

# ADOLPHUS



# BELL ONE MAN BAND

"...THE ONLIEST MAN IN THE WORLD THAT BEATS THE DRUMS, PLAYS THE GUITAR, SING, TALK, HARMONICA, ALL AT THE SAME TIME."

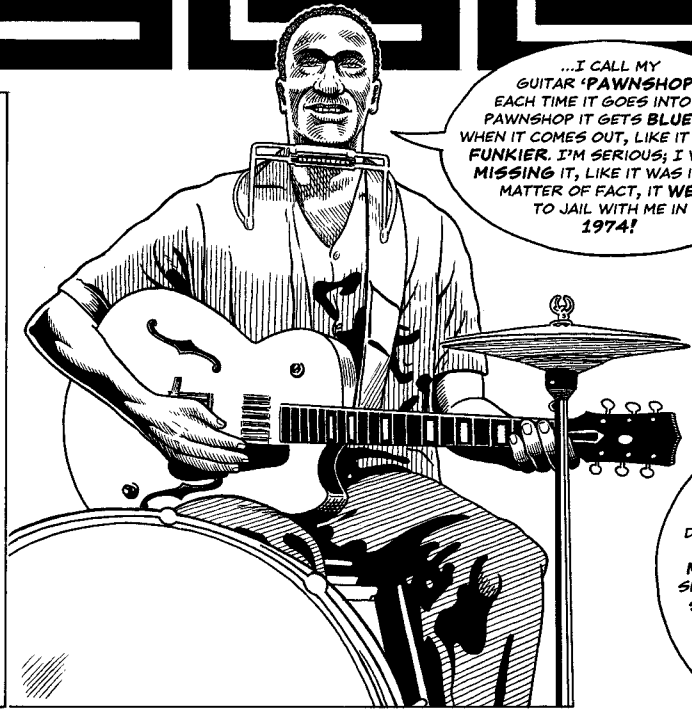
Story and Art BY Gary Dumm

ADOLPHUS BELL (THE ONE-MAN BLUES BAND) WAS BORN ON JUNE 5, 1944 IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA. AS A CHILD GROWING UP THERE, HE WENT TO WORK AS A FARM LABORER IN THE COTTON FIELDS DUE TO HIS FATHER'S UNTIMELY DEATH. MOVING TO PITTSBURGH IN 1962, HE SOON BEGAN PLAYING MUSIC THROUGH THE INFLUENCE OF GUITARIST GEORGE BENSON.

BY THE AGE OF 22, HE DEDICATED HIMSELF TO A FULL-TIME MUSICAL CAREER, FORMING A BAND, BUT AFTER A FEW YEARS BECAME DISENCHANTED WITH THEM. THEY WERE LATE FOR GIGS OR PRACTICE; HE LOANED THEM MONEY, AND THEY STILL DIDN'T SHOW UP ON TIME.

ADOLPHUS FELT THE RHYTHM IN BOTH HIS FEET AND THE GUITAR IN HIS HANDS, SO HE WENT TO A PAWNSHOP, GOT SOME DRUMS AND STARTED PLAYING IN HIS ROOM. HE STAYED THERE PRACTICING EVERYDAY, ABOUT 6 HOURS, FOR NINE MONTHS STRAIGHT. WHEN HE CAME OUT, HE DROPPED HIS UNDEPENDABLE SIDEMEN AND STARTED ON HIS SOLO BLUES JOURNEY THAT HAS CONTINUED FOR 40 YEARS.

HE HAS PLAYED AT HOUSE PARTIES BUT ON THE STREETS SINCE THE LATE SIXTIES HAS BEEN AN ACTIVIST, PERFORMING FOR THE KIDS IN URBAN GHETTOS, TRYING TO EASE FRUSTRATIONS WITH HIS ONE-MAN BAND.



...I CALL MY GUITAR 'PAWNSHOP.' EACH TIME IT GOES INTO THE PAWNSHOP IT GETS BLUESIER WHEN IT COMES OUT, LIKE IT SOUNDS FUNKIER. I'M SERIOUS; I WILL BE MISSING IT, LIKE IT WAS IN JAIL. MATTER OF FACT, IT WENT TO JAIL WITH ME IN 1974!

THIS MUSIC THING IS NO JOKE. YOU GOT TO DEDICATE YOURSELF TO IT OR LEAVE IT ALONE. I HAVE DEDICATED MY LIFE TO IT. IT IS MY LIFE. IT IS MY GIFT. EACH PERSON HAS A GIFT. IT MAY BE YOUR PERSONALITY, THE WAY YOU TALK TO SOMEONE, DANCE, SING OR EVEN PUSH A BROOM. YOU MAKE THAT FLOOR LOOK SHINY; MAKE IT STAND OUT LIKE A SHINING STAR...

...BE GOOD AT WHAT YOU DO, IF YOU ARE SHINING SHOES, I DON'T CARE WHAT IT IS, CUTTING A YARD. ANYTHING I DO, I DO IT GOOD. I LIKE TO HAVE PRIDE, RESPECT. THIS IS WHAT MOTIVATES OTHERS, WHEN THEY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS. BECAUSE SOMEBODY HAS GOT TO START SOMETHING TO SHOW SOME LOVE. I DON'T WANT TO EVER CHANGE. I WILL BE THE 'ONE MAN BAND' UNTIL THE DAY I DIE.