

Wil Forbis and the Gentlemen Scoundrels A Quarter Past Four

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"Forbis has a badass attitude and the guitar chops to back it up, but he also knows how to slow down and engage in authentic self-expression."

- Ben Vaughn, producer, television music composer
(*That 70's Show*, *Third Rock from the Sun*)

Several years after releasing the well-received alt-country CD *Shadey's Jukebox* singer/songwriter Wil Forbis felt the time was right for another recording project. This would be something different: a one-off collection of original jazz tunes far removed from the bluegrass Americana of his previous work. There were, however, several challenges. After years of intense guitar playing and computer use Forbis had developed painful repetitive strain in both his forearms, severely limiting his ability to play and work. "I basically had to quit every band I was in and take it easy for a while," he says. Forbis handed the bulk of guitar chores on the album over to the always capable hands of six-stringer Peter Kavanaugh.

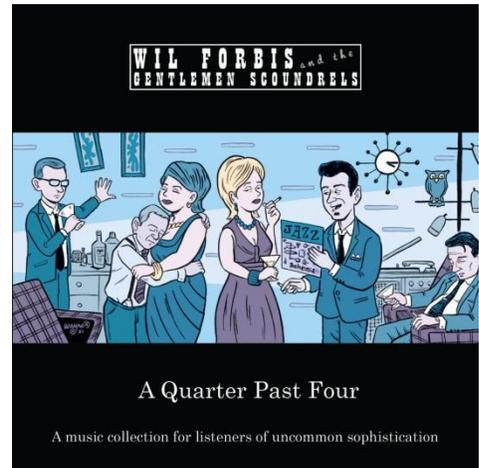


Photo credit: Lara Michelle

Then, weeks before the start date for the project, Forbis woke up feeling dizzy. This was the onset of what would be months of unsteadiness, fatigue and headaches eventually diagnosed as a viral attack on the vestibular (balance) system of his inner ear. "Working on the album became about more than just making music," Forbis says. "It was about focusing on the one good thing going on while everything else was disintegrating."

Some of the material that appears on the album had been a part of Forbis' repertoire of original music for years. However, much of it was new, composed in fitful creative bursts during the album's recording process. "The tune 'Nightflowers' just kind of poured out of me in about 30 minutes," he states. "For the instrumental 'On Hold', I started noodling with some Coltrane ideas and it practically wrote itself. The challenge was keeping up with all the notes as they came into my head."

The final result is an album that both looks to the past and embraces modernity. Some of the tunes capture the essence of vintage jazz, others blend together influences of rock, R&B and fusion into sounds defying easy categorization. For Forbis, the process of creating *A Quarter Past Four* may not have been easy, but it was worth it.

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