines and people who give you a basic show."

Getting there wasn't easy. Buffett wasn't an overnight sensation. "You gotta remember, Jimmy started in my bar, Captain Tony's. That was back in the hippie days [early 70's] with the love kids," according to Capt. Tony Tarracino, current elected Mayor of Key West, FL.

Tarracino, who prefers "Capt. Tony" to "mayor" or "your honor," recalls playing host to a load of aspiring musicians. "Jimmy walks in and says to me, 'Man, I'd like to play here sometime.'" So Capt. Tony hired Buffett-for 10 bucks and 2 beers. Capt. Tony says all he can recall from Buffett's first gig in the bar was that nobody clapped. "I ought to get back my

10 bucks and 2 beers."

Over the years Capt. Tony has watched Buffett develop the art of telling a story, delivering the message. That's the key to his shows the mayor says. "The remarkable thing is his ability to talk to the generations. Twenty years ago he was singing to the kids and they liked it. Today he's singing to the kids and they like it, and so do all those other (older) kids. He's like perpetual, you know what I mean?"

#### GIVING UP MARGARITAS?

"It's called aging," Buffett says. "I had a good run at it, and that's what I think of when I see kids at the show today. I made background music to a rite of passage. But I lived that rite of passage, now it's there for other people to do. When hangovers became illnesses, I thought, Whoa! I was very lucky to live through all that."

Now his family, composing music, writing books, touring, flying, fishing, tending the needs of his various enterprises, staying physically fit and vacationing provide the tonic for Buffett. And when he's not encumbered by any, or all, of those, he finds time for environmental and educational causes.

"But I bascially like to take it easy," Buffett says. "I get away from the humdrum, I put my guitar away when the season's over. It's what keeps performing again very fresh to me."

"My off time and my time out of the public light, I would prefer to live where I'm comfortable, as opposed to where it's fashionable. A lot of people I know, their social lives are just an extension of their public lives, and I aim not to do that."

You'll hear a Buffett tune on the radio just slightly more often than you'll see a shark across the street, yet the entertainer continues to thrive. Radio stations most often play the standards; "Margaritaville" and "Come Monday," but little else.

Buffett says his 1989 release "Off To See The Lizard" is his favorite album and had all the elements to be a smash. It wasn't. "There was an album that had, to me, everything; it had enough freshness, great songs, a great producer. There are songs on there that I play in concert, 4 or 5 songs that could have been hit records. It's a durable and lasting record. It had enough modernization that the record company should've gotten into it...it didn't happen, they went about it the wrong way."

"I used to be a lot more adamant

about it [lack of airplay] and fight for it, but it was wasted energy," he says. "And so now it doesn't matter if I get a song on the radio. The only thing I can do is set myself into a position where I've got my best shot, and that's what I'm doing. I'll wait until that time to do another record."

"I'd love to go back in and do an album, and I think that everything will work out," he says. "I've just resolved myself to the fact that recording is like the third priority of mine." Right now touring and writing books comes first, Buffett says.

"I love that I've established myself as a writer, because that's what I always really wanted to do before I got into rock 'n roll. So I can juggle the two of those and be very bappy."

"I still think I've got a great record left in me," says Buffett, who has two platinum and four gold albums. "I could be the George Foreman of rock 'n roll."

*From an interview with Steve Greenberg, Sports Editor of the Lafayette, IN Journal & Courier*

*From an interview with George Varga, Pop Music Critic for the San Diego Union.*

"People name boats after my songs, they move because of my songs. I certainly never figured any of that would happen, but it's there, and I have to realize that."

More than music and zany outfits, Parrot Head-dom is a celebratory way of life. To a neophyte Buffett concertgoer, all the fuss might seem a mystery. But to his many devotees, attending a Buffett concert is as American as Mom, apple pie and maitais. "It definitely goes beyond the music, but beyond me making the songs at the time, I don't know much about what goes on when other people interpret them. But I do have the good sense to not say, 'OK, I'm not going to do any of the old songs anymore.'

"There's a basic set that people want to hear, and I'm not going to deprive them of that. Because, to me, that's what an entertainer does—he provides a few enjoyable moments for people who use that to alleviate the rigors of modern life."

Most, if not all, of Jimmy's free time is now spent on his next novel tenta-



Photo: Jean Pagliuso

"I hope this doesn't burst your bubble, but I could care less who you guys are." John Ansbaugh, Des Moines, IA, commenting on the last issue of the Coconut Telegraph.

## **S**OUTH OF THE REAL WORLD *is a collection of thirty-four songs written and performed by Key's musicians.*

Mark Lindas, workshop manager of the Monroe Association for Retarded Citizens (M.A.R.C.) had the idea to make a cassette tape of Key West performers as a way of raising money for the association. As someone who has appreciated Key's music for years, it seemed that this would be a way to expose the talent here; make a recording that would be enjoyed by locals and tourists, and raise money.

Mark approached Vicki Roush, a well-known Key West performer, who in turn contacted Ben Harrison, a songwriter who has performed and recorded in Key West for years. Together they went about the mechanics of producing an album.

All agreed that the tape should be as inclusive as possible—boogie woogie, country, show style, jazz, hippie, older, younger, darker, lighter—and it is a marvelous blend of the music being played here. With the exception of Shel Silverstein, who donated "The Great Conch Train Robbery," the musicians on the tape are the working musicians who go on stage night after night playing their music. Some of the musicians were born here and have lived here their entire lives. Most of the musicians have been here for over ten

years, while a couple of the 'newcomers' who contributed songs have been here for only four or five years.

*This special musical presentation of the Florida Keys, much like the very 'unreal' city of Key West, has a lingering flavor that exists in no other place...nor in any other state of mind. A hearty mix of the most talented Keys musicians, island images, sun and blue waters...recollections, tall tales and imagination that has been dedicated to a very special population. The Monroe*

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*ording will return to the Monroe Association for Retarded Citizens, the sole provider of the residential, educational and vocational opportunities for our mentally retarded citizens and your new friends.*



### SOUTH OF THE REAL WORLD

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ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT M.A.R.C.

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Photo: Jean Fagins

tively titled "Who Is Joe Merchant?" The pressure is on after the success of "Tales From Margaritaville." The novel about a free-wheeling Alaskan seaplane pilot, is at 600 pages and counting after some firsthand research flying to such remote Alaskan outposts as Dutch Harbor and Cold Bay.

"I think I held off my writing, in that it seems to have come at the right time when, fortunately, I still have a thriving career, unlike a lot of middle-aged rockers out there who are either dinosaurs or over the hill. I'm very thankful for that.

"But writing a novel, as I'm finding out, is a hell of a lonely, tedious and demanding thing to do because it's just you."

Delighted by his ascent into middle-age, Buffett now intends to do anything and everything that strikes his creative fancy.

"I'd like to make a career out of being uncategorizable. I want people to say, 'He did this and he did that, but what did he really do?' That sort of fits me."



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Jimmy, your music is great-you don't have to sell sex to sell concerts, please don't fall into that trap! Becky Laughlin, Ft Worth, IN.

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**"THERE'S A BASIC SET THAT PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR, AND I'M NOT GOING TO DEPRIVE THEM OF THAT. BECAUSE, TO ME, THAT'S WHAT AN ENTERTAINER DOES-HE PROVIDES A FEW ENJOYABLE MOMENTS FOR PEOPLE WHO USE THAT TO ALLEVIATE THE RIGORS OF MODERN LIFE."**

In this age of over-sensitivity, where photos, paintings, movies and records must pass the muster of some pursed lipped, anal retentive committee, Robert Maplethorpe has nothing on Jimmy Buffett. At least according to Jean Rosenbluth of the Los Angeles Times. These are indeed strange times; a song, a painting, a photo, etc. is guaranteed to offend someone, somewhere. Jean Rosenbluth has reached to new depths in self-righteous indignation, condemning Jimmy Buffett for singing "Volcano" (a song written 13 years ago), in total indifference to the victims of a volcanic eruption in the Philippines.

Miss Rosenbluth has developed a very strong dislike for Jimmy, commenting negatively on the quality of entertainment, his performance, his writing ability and even his fans; referring to Parrot Heads as birdbrains. Birdbrains!

It is not necessary for me to defend Jimmy. Several things are obvious; he can write well, he can entertain a crowd, and he is not responsible for the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo.

Miss Rosenbluth-lighten up.

...And if music critics don't like that-and some don't-Buffett doesn't care.

*"I just don't listen to them anymore, because as Faulkner said, 'I don't read reviews-they hurt my feelings.' (Critics) say, 'Well, he's just playing the same old ----.' Well that's what people pay to see. I'm an entertainer, and until I can't fill up seats, I'm not going to listen to any of that (criticism).*

*"I listen to my audience. I connect with my audience. I don't play at my audience, I play for my audience."*



Photo: Ray Stanyard

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