

Marin Independent Journal

Paul Liberatore's Lib at Large: Slim's book



Valentine's Day 1989, left to right, Doc Kupka, Bonnie Raitt, Bob Brown, Corey Lerios, Alex Call, Huey Lewis, Mike Duke, Bonnie Hayes and Andre Pessis. (Photo by Erik Weber)

There were no blues clubs in the city in 1988, when Boz Scaggs and Marin's Bob Brown, then manager of Huey Lewis and the News, opened Slim's in a vacant building on 11th Street. Weber was the house photographer for the club's first four years, when blues founders like Albert King, Pinetop Perkins, Hubert Sumlin, Gatemouth Brown, Champion Jack Dupree, Jimmy Rogers, Earl King, Jimmy McCracklin, Lonnie Mack, Charles Brown, Lowell Fulson, Koko Taylor, Johnnie Taylor, Jimmy McGriff and others too numerous to mention were still around to show the rest of us how it's done.

Weber, who already had a counterculture reputation as the photographer who took the iconic photo on the cover of Richard Brautigan's "Trout Fishing in America," was at Slim's every night, taking pictures of all of the above and some other headliners you may have heard of — Marianne Faithfull, Billy Joel, the Fabulous Thunderbirds, Irma Thomas, Rickie Lee Jones, Elvis Costello, Dr. John, Sergio Mendes, Nick Lowe, Warren Zevon. I could go on. In 130 pages of mostly black-and-white photos, he captured a phenomenal era in American roots music that has come and gone. At long last, he brings it all back with this collection.

“I’ve been sitting on these photos all this time,” says Weber, 75, speaking by phone from his home in Plumas County’s Indian Valley, where he’s lived for the past 20 years. “My wife, Sally, said you’ve got to get them into a book before you go. So we got it together.”

Weber could only afford to print 20 copies, so I’m particularly grateful for mine. But if you’d like to contribute to the cost of a new edition or get more information on “One Hundred Seventy Two Nights at Slim’s,” contact Weber at erik@desart.com or go to his website, desart.com.