

"Don't Miss This" | David Vowell Delta Democrat Times

If you missed them the first time, you don't want to miss them this go-around.

For the second time this year, Willie and Me is back home for one night of a rockin' good time. Saturday night One Block East will be filled with old friends and acquaintances of Willie and Me's frontmen and founding members William Coppage and Ron Etheridge, both Greenville natives.

It has been almost three months since the group has graced the Delta with its presence, and a lot has happened in those 12 weeks. The band has completed a long tour on promoting their first album "Magic Show," and under the new direction of manager Geoff Hanson, the foursome is making heading in the Southeastern jam band scene.

I was looking at their newly updated website, www.willieandme.com, and I saw a quote that caught my interest. The quote was how Willie and Me describe their own music.

"(It's) Mississippi music for the soul. Sometimes it's slow. Sometimes it's fast. Sometimes it's happy and sometimes it's sad. Sometimes it's funky and sometimes it's folky. But it's always got soul."

While trying to think of a way to describe their music, I couldn't have found a collaboration of words more fitting. Let me take a second to analyze each phrase.

"Mississippi music for the soul." - Mississippi's rich blues and Southern rock tradition weigh heavily in both Coppage and Etheridge's guitar playing. They reach deep within themselves to find that sound that hits you in the gut and makes you listen them.

"Sometimes it's slow. Sometimes it's fast. Sometime it's happy and sometimes it's sad" - This sounds like more of a vague description of any type of rock music, but holds validity in their song set lists. A slow almost ballad-type song can be followed with upbeat and funk tempos to make your toe tap and your tailfeather shake.

"Sometimes it's funky and sometimes it's folky." - Bassist Jason Moore holds up his end of the bargain with the funky bass riffs. And the folk comes from Greenville's own Aubrey Holman's strong influence on Coppage and Etheridge from years ago. Willie and Me is even known to play a Holman song or two.

"But it's always got soul." - If you listen to just one CD of Willie and Me you will know that soul is there in every lyric and every pluck of a string or tap on a drum. These are just two good ole Delta boys who have found a better place and way to express their music. So take a gander at a CD, you might like it, but if you want the full Willie and Me experience, you must see them live.

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