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NOW WE'RE TALKIN'

By Helen Marketti

AN INTERVIEW WITH AL JARDINE

Al Jardine and Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys will be performing the album, *Pet Sounds* at the Hard Rock Rocksino on April 22nd. Fans will be entertained by signature songs on the album, *God Only Knows*, *Wouldn't It Be Nice* and *Sloop John B*. Al was kind enough to take some time out during his busy schedule recently to discuss the tour, current projects and the longevity of his career and friendship with Brian Wilson.

If you were born in time to witness the music of The Beach Boys first hand then you were around during an ideal time for music when the transformation of the 60s progressed, as did the musicians of that era. The Beach Boys were a presence in the 60s as they still are today. Their music gave a voice to the thoughts people wanted to express. Sometimes when we do not know what to say we may choose a song as a substitute for our own words because the song says it best. The catalog of Beach Boys music can capture any feeling or thought and it is with words we know and love.

Everything, of course, has its beginning. Al fell into playing the guitar quite naturally. "I remember seeing a guitar and wanted to learn how to play it. I was influenced by my heroes such as Buddy Holly, Bill Haley and Elvis Presley. My mom also bought me a ukulele when I was six years old," remembers Al. "When I was growing up, I listened to doo-wop, rock, country and western. I loved The Four Freshmen, Gilbert & Sullivan and The Kingston Trio. The Four Freshmen were a musical experience and I loved their harmonies while The Kingston Trio was an escapist experience. They provided a way for me to travel musically. They took me places such as Mexico, Jamaica and Florida. All of us are Capitol Records artists too, so we all kind of borrowed from each other such as The Kingston Trio doing "The Wreck of The John B" in 1958 and then we included our version on the *Pet Sounds* album as "Sloop John B."

It is hard to believe that it has been 51 years since the *Pet Sounds* album was released. People have grown up with the classic songs and new generations are discovering the music. "It made sense in 2016 to do a tour for the 50th anniversary of the album," said Al. "I love playing with Brian. We are very entertaining together. We have a wonderful band that has become our orchestra. They can play anything! My son, Matt is also in the band. He basically grew up during The Beach Boys and is a highlight for many fans at every show as is Blondie Chaplin who played with us in the early 70s. This year we are continuing the tour and now celebrating the 51st anniversary."

Al and Brian have a friendship that has lasted more than 50 years which perhaps is the best gift of all for a band that has been a household name for many generations. "Our friendship is the largest part of the reason that The Beach Boys continue. After the reunion tour ended in 2012, we just decided to keep it going, to continue the tour together."

Fans are always hungry for the 60s era of music, the bands that shaped the counter culture and the songs that made us think, cry, smile and remember. "I would have to say that the music of that time and the iconic personalities like Brian are what keeps fans interested," said Al. "People are more curious these days. They want to see the artists that made the music and hear the albums in their entirety. That is a remarkable accomplishment in itself. We got lucky and are fortunate to still be able to offer the music the way it was supposed to be heard."

Al keeps his inspiration going by the energy of others. "Working with young people helps, people that are still excited about the music. Their excitement is contagious and helps us stay focused. We like their young point of view and they know all of The Beach Boys standards, which we do play in addition to *Pet Sounds*."

In 2010, Al released a solo project, "A Postcard from California" which has several tracks that remind of us warm memories, fun experiences with some new material as well as familiar staples. Al's inspiration for the album started with a childhood memory. "My parents took my brother and me to California during the 50's on a trip. It was very exciting to see the mountains and the ocean for the first time. My first flight across the United States was an adventure of all time and it was a great experience. Then we eventually moved to LA where I met Brian, his family and the rest is history. Actually, it's still happening, it feels like we are embarking in a whole new direction."

In addition to the *Pet Sounds* tour, one of Al's next projects is to release the album, "A Postcard from California" on vinyl.

Whether you have been a Beach Boys fan since they first hit the airwaves or a fan that has discovered them in the generations that followed, you are in for great memories and timeless music at the Hard Rock Rocksino on April 22nd!

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Brian Wilson, Al Jardine and band
Photo Credit: Drew & Robbie Jardine

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