Letter to Bill Matthews

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Letter to Bill Matthews

by Brad Donovan

So I grabbed an Atlantic thinking the sucker always gets stuff in here only to read your harrowing news, blue notes graced with elegiac wit, as I recall talk about jazz, and wine, and lost time, our unmeek subject.

So listen to Buster Benton who was “live” at the Silver Cloud, a place long since closed because the owner couldn’t even spell “I.R.S.” and you will hear the train-wail of great nobodies who ditched their day jobs: “I worked 27 years until a locomotive took my leg. Knew everyone way back when but got no ‘tension at all, then I lost this leg but got me my own style.”

While on the turntable, Buster’s Gibson maintains the modal parade and pours heartbreak riffs and years of stuff (we might as well call it the tradition) into the air with a smoky lining.

Brad Donovan is a river guide and a teacher. He studied with Bill Matthews twenty years ago, in Boulder, Colorado.