

CBQ Review

January 2019

AND NO...I DON'T PLAY REGGAE

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SMOKIN' GUITARS
3. GERMAN CIGARBOXGUITAR FESTIVAL
PLEUTERSBACH
15.-16. SEPTEMBER 2018

GARAGE 3
MISSISSIPPI BLUES BUNCH
ADI HAUKE
DC SNAKEBUSTER
DE HERR RUPPEL
PROFESSOR SNAKEOIL
3 TO 1
CAPTN CATFISH &
MRS. NICKY



Goin' to Germany...

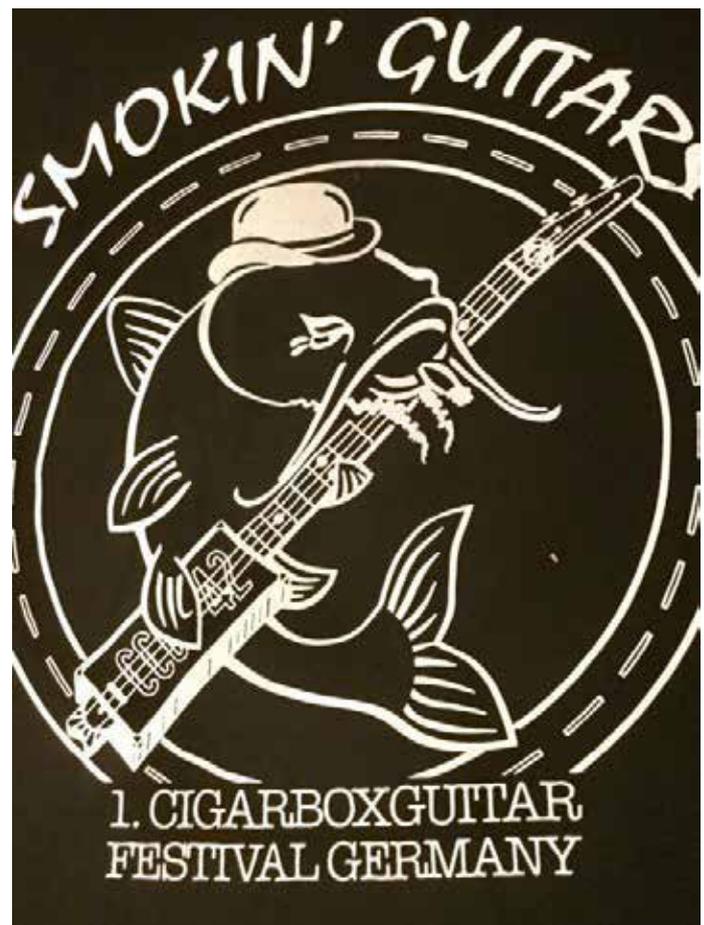
by Cathy Mullaert, Herminie, PA, U.S.A.

My trip to Germany was a snap decision... a friend of mine, Jörg Metz, contacted me and asked if I was interested in going to the German Smokin' Guitars Cigar Box Guitar Festival. The idea was very appealing, especially since I had never been to Europe before and it's where my family originally came from. So a quick call to the travel agent and a bit of luck getting a plane ticket at the last minute – and off I went to the festival with Jörg and his brother Volkar!

Up until three years ago, the cigar box guitar scene in Germany was fairly unorganized. In 2015, Fabian Fahr visited and exhibited at the Delta Calluna Dutch CBG festival where he met Justin Johnson (USA), Rocco Recycle (Germany), and a number of Dutch performers like Gumbo and the Monck, Herman Ouboter, The Boothill Stompers, Bacon Fat Louis and Cigarbox Henri. Justin Johnson even played a number on Fabian's Capt'n Catfish "polarbear" license plate guitar. All this aroused his enthusiasm to organize a similar event in Germany.

And so the first Smokin' Guitars International CBG Festival was born in Germany in 2016, featuring Chickenbone John and Hollowbelly from England, Cigarbox Don from Scotland, Vincent Slegers from Belgium, Gumbo & the Monk, Herman Ouboter und Cigarbox Henri from Holland, Fuxdeiwelswilde, Peter Ruppel, Friedel Geratcsh, the Blues Tones, Van Wolfen and Capt'n Catfish from Germany. If you ask Fabian, the idea behind the festival has always been to connect artists and builders and promote the spirit and sound of CBGs.

The festival is now held annually in September and takes place in the quaint village of Pleutersbach. This year's Smokin' Guitars Festival 2018 has made my travels to Germany unforgettable. The town is huddled on the





From left to right: Jörg Metz, Cathy Mullaert, Onno Nicolas, Adi Hauke and Mike Helming

banks of the river Neckar near Germany's famed Romantic Road Castle Route. The event was combined with the annual village fair to add even more German flavor, including traditional German food, local handmade items for sale and an authentic German musical band playing in the street. The view of the moon over the German mountains and watching the tourist riverboat pass by topped off the festive atmosphere. And another highlight was the Sunday church service in the street on the last day of the festival.

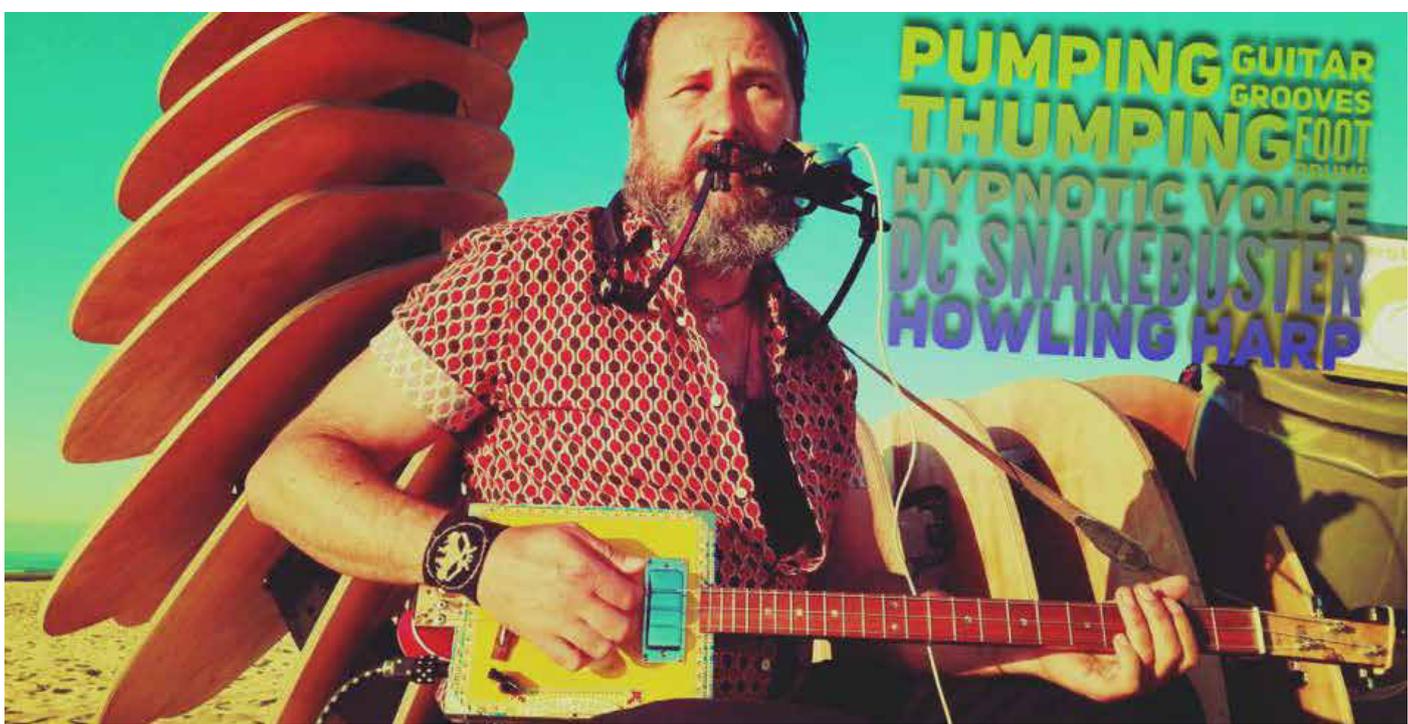
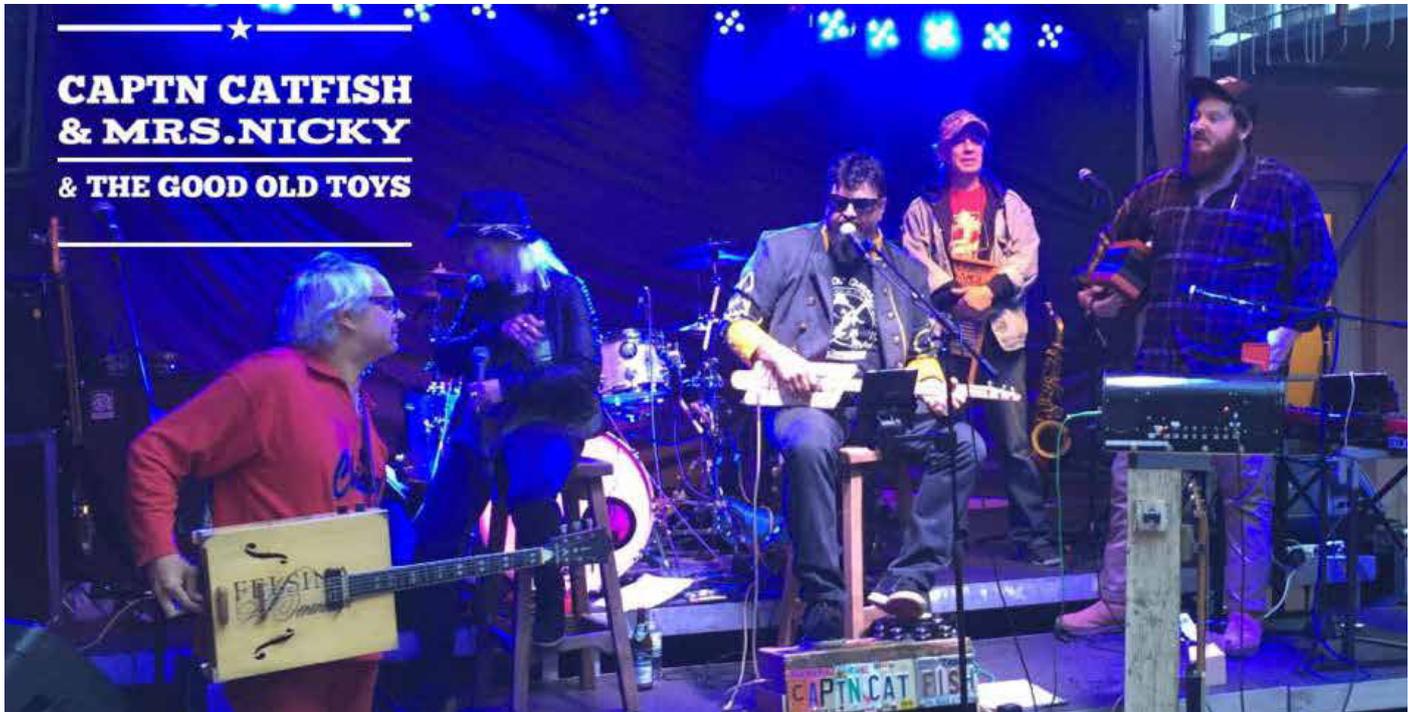
Fabian welcomed me most graciously and gave me a tour of his farm and workshop. Backstage I had the pleasure of meeting not all, but several of the performing musicians and builders. Where do I begin? Along with Fabian Fahr and Nicole Guida (aka Capt'n Catfish and Mrs. Nicky), other German artists included Elke Beck, Andreas Dock, Friedel Geratsch (aka Cigar Box Gery), Thomas Wenzel, Andreas

Großmann, Tobias Langguth, Andy Saitenhieb, Keith Newman, Michael Dittmar, Adi Hauke, Wolf Estal and Peter Ruppel.

"This year's Smokin' Guitars Festival 2018 has made my travels to Germany unforgettable"

Then there was Todd Cecil from the USA who tours in Europe every year performing with professional drummer Benny Sapphire (originally from the USA living in Germany), Reiner Margulies (from Canada living in Germany), Frank Declercq (aka DC Snakebuster), Philippe Hombert, and Jeffrey Robert from Belgium, and Onno Nicolas from Mauritius – the performances were incredible

★
**CAPT'N CATFISH
& MRS. NICKY
& THE GOOD OLD TOYS**



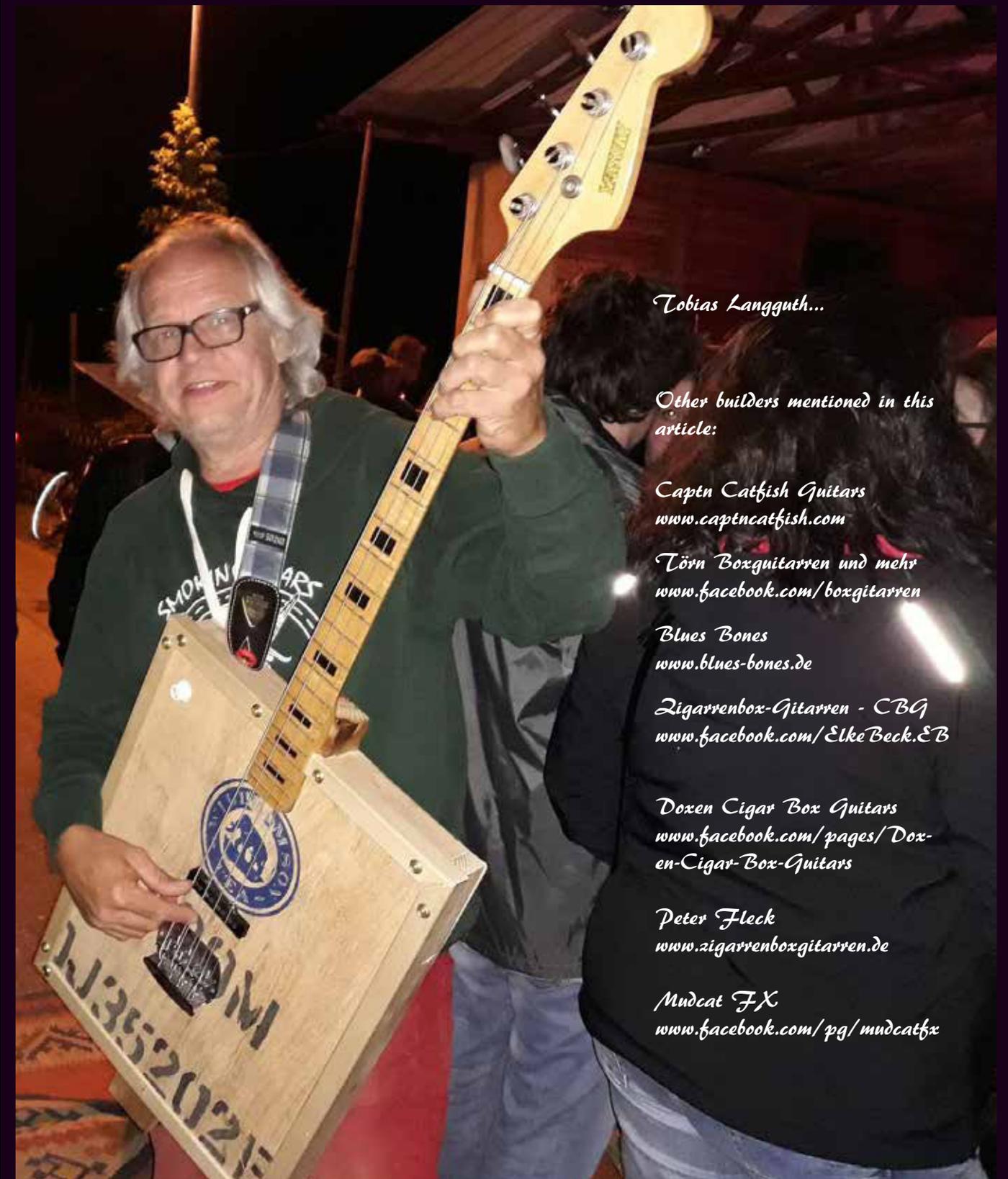
with all these musicians capturing the true spirit of the blues with their homemade instruments. Next year I'm hoping to hear guitarist Andy Mühlrig and slide guitarist Micky Wolf at the Smokin' Guitars Festival 2019, which means I guess I'll have to start saving for my next ticket. They were not at Smokin' Guitars this year, but still welcomed me heartily to Germany.

"...capturing the true spirit of the blues with their homemade instruments"

Strolling through the festival, you could see CBG builders on either side of the street with the most amazing instruments for sale – so much so that I couldn't resist buying three guitars myself from Werner Wende (Törn), Bastian Ortner (Blues Bones) and Elke Beck. I'll no doubt have fun getting them back to the States. I wanted to buy one of Andreas Dock's guitars too, but figured I can't just keep buying all these incredible builds, so I resisted temptation. Two other well-known German builders I would like to mention are Peter Fleck and Jan Hummel (aka Mudcat who also makes awesome guitar pedals). Many of the builders themselves are cigar box guitar players, professional entertainers and music teachers. They all connect with one another throughout the year and are joined by a steady flow of newcomers to the German scene – now including me ☺.

All in all, I've had the trip of a lifetime and it's going to be hard to top, but I'll try... What a life and I owe it all to cigar box guitars! ■





Tobias Langguth...

Other builders mentioned in this article:

*Capt'n Catfish Guitars
www.captencatfish.com*

*Törn Boxgitarren und mehr
www.facebook.com/boxgitarren*

*Blues Bones
www.blues-bones.de*

*Zigarrenbox-Gitarren - CBG
www.facebook.com/ElkeBeck.EB*

*Doxen Cigar Box Guitars
www.facebook.com/pages/Doxen-Cigar-Box-Guitars*

*Peter Fleck
www.zigarrenboxgitarren.de*

*Mudcat FX
www.facebook.com/pg/mudcatfx*