

# CAJUN ROOSTERS

AWARD WINNING CAJUN & ZYDECO MUSIC FROM LOUISIANA

**Chris Hall**  
cajun accordion, vocals, 2. fiddle

**Hartmut Hegewald**  
fiddle, rubboard, vocals

**Hazel Scott**  
vocals, guitar

**Michael Bentele**  
bass

**Sam Murray**  
drums, rubboard,  
vocals, lapsteel



The Cajun Roosters are a five piece band specialising in the music of SW Louisiana, deep in the South of the USA.

Over the last few years a new sound has been gaining momentum here in Europe. More and more bands have been visiting these shores bringing a new sound from over the atlantic ocean. This music is using familiar instruments like guitars, accordions and fiddles played in a way that is fresh and vibrant. Its home is in swamps and prairies of Southwest Louisiana but bands from over the seas are finding a warm welcome in clubs and festivals 3000 miles away from their roots. The music isn't new of course, its traditions are centuries old but to many people here in Europe it comes like a breath of fresh air. With its driving beat, heartfelt emotions, and trance like melodies it strikes a chord with 21st century ears.

This music is called Cajun and Zydeco music and just like in the 1960's with the blues, European bands are taking it and honouring its traditions whilst at the same time giving it a new twist. One of the main bands in Europe promoting this music are The Cajun Roosters. We aren't from Louisiana but we play respect to its masters and our heroes. We dig deep into its roots (some of us in this band have been digging now for over 30 years!) and aim to share our love of this unique sound.

So who are The Cajun Roosters? Formed five years ago by some of the most respected musicians of this genre they quickly established a reputation as the band most likely to bring this music to a wider public. They were picked up by Mark Lamarr and invited to be in session on his BBC show for Radio 2 "Gods jukebox". Previous to this UK based accordion player and vocalist Chris Hall was invited to record with the likes of Kate Bush and Bill Wyman and also recorded and appeared on TV with ex Beatle and rock god Sir Paul McCartney.

Mark Lamarr said on his show "there should be revival of this music" ..... If any band are placed to ignite this revival it's the Cajun Roosters" Over the last few years they have headlined major festivals all over Europe whilst at the same time collaborating with US musicians on recordings and tours.

Their latest projects in the making alongside tours with major Louisiana acts is a the **new album 'okra and a pepper' (released feb 5th 2001)** featuring new vocalist Hazel Scott and an album of recordings with special guests (Grammy nominee Cedric Watson, Dwayne Dopsie, Corey Ledet, The Lafayette Rhythm Devils, Yvette Landry and Sarah Savoy). It's about working together to promote this music and bring it to a wider public in every way we can.

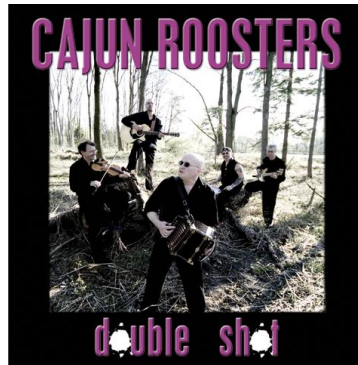
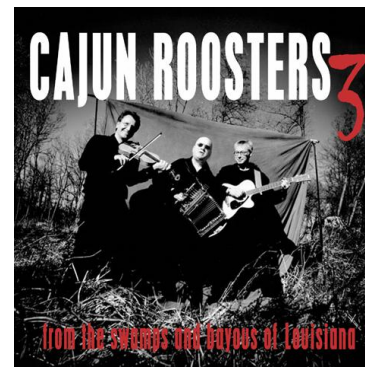
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## CD's/AWARDS



Their **first CD 'Crank it up'** recorded in Munich received rave reviews and picked up many radio and TV appearances! Down home, dirty, and dangerous Cajun & Zydeco recorded with passion to honour the Louisiana Masters. They were subsequently invited to the UK as studio session guests on Mark Lamarr's BBC2 prestigious radioshow 'God's Jukebox' and chosen for his end of year highlights of 2008 shows.

The **follow up CD 'Double Shot'** recorded in Dortmund and Derby/UK and released in November 2008 cemented their reputation as supreme 'swamp meisters' of the Cajun groove!

Some indication of the reputation of the band is reflected in the many awards which have come their way since they formed.

### **NEW CD 'OKRA AND PEPPER' RELEASED FEB 5th 2011**

#### **AWARDS**

**The Band received several awards 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 at the European Cajun & Zydeco Awards in Raamsdonksveer/NL:**

2009, 2008, 2007 and 2006: Best European Cajun Band four consecutive years!

2009: Chris Hall: Best European Zydeco Accordion player

2009, 2008, 2007 and 2006: Chris Hall: Best European Cajun Accordion player four consecutive years!

2009 and 2008: Hartmut Hegewald 1st runner up best cajun fiddle player

2009: Sam Murray: 1st runner up 'Best European Scrubboardplayer'

2008: CD "From the Swamps and Bayous of Louisiana" : 1st runner up best European Cajun CD

2006: CD "Crank it up": Best European Cajun CD

#### **CFMA Awards in Lafayette Louisiana (the "Cajun grammys"):**

2009: CD "Double Shot" 1st runner up and 'Best Cajun CD from outside Louisiana'

2009: CD "From the swamps and bayous of Louisiana" 2nd runner up and 'second best Cajun CD from outside Louisiana'

(NB the only time in CFMA history a band has taken both these places for this award)

2007: CD "Crank it up" 1st runner up and 'Best Cajun CD from outside Louisiana'

# PRESSQUOTES

## **Trowbridge Festival UK, 2009**

"If you're looking for Cajun / Zydeco then look no further than Cajun Roosters - we booked them because they're the best in the business - we love 'em"

Christine Briars, Festival Director, Trowbridge Village Pump Festival, UK

## **Neu-Ulmer Zeitung, Ulmer Zelt, 05/2009**

Cajun Roosters fans response was overwhelming.... great feedback from 400 people at Ulmer Zelt, the Cajun Roosters are masters of their trade...

## **bluerhythm magazine 01/2009 :**

...templates from the old testament of cajun, blues from the legendary Excello label, stomping zydeco and a honky-tonk in 50's style.... with their well chosen classics and own repertoire this five piece band delivers a great swamp sound...

## **bluesnews 04/2009 :**

...the Cajun Roosters perform their very authentic mix of cajun with a side order of zydeco, swamp pop and swamp blues, and the listener feels as if they are in a dance club in Louisiana...

## **Larry Miller, Chairman CFMA, Prix Dehors de Nous Category, Lafayette / Louisiana, 2009**

Congratulations, The Cajun Roosters have won First Runner-up for the CD "Double Shot" and in addition your CD Cajun Roosters3 "from the swamps & bayous of Louisiana" has won the Second Runner-up in the Prix D'Hors de Nous category of the famous Cajun music awards, "Le Cajun".

**That is the first time in our history that a band has placed with two CD's in the same year!**



# FESTIVALS

- Cajun & Zydeco festival, Saulieu (F)
- Cajun & Zydeco festival, Opwijk (B)
- Cajun & Zydeco festival, München (D)
- Cajun & Zydeco festival, Ravensburg (D)
- Cajun & Zydeco festival, Soest (D)
- Cajun & Zydeco festival, Baasem (D)
- Gloucester Cajun & Zydeco Festival (GB)
- Bristol Cajun & Zydeco Festival (GB)
- Cajun & Zydecofestival, Raamsdonksveer (NL)
- Zydeco at Sea Festival, Ameland (NL)
- Louisiana Ball, Hainichen (D)
- Burghausen Jazz festival (D)
- Bietigheim Jazz festival (D)
- Hildesheim Jazz Festival (D)
- Lichtensteig Jazz Festival (CH)
- Breda Jazz Festival (NL)
- Gronau Jazz Festival (D)
- Füssen Jazz Festival (D)
- Kempten Jazz Festival (D)
- Ulmer Zelt (D)
- Bremen Maritim Festival (D)
- Skagen Folkfestival (DK)
- Broadstairs Folk Festival (GB)
- Piacenza Folk festival (I)
- Trowbridge Village Pump Folk Festival (GB)
- Tollwood Winter Festival, München (D)
- Tollwood Summer Festival, München (D)
- Festival du Culture (LUX)
- Donauinsel Festival, Vienna (A)
- Nottingham Riverside Festival (UK)

The band plays music from the Louisiana swamps and prairies north west of New Orleans. One of the last great undiscovered musics of the modern world. It is a music which instantly grabs an audience and infuses them with a feeling of bonhomie and good times. Instant happiness as the fiddle and accordion weave their magic spell over unsuspecting audiences. Cajun and Zydeco is the main course mixed with a healthy side order of bayou blues and swamped up rock n roll. Their inspiration comes from players like Nathan Abshire, The Balfa Brothers, Johnnie Allan, Balfa Toujours, John Lafosse, Zydeco Force, Iry Lejeune, Boozoo Chavis, Steve Riley, Canray Fontenot, Slim Harpo, and Amadee Ardoin. They play with energy, intensity and passion, infusing life into old standards and new compositions. It is broadly speaking Cajun and Zydeco with a modern edge played with attitude but with a deep heartfelt respect for the old masters of the tradition. Every gig is a celebration of the richness of a Louisiana musical culture that all the members of this band love and understand. Every gig is non stop Louisiana party. Laissez les bon rouler as they say in Louisiana.

Let the good times roll.

# CAJUN ROOSTERS<sup>3</sup>

Their side project **Cajun Roosters<sup>3</sup>** is a traditional back porch Cajun/Creole trio. They released a CD "From the swamps and bayous of Louisiana" at the start of 2008 that won awards at the CFMA and European Cajun Awards. It's a stripped down sound featuring accordion / twin fiddles / guitar / vocals / and percussion but still has that driving cajun groove. Ideal for smaller venues and festivals and more intimate concert gigs. They have played several major venues and festivals including a 25 date non stop tour of Germany to mostly sold out venues.



### **Chris Hall (Cajun and Zydeco accordion, vocals, fiddle, scrubboard, triangle)**

Since the 70's Louisiana accordion boss man Chris Hall, living in Derby/UK, has become widely known through his work with R.Cajun & the Zydeco Brothers, The Bearcats, Zydecomotion and US/UK band Breaux. His reputation is such that he was called on by ex Rolling Stone Bill Wyman to play on his album and was also part of the band put together by ex Beatle Sir Paul McCartney to record his "Run Devil Run" album. He was also called in by Kate Bush to contribute to her last album. His company Swampmusic is responsible for many tours and concerts of Louisiana artists in Europe and through its work he has spent many hours on the road with guys like Steve Riley, John Delafosse, Randy Vidrine, Mitch Reed, Geno Delafosse, Sean Ardoin, and Sean Vidrine absorbing their DNA through musical osmosis. He has a huge knowledge of C/Z which he put to good use on his own radio series on BBC Radio 2 and has been playing the music for almost 30 years with bands in Europe and with fellow musicians from Louisiana. With the Cajun Roosters he fronts a powerhouse band on vocals, Cajun accordion, triple row Zydeco accordion and occasional fiddle, all learnt from the masters at first hand.

### **Hazel Scott (vocals, guitar)**

Hazel Scott's rhythm guitar, although learnt first hand from the Louisiana masters like Randy Vidrine, has developed into her own style which is both powerful and driving. But its her vocals that make her a world class addition to the Rooster sound. Described by highly respected musicians in Louisiana as "awesome" "right on the money" and "the business" she has rapidly gained a reputation as one of the most authentic Cajun vocalists around. And since Cajun music is her first love she's undeniably in the right place up on stage with The Cajun Roosters. With the addition of Hazel Scott the band have a new secret weapon that will help raise the bar for Cajun bands this side of the Atlantic.

### **Hartmut Hegewald (fiddle, scrubboard, vocals)**

A fine, award winning, musician, he has a rare and uncanny ability to really get to grips with the subtlety of the Cajun style and capture the elusive Louisiana feel. He has studied the masters with great passion and has emerged as one of the few players outside Louisiana who really understand how to get the real Cajun sound. The fiddle is an essential part of Cajun music playing complex rhythms and soaring solos. He locks into a groove with the accordion that forms the driving front end of The Roosters sound. On Zydeco numbers he plays the scrubboard which he learnt first hand from the great Joe Chavis from Lawtell Louisiana. He is an internationally known master guitar maker, building custom acoustic guitars, mandolins and ukuleles.

### **Michael Bentele (bass, guitar)**

Has known the Louisiana Cajun scene for many years. During the 80's he went to Louisiana for the first time to do an interview with legendary Cajun fiddler Dewey Balfa and other Cajun musicians for a documentary film about the music. From that moment on he has been in love with the sounds of the swamp and has spent his time studying and playing the music of his heroes, writing articles on the music for national press, running his own Cajun record label, and organising the well known German International Cajun and Zydeco festival. As a documentary film maker and TV director of many legendary music shows he has been around many kinds of music all his life. Yet one thing has remained constant, his love and passion for Cajun and Zydeco. He plays bass with drive and soul and switches to acoustic guitar on some songs for a more back porch feel.

### **Sam Murray (drums, scrubboard, vocals, triangle,lapsteel)**

He is one of the finest Cajun and Zydeco drummers this side of the Atlantic who has played in many bands of this genre and is the first choice for visiting US musicians. The great Marc Savoy was overheard to say when watching him play in London "I wish we had more guys like him in Louisiana" He has toured in the bands of many of the great Louisiana Cajun and Zydeco players, like Steve Riley, Balfa Toujours, Willis Prudhomme, Sheryl Cormier, and Sean Vidrine and is the regular drummer with UK Cajun band The Bearcats. Formerly a UK resident and now living in Holland he is a long-time musical collaborator with Chris Hall and gives the Roosters the most solid backbeat this side of Lafayette. He also plays a mean scrubboard and triangle and has even been known to play bass and guitar in Cajun and Zydeco bands.

# CAJUN & ZYDECO

The word Cajun is a term applied to the people of a particular area of Southwest Louisiana. Their ancestors left France in the 17th century to settle in an area of Canada then known as Acadie, which became Nova Scotia and New Brunswick when the British took over in 1710. The Acadians were deported from their homeland in 1755 by the British Crown when they refused to swear allegiance, and renounce their Catholic faith. Many families were separated and more than a quarter of the 12,000 exiles perished in this sad episode in British colonial history. After 1765 many Acadians arrived in Louisiana where they struggled to recreate their society in the inhospitable swamps and bayous of their new home. For the next 200 years they lived in relative isolation in this harsh landscape and their distinctive culture developed away from the mainstream of American influence until well into the 20th century.

Cajun and Zydeco are regional music styles which flourish in Louisiana despite the efforts of the USA to homogenise all its cultures into one seamless whole. It's a blend of German, Spanish, Scottish, Irish, Anglo American, Afro Caribbean and American Indian influences with a base of French folk tradition. It's a music born of hardship and oppression and is joyous and uplifting despite the sadness of its lyrics. Whilst Cajun music is played by the white French people of Louisiana, Zydeco is the music of the black French speaking population. Though similar in some respects, Zydeco has a heavier helping of Afro Caribbean rhythm and more of a taste of the blues. Zydeco tends to be more rocking, syncopated and funkier than Cajun and is more likely to have English lyrics.

Both types of music are originally for dancing and having a good time. In Louisiana and here in Europe there are dances that go with the music and some people like to learn the moves and try out the dances. The music of The Cajun Roosters is equally suited to concerts and the band can tailor their show for many different situations.



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