

Goldberger uncorks rootsy solo disc

CD release party Saturday in Niagara-on-the-Lake

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Steve Goldberger wears so many different hats, he barely has time for his own.

The veteran Niagara musician is a member of three local bands: The Niagara Rhythm Section, the Fringe Locals and the duo Stevie GeeBees with Steve Grisbook. He's so busy, there's no time for any solo gigs to support his newest CD, "The Goldberger Variations."

Instead, he'll join his Niagara Rhythm Section mates to play a few tracks for a CD release party Saturday at Corks in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Playing with different guests every week in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Goldberger says they're used to learning on the fly.

"We're more bluesy and rock and roll, where as this is a lot more rootsy," says Goldberger, one of the region's most respected bass players. "It's more where my roots and real interests lay."

The album includes tunes Goldberger has been performing since the '70s, like Willie P. Bennett's "Lace & Pretty Flowers." Among other covers is Rodney Crowell's "Ain't Livin' Long Like This" and Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are a Changin'."

Making a CD isn't the big deal it was even 10 years ago, Goldberger realizes (he jokingly calls it an egg nog coaster). But even performing a song a thousand times doesn't replace the satisfaction of getting it recorded for keeps.

"It's like, why does a painter paint? You've just gotta do it. If it does well, that's fantastic, but it's part of the creative process."

Solo album or not, however, Goldberger's loyalties remain with the Niagara Rhythm Section. Since starting a weekly gig at The Anchorage restaurant five years ago, they're become known as Niagara-on-the-Lake's resident house band.

With the recent closure of The Anchorage, the band quickly found a new home at Corks (formerly The Buttery) on Queen Street.

"It's such a different place," says Goldberger. "The Anchorage was a huge room, and this one's more like three rooms all in a row, and it's very intimate. People are all around you and the sound is excellent. People have been saying what a difference the sound is."

They won't be leaving anytime soon - the band is booked through to March.

"There were a couple other venues I was going to approach (after The Anchorage closed), but I really wanted to keep it in Niagara-on-the-Lake," he says. "We can walk to the club."

The CD release party starts at 9 p.m. Saturday. "The Goldberger Variations" is available at www.stevegoldberger.com

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