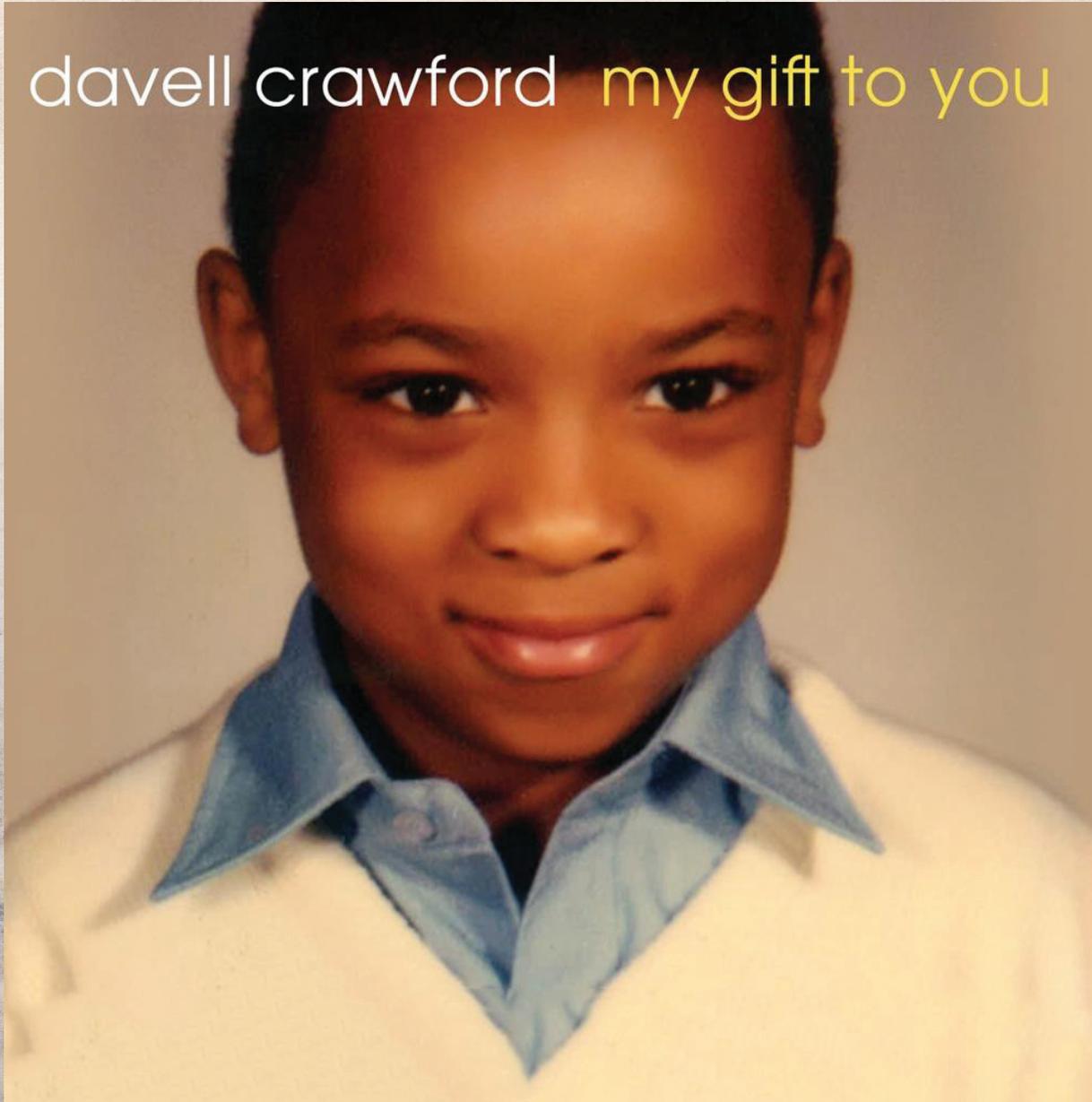


davell crawford my gift to you



- 01 creole man 5:39
- 02 river / white socks & drawers 5:41  
(feat. donald harrison, jr., dr. john &  
big freedia the queen diva)
- 03 junco partner cud'in joe 6:10  
(feat. walter 'wolfman' washington)
- 04 the river of dreams 4:06  
(feat. donald harrison, jr.)
- 05 fire and rain 5:42  
(feat. nicholas payton)
- 06 southern nights / many rivers to cross 5:02
- 07 don't ever be blue 4:37  
(feat. steve riley)
- 08 louisiana sunday afternoon 5:06  
(feat. bobbi humphrey)
- 09 southern girl 4:32
- 10 southern woman (ain't nothin' like a) 4:12
- 11 stranger in my own home 5:40  
(feat. nicholas payton)
- 12 until I see you in a while 4:17
- 13 going back to louisiana 5:09  
(feat. dr. john & the davell crawford singers)
- 14 can't find my way home 4:51
- 15 ode to louisiana 3:17

Conceptualized, Written, Arranged, Produced and *Purr-formed* by:  
Davell Crawford™ for SoulspeL Music™

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# davell crawford - my gift to you

Davell Crawford is a passionate keyboardist, vocalist, composer and arranger. He can always be relied on for bringing deeply felt emotion and energy to every endeavor. That spirit prevails on *My Gift To You*, an ambitious, dramatically arranged and meticulously produced album born out of love.

The wonderful quandary that runs through Crawford's original works and the covers that he carefully selected to include is that it's never absolutely clear whether his longing is for a place, a lover or perhaps both. He expresses the ache quietly on his beautiful ballad, "Until I See You in A While," initially accompanied only by his piano. "It won't be long until I get home, until we laugh and sing and play a brand new song," he promises. Home, be it New Orleans, where Crawford grew up, Louisiana, where he was born or the dear friends who beckon, pulls at his heart just as it has done for all of those who endured the separateness forced on them by Hurricane Katrina's devastating aftermath. "I've made the quietness my new home," he offers on his brilliant, self-penned, highly orchestrated "Stranger in My Own Home."



Photo by Davell Crawford and Stephen Gladney



Crawford introduces himself and the album in an epic manner on his celebratory "Creole Man." Lyrically and instrumentally, it speaks of Louisiana's mix of heritages that contribute and continue to influence local music. "I come from foreign lands to spread the news," Crawford exultantly sings on this elaborately arranged song that incorporates Native American and African drumbeats. Crawford's abilities as a lyricist and storyteller shine on this masterpiece as he makes reference to Louisiana's French ancestry, Congo Square, where on Sundays slaves were allowed to maintain their African drumming culture, and second line parades that continue the heritage. It fittingly concludes with Crawford returning to his hometown of New Orleans by laying down some essential piano trills. They stand as a signature of the city and its legendary pianists – Tuts Washington, Fats Domino, James Booker, Professor Longhair, Dr. John, Huey Smith – who helped create and keep that sound alive. Crawford is definitely in that number. "I am the Creole man, I come to you today with words of love. I am the Creole man, I give to you my gifts, I give my hands..."

Crawford, the grandson of the great James “Sugar Boy” Crawford of “Jock-A-Mo” fame, made his first public appearance at the early age of seven playing favorite tunes from the likes of Ray Charles on a piano that belonged to the telescope guy outside of New Orleans’ famous Cafe du Monde where he’d go each Monday with his grandmother. While still a youngster, he made an impression on this city’s gospel community when, at just 10 years old, he became the accompanist to the St. Peter Claver Catholic Church choir. By the time he was 11, his talents were utilized by the St. Joseph Baptist Church where he became the choir director over the youth and young adult choruses.

While renowned as a jazz, R&B, blues and funk musician, he continues performing in gospel, and those roots emerge in most endeavors. It’s heard in his effective use of call and response with his back-up vocalists including the members of his longtime handpicked collaborators The Davell Crawford Singers. At all times Crawford hears his vision just as anyone standing in front of a vocal ensemble must do. In the recording studio he would stop and say, “somebody get Wolfman {guitarist Walter “Wolfman”

Washington}. I need him right here,” just for the perfect sound.

“I can’t run away from Christian, spiritual or gospel music,” Crawford concedes. “In fact, you could look at this as a gospel album. Gospel is the truth. The whole album is the truth; every word on it is the truth. This is an album about Louisiana; this is an album about New Orleans, and this is an album about the people, my people, and their feelings and experiences. It is the gospel of my life, my friends and family - your friends and family. This is transparent as to what we’ve gone through.”

Considering those who surrounded Crawford in the making of *My Gift to You*, it could also be deemed a family album. The core of the band features Crawford’s cousin, the exceptional, up-and-coming drummer Joe Dyson. Crawford considers brothers bassist Mark Brooks, who he met decades ago through their mutual activity in gospel, and guitarist Detroit Brooks like his uncles or sometimes even his own brothers. He says that percussionist Bill Summers of the Headhunters’ fame simply “adopted” him at their very first meeting. “He just loved Davell Crawford,” he adds with a laugh. “Primarily,

when you talk about family it is, of course, your bloodline. But for us in New Orleans, we're all one big happy family."

The branches of the family tree extend beyond the rhythm section to include a bevy of guest artists who appear on the disc. They include fellow keyboardist/vocalist Mac Rebennack a.k.a. Dr. John, who was among many who kept an eye on Crawford during his budding career and is heard on two cuts. "Going Back to Louisiana," which is a nod to Dr. John's own swain' "Goin' Back to New Orleans," teams Crawford's spectacular, trill-filled acoustic piano with the good doctor's gritty vocals. New Orleans' style of rhythm and blues remains alive and soulful in Crawford on this cut and in this city that never gave up on its good times feel. Crawford perpetuates the sound and essence of the Big Easy writing verses such as, "Life we live by the moonlit skies, the life we live for fun." Dr. John is back to add a bit more swamp to "River," a song by the iconic, Roberta Flack, Crawford's godmother. This "River," which when it comes to New Orleans means the mighty Mississippi, meanders through some unusual territory traveling a modern jazz route with saxophonists Donald

Harrison and Clarence Johnson and ending with a hip detour into bounce with phenom Big Free-dia the 'Queen Diva.'

Amidst the wealth of exceptional original material from Crawford's pen live several well-chosen covers. For the first time, he went to a tune that for years he avoided, James Booker's classic "Junco Partner Cud'in Joe." Until recent years and despite numerous requests, he even declined to play the song live because, he says, it spoke of drugs and their associated life style.

"About three years ago, I said, 'Let me dissect this song, take a closer look at it. Actually listen to the words and the story.' And I did and I started doing it. I was 14 years old getting requests to do this song, so of course, throughout my transitional period I've had a lot of time to realize this song's not talking about me at all. I've never had an issue with drugs of any kind - just never embraced that life, thank God. I just didn't want that sort of stuff anywhere around me. The song is what it is - it's a testimony, it's a story. A story of someone's life experience. And I'd like to think that I'm some sort of a storyteller."

Junco partner Cud'in Joe



Photo by Louis Moore, Jr.

Crawford instinctively reinvented “Junco Partner Cud’in Joe,” stripping and slowing it down and making it feel more youngish, urban contemporary but still even more regretful. As he strategically places down some heartfelt piano runs and moaning vocals, the guitar of the always-tasty Walter “Wolfman” Washington accentuates the emptiness. Crawford brilliantly transforms this exceptional material as few or anyone else could. It stands as an embodiment of Booker whose uniqueness, like Crawford’s, came from supreme talent and soul.

While Crawford’s vocals express a certain sultriness on “Junco Partner Cud’in Joe,” the next cut, Billy Joel’s more modern “The River of Dreams,” finds him flying high in mood and vocally employing his upper register. The trickle down of the melody puts his great range on display. Crawford takes it out in his own style. The arrangements for the background vocalists stylistically give the tune an African tinge that is reminiscent of a group like Ladysmith Black Mambazo and suddenly the river becomes the Nile or the Gambia.

The album’s “special guests” list, which includes jazz trumpeters Nicholas Payton and

Marlon Jordan and roots-oriented percussionist Geechie Johnson, shows how deep Crawford tapped into New Orleans' bountiful musical network. Beyond the musicians, he also had long-time associate, engineer David Farrell behind the console. Observing their interaction and the resulting sound made it clear that he and Crawford shared a deep understanding. The Basin Street Records label shouts New Orleans with its stable of local artists who have enjoyed the closeness and the kinship of the Crescent City music community. It's a warm spot for Crawford.

"We feel like we are family," says Crawford who had artists like vocalists Lady B.J. Crosby and Charmaine Neville arriving at the studio with armloads of hot, homemade food. "We fuss, we fight, we care for each other, we cuss each other out, we praise each other and we think about each other," Crawford explains. "That's family. They respect the way that I function. They respect the way that I live and breathe, my remoteness, and privacy. They respect the process in which and how I create, the way that I talk or administrate or delegate. Having family and friends around me grants me as much freedom as I need or want in order to be myself."

Trumpeter Clyde Kerr Jr., an educator at the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts (NOC-CA) when Crawford was a student, was quick to point out that the teachers at the noted school knew that the young pianist was a special student and needed a free rein. His talent and, yes, genius demanded that they give Crawford what he needed and stand back. That philosophy has been carried out by all of those involved with *My Gift To You*, an album that moves with free will.

Crawford admits that his detour into Southwest Louisiana on his original country tune, "Don't Ever Be Blue" might surprise some. And few would associate Crawford with his featured guest here, Cajun fiddler/accordionist Steve Riley. It's a beauty that could send Crawford down the trails that launched Aaron Neville on the country and western roads with "Grand Tour" or the great R&B artist Johnny Adams' crossing over into the genre with "Release Me."

"I'm just revealing some things that have been a part of my musical world since I was a child," he explains, mentioning some of his long-time country and bluegrass favorites like Hazel Dickens, Dolly Parton and Patsy Cline, Tam-



Don't Ever Be Blue

my Wynette, Loretta Lynn, and Kenny Rodgers. “I grew up listening to tons of country and I’ve always loved it. I still do very much. Writing ‘Don’t Ever Be Blue’, was very easy for me - very natural.”

With his immense talent and experience in any number of genres, Crawford could have released a jazz album, a rhythm and blues album, a gospel album, a funk album or a blues album. And next time he just might. For this project, he decided to combine all of those styles in offering a very personal expression of Louisiana music as a tribute to its richness and its residents.

“I figured I’d dedicate this album to New Orleans and to Louisiana so that the people, my people, can continue to heal and reminisce in a good way,” Crawford explains, referring particularly to the trauma experienced by so many following Hurricane Katrina. “In various ways people need to be reminded of some things that weren’t so good for them prior to August 29, 2005, that they can currently live with the fact that through it all they are still blessed – that things are getting better, that things have gotten better and that better things will continue to sprout and blossom for the better. My music,

but mainly this album, is whatever it is for whoever needs it.”

The lyric “I can’t find my way home” is a sentiment so familiar, so crucial to those who were and have been thrust from familiar realms to those unknown. The sadness that Crawford brings to the song, “I Can’t Find My Way Home,” written and made famous by Steve Winwood and Blind Faith, is crushing. There is a time to cry just as there is time to celebrate as Crawford pays a funkified tribute to a New Orleans favorite Frankie Beverly by including his and Maze’s hit, “Southern Girl.”

Many have referred to Davell Crawford as the Piano Prince of New Orleans, a title he shunned for many years because of its association with James Booker. Another master of the piano, the late great Eddie Bo of “Check Mr. Popeye” fame once told him, “You are the Piano Prince too.” Bo rightfully introduced Crawford with the regal title each time he introduced him. Others encouraged Crawford by reminding him that, unlike a king, there is more than one prince.

“At this point it is there,” accepts Crawford of the title. Davell Crawford is indeed our Piano Prince of New Orleans. As heard on *My Gift*

*To You*, he powerfully reigns with sophisticated style, spirituality, soulfulness, sincerity and the blessing of genius with which he is endowed.

On *My Gift to You*, Davell Crawford, who boasts one foot in the past and one foot squarely in the here-and-now, generously shares his huge musical talent, inspiration, compassion and love of the place where his soul was born and of those who nurtured it. For this musical milestone, the one-of-a-kind vocalist and keyboardist gathered together those people who’ve touched his life to join him on this multi-faceted journey. The self-penned masterpiece “Ode To Louisiana” is an emotional, musical voyage that, as he hauntingly sings accompanied by a 19-piece orchestra at the album’s finale, will one day find him back home. “Louisiana, I love you for keeping me so long. I promise never to forget you... and I promise to someday come home.”

Geraldine Wyckoff  
Music Journalist

At times it was simply because I was interested in other things. I wanted to actually be in New Orleans and really discover this great city... become a part of it. Traveling nearly non-stop for years and starting at an early age afforded me little to no time to learn my environment. I felt as though I was associated with a place I knew nothing to very little about. I also wanted to teach school and give back to the community quietly...and I did that. I also needed to change lives...and I did that.

At other times I didn't know just what to say. For some reason I couldn't sing it, play it, let alone write it. I simply couldn't interpret it in anyway.

Still, at other times I wrote and recorded songs and put them on the shelf or under the mat to never be heard again. Sometimes it was because music was changing so very rapidly around me,

as was the music business and I didn't feel like I'd be accepted much anymore (who'd want to hear a piano when keyboards with all the fancy lights, sounds and buttons were the 'it' and 'in' thing?). Still at other times I felt like...ok, maybe this isn't so bad after all...no music, no shows, no airports, no hotels, no interviews...no public life whatsoever. Maybe, just maybe, I'll get used to the total freedom thing and chillin' thing pretty soon.

Perhaps it could have been that sometimes I felt completely alone. Perhaps I felt betrayed by the business and abused by friends, and even the very people I employed for many years. Perhaps I didn't pray hard enough? Perhaps I forgot to pray for me and my needs? Perhaps I should have said something more at the time or something less?

At times it could have been because almost perhaps, maybe I kinda fell in love...I guess... I think. Well, now that I'm thinking about it...I think I guessed that I thought I was thinking I was in love...kinda.

How about this...lots of times it was the key decision-makers that wanted to but didn't know how to, or simply didn't really have the power or last word. Still, if some did (have the power or the last word) it could have been simply that they didn't have the balls to stretch out! Several times it was just a flat out, "No." Or as one person told my Godmother, which brought her to tears, "Don't give him anything, don't give him any money or anything! Nothing! Let him work and struggle for it!"

Even a few times it was, "OK great! Hey, let's do an Irish Folk album!!! Ha!"

Real talk! Perhaps my personality on stage overshadowed my personal quiet being. Maybe I was too shy off stage...and perhaps I still am. Maybe I just wasn't talented enough — my own bass player had no issue saying this to other musicians around the city...even worse, musicians and singers in my band — or maybe, just maybe I was given too much of a gift and it intimi-

dated people...that's possible, very possible you know...it could happen.

At times depression set in and I felt that my contribution to New Orleans music, Louisiana music, and American Roots Music and the piano just didn't really matter at all. After all, I'd remained pretty loyal to roots music when I could have completely turned away.

It could have been at times I felt very closed... and very close to the end...saddened, ridiculed, judged and quietly suicidal. Very suicidal. I'm sure lots of times it was because I felt like my gift and my artistic being didn't really matter much to people and that I'll share when the time permits.

It may have been that I stopped performing in public for some time and releasing music for the aforementioned reasons or even others unmentioned...good and bad...simple or complex...but it was never because within my heart I didn't want to.

Enjoy.  
Davell

# 1 - creole man

Written and arranged by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

*Songs are poems put to music. Creole Man was written as a poem and meant to be just that. The strangest thing is that as I was writing the poem, the melody came to me also. That's the way I've always written songs, with words and music coming together, though this time, I tried to turn it off and just couldn't! I really wanted a poem!!! Nothing else to it! Words, that's all! A damn poem! But God gave Creole Man to me as both poem and song, and demanded it be used as both.*

*For as long as I can remember, all over the world people have asked me about Creole life. Just what does it mean to be Creole? Are you Black, Mixed, Cajun, African American, Indian, Spanish, French? What? Do you eat raccoons and alligators? Can you put a spell on somebody? To this very day I still get the question that everyone ought to know the answer to...can all ya'll really cook? My answer to all Creole queries is Creole Man.*

*Creole Man is a song that boldly expresses just what I am made of - from head to toe...what all Louisiana Creoles are made of! And it is a song - an Anthem - that I am extremely proud of, as I am extremely proud of my heritage."*

**I am the Creole man.  
I make you sing and dance and waltz awhile  
You dance to my melodies, sleep to my memory  
I know you smile  
I am the Creole man  
I come from foreign lands to spread the news  
I sing 'till you're ok...  
wish for you brighter days and play for you**

**I am the Creole man.  
I come from foreign lands by boats and all  
Mixed with the Kings and Queens of  
African royalty and Indian soil  
I am the Creole man  
the keeper of the flame and of your soul  
I'll have you in my heart, though we are  
miles apart and keep you whole  
I hope you dance with me to a  
French melody and Indian drum  
or Congo sacred praise...  
or second-line parade all for fun.**

**I am the Creole man (4x)**

**I am the Creole man  
I come to you today with words of love  
Just as my ancestors from Nova Scotia and Africa**

**I am the Creole man (4x)**

**I am the Creole man  
I give to you my gifts...I give my hands  
I am Creole man  
I'm from the earth and land...  
The Creole man**

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano,  
Hammond B-3, Keyboards  
Mark Brooks - Bass  
Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Drums  
Bill Summers - Percussion  
Norwood 'Geechie' Johnson - Bass Drum  
Derwin 'Big D' Perkins - Lead Guitar  
Bernard Grobman - Rhythm Guitar, Tremolo Guitar  
Marlon Jordon - Trumpet  
Clarence Johnson, III - Saxophones  
Emmanuel Burke - Background Vocals  
Shawn Hampton - Background Vocals  
LaTasha S. Jordan - Background Vocals

# 2 - river / white socks and drawers

Featuring Donald Harrison, Jr.; Dr. John; & Big Freedia The Queen Diva

“River” by Eugene McDaniels (Wixen Music Publishing O/B/O Londonport Music Corp., BMI)

“White Socks and Drawers” by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*I've got the best Godmother that anyone could ever ask for. Not much more to say here. It is what it is. She sang it - and because she's for me, I thought, hell, I wanna sing it too!*

**You know the spirit of the river  
Ain't gon' neva lie  
It's gon' be dere to show grandmother earth  
How we live and how we die  
It's gonna show you da way  
They can't be no other way**

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Hammond B-3, Keyboard, Hand claps

Dr. John “The Night Tripper” - Vocal

Donald Harrison, Jr. - Saxophone

Big Freedia ‘The Queen Diva’ - Vocal Rap, Hand claps

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Drums

Bill Summers - Percussion

Norwood ‘Geechie’ Johnson - Bass Drum

Bernard Grobman - Acoustic Guitar

Derwin ‘Big D’ Perkins - Electric Guitar

Marlon Jordan - Trumpet

Clarence Johnson, III - Saxophones

Background Vocals - Anthony Bailey,

Shawn Hampton, LaTasha S. Jordan

Derron Cook - Hand claps

## Instructions for listening to River / White Socks and Drawers:

- 1) Now turn the music way, way, way, way, waaaaay up.
- 2) Get up outta ya seat! Do it NOW!!!  
Hurry before the song is over!
- 3) Find YOUR groove. (If you're near any potential groove partners - damn it - grab their \*sSES too)
- 4) Start dancin' - Start groovin'...NOW...like you're crazy!
- 5) Once the song is over -  
press repeat and start jammin' again.
- 6) Lastly, you are instructed by me, Davell  
(and probably Roberta also), to like the song so much  
that you will now go to  
[www.basinstreetrecords.com/davell-bonus-tracks/](http://www.basinstreetrecords.com/davell-bonus-tracks/) and  
download the bonus track of ‘White Socks and Drawers’

# 3 - junco partner cud'in joe

Featuring Walter 'Wolfman' Washington

"Junco Partner" by Robert Shad (Embassy Music Corporation, BMI)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*After years of requests from fans, I began to consider - then research the song, Junco Partner Cud'in Joe. While studying, I realized this song-story, spoke much more to me than a blues song about some strung out addict that just gets high because he knows no other way. In this song, I discovered a very true and most common story that needed some new attention...I just had to sing about whoever this guy was. He may have been my family member, my friend, the guy down the street - whoever. Though I couldn't quite place him, and didn't really want to specifically - I knew I knew him. I learned about his life of addiction and his attitude towards his addiction - but of most gravity and worth, his most sincere plea for Christ before his life ends. Wow!"*

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Hammond B-3, Keyboards

Walter 'Wolfman' Washington - Guitar

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Drums

Bill Summers - Percussion

Detroit Brooks - Guitar

Trina Dyson - Vocal

# 4 - the river of dreams

Featuring Donald Harrison, Jr.

Written by Billy Joel (Almo Music Corp O/B/O Impulsive Music, ASCAP)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*One of my favorite songs - I was eighteen when Billy Joel released this song. In the process of recording this album, so many artists and their music came to mind - especially ones from my childhood and teenage years. During my youth, Billy Joel was a platinum selling artist and very active on radio, television and in print. He was absolutely everywhere and I couldn't help but be influenced by his music. This song, and many others from his catalog, became part of the soundtrack of my life - and I never forgot or ignored them.*

*I hope my cover of this wonderful tune will allow some to reminisce, and others discover.*

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Keyboards  
Donald Harrison - Saxophone  
Mark Brooks - Bass  
Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Drums  
Bill Summers - Percussion  
Derwin 'Big D' Perkins - Guitar  
Emmanuel Burke - Background Vocals  
Davell Crawford - Background Vocals  
Shawn Hampton - Background Vocals  
LaTasha S. Jordan - Background Vocals  
Eric Pointdexter - Background Vocals

# 5 - fire and rain

Featuring Nicholas Payton

Written by James Taylor (EMI Blackwood Music Inc., BMI / EMI April Music Inc. O/B/O Country Road Music, ASCAP)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*Ever since I can remember, this song has made me cry, and cry - and cry some more. Perhaps as a very young boy it was James Taylor's calming voice (such like John Denver's) that made me swell up with tears...I'm not sure.*

*After a while I learned that my cries birthed from this song were all for different reasons. I determined this song affected me differently at various times in my life. The line "when I couldn't find a friend" was so very prevalent in my life while attending high school and pursuing my career as a professional musician. During my high school years I toured extensively and was often away from school for long periods of time. I simply did not connect with my schoolmates as I would have liked to - to be honest, though I may have been popular, I had little to no friends.*

*Anyway, at other times it was the line, "won't you look down on me Jesus... you've just got to see me through another day."*

*Today, it is every single line of this song that makes me cry. I cry with tears of joy, sadness and sorrow. I only assume this song is just as personal for me now as it was when I was a kid and thereafter, a teenager. Today, I understand differently. I understand this song completely - but still, it lives with me by my own interpretation. One of the greatest songs ever written. And for me, and now, many others like me -  
what an old-new-New Orleans song!"*

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Keyboard

Nicholas Payton - Trumpet

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joe Dyson, Jr. - Drums

# 6 - southern nights / many rivers to cross

"Southern Nights" by Allen Toussaint (Screen Gems-EMI Music Inc., BMI / Warner-Tamerlane Pub. Corp., BMI)

"Many Rivers to Cross" by Jimmy Cliff (Universal - Songs of Polygram International Inc., BMI)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*"Southern Nights" had been on my radar to cover for years. I felt it just wasn't the right time. For 'My Gift To You', I still had no intention of recording "Southern Nights." One morning I walked into the studio and went straight to the piano - the same as I had done every morning. But this particular morning, something was different. Something was different about the atmosphere in the studio. Believe it or not, it transferred over to the piano. This day, the piano was perfect! It was tuned perfectly! I ordered the piano freshly tuned every morning before we started the session for the day but this particular morning, it felt more perfect than before - for my touch - and it played and sounded more perfect than any other piano I'd ever played. (What's that about?)*

*It was the perfection of the piano and the atmosphere of the studio that helped capture one of those magical moments we all long for while creating - it led to the dictation and interpretation of "Southern Nights" and "Many Rivers To Cross."*

Davell Crawford - Piano

# 7 - don't ever be blue

Featuring Steve Riley

Written and arranged by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

*At one of the lowest emotional times in my life, I wrote this song. I wanted to write a song documenting what I was going through; what I was fighting. I felt no matter the situation, it was my duty as an artist to document this part of my life through song, as heartfelt and honestly as I could. I wanted to create this song in the style of music that influenced me earliest as a child and remind listeners of this: While so many beautiful things can be birthed from one thing (in this instance, the color blue), let us not be fooled, and let us not forget how quickly the beautiful can become the ugly - the positive negative. Keep all other options open and never cease to explore them, and when you feel all is lost - gone, when you feel 'blue' - for whatever reason - never ever give up!*

*I dedicate this song to my Grandmother, Aunts, and Ms. Shirley too...they absolutely love this song. Oh, and Irma - of course you can sing it too!*

Davell Crawford - Vocals, Piano

Mark Brooks - Upright Bass

Joe Dyson, Jr. - Drums

Steve Riley - Accordion, Fiddle

Like the cool winds of March and the  
waters that flow from the fall  
Like the cold winter's night  
and the stars that light up the sky  
It's a blueberry field and the blue-jays that sing a song  
It's the prettiest color of all...  
But it lives in my home

It's often sweet and gentle like a  
breeze on the first day of May  
Like a baby's eyes full of joy contentment and play  
It's an old country morning  
when grandma is moaning her song  
It's the prettiest color of all...but it lives in my home  
Don't ever be blue  
Don't ever be blue

There's a rainbow of colors awaiting  
right there before you  
Just keep going on keep  
singing your song and doing the best you can do

Don't ever be blue

# 8 - Louisiana Sunday Afternoon

Featuring Bobbi Humphrey

Written by Franne Golde & Peter Ivers (Sony/ATV Songs LLC DBA ATV /  
Warner-Tamerlane Pub., BMI O/B/O Franne Golde Music, BMI)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*Diane Schuur - Ahh! I was twelve when  
Diane Schuur and Dave Grusin released  
this song - and I never forgot it. Dave  
Grusin, pure genius! Thanks for the  
music!*

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Hammond B-3, Keyboards

Bobbi Humphrey - Flute

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Drums

Bill Summers - Percussion

Derwin 'Big D' Perkins - Guitar

Anthony Bailey - Background Vocals

Davell Crawford - Background Vocals

Shawn Hampton - Background Vocals

Milton Jackson - Background Vocals

LaTasha S. Jordan - Background Vocals

# 9 - southern girl

Written by Frankie Beverly (Amazement Music)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*At the age of eleven I was asked to write a song for Frankie Beverly & Maze by one of the band members. April 5, 1988, I wrote a song titled, 'A Little Rain Must Fall' - I demoed it and all, but never gave it to Maze or Frankie Beverly. McKinley 'Bug' Williams, a close life-long family friend and bandmate of Maze, never let me live it down that I refused to turn over my song to the group - especially after hearing me play it on my little keyboard. Despite how McKinley felt, I simply didn't believe it was demoed good enough for me to share.*

*McKinley was a champion of my talent and gift. He stayed in touch throughout the years and encouraged me to keep playing live, writing, recording and releasing music. Later on, he asked me to cover some Maze tunes in my own way - and for years I promised that I would. Preparing for this recording, I knew hands down that I would make good on my promise to him and record a Maze song and ask him to play on it. With all of the pride he had in his heart, he was scheduled to appear on this record. McKinley 'Bug' Williams died on my birthday, September 3, 2011.*

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Hammond B-3, Keyboard

Donald Harrison, Jr. - Saxophone

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Drums

Bill Summers - Percussion

Derwin "Big D" Perkins - Guitar

Davell Crawford - Vocal Solo, Background Vocals

# 10 - southern woman (ain't nothin' like a)

Written and arranged by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

*Not complicated. I wrote this song to celebrate the virtue of the Southern Woman.*

**Ain't nothin' like a Southern woman,  
Country woman  
Sexy woman  
Lovin' woman  
Pretty woman  
Feel good woman  
If you ain't got a real good woman  
Prissy woman  
Fine ole woman  
Like a wine  
A takin' care of business woman  
Then get yo'self a damn good woman  
Dancin' woman  
Ooh wee woman  
Groovy woman  
Sho'nuff shoutin', churchy woman  
Don't wanna have no cryin' woman  
Tryin' woman  
Flyin' woman  
Whinin' woman  
Tear you down, "I got mine" woman**

**Been all around the world  
I fancy life and the pretty girls  
But still one thing I wanna find  
A Southern woman, make her mine**

**A rock-star life is sho'nuff good  
Got the wine and the women and the whiskey,  
fit me good  
But still one thing I wanna find, yeah  
A Southern woman, make her mine**

**Got her number on the airplane  
Got a kiss when we hit the land  
No matter how it felt that time  
I need a southern woman, make her mine**

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Hammond B-3, Keyboard

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Tambourine, Drums

Bill Summers - Percussion

Norwood 'Geechie' Johnson - Bass Drum

June Yamagishi - Lead Guitar

Marlon Jordan - Trumpet

Clarence Johnson, III - Saxophones

Anthony Bailey - Background Vocals

Shawn Hampton - Background Vocals

LaTasha S. Jordan - Background Vocals

# 11 - stranger in my own home

Featuring Nicholas Payton

Written by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

Arranged by Davell Crawford & Michael Esnault

*I wrote this song after Hurricane Katrina. I remember coming back to New Orleans and playing mostly fundraisers and a few regular gigs, all while sleeping in cars. Many nights I stayed up all night in restaurants. Some nights, in the French Quarter, I even walked from bar to bar from sun up to sun down, sun up to sun down and up again, looking for someone familiar, hoping someone would recognize me - would give me a place to stay for the night to stop feeling as if I were a total stranger in another stranger's home.*

*Believe it or not, today, this is still how I feel in New Orleans...this is still my reality. The majority of my family and friends are gone from the city, and yes, I'm still traveling out of town to Baton Rouge or Lafayette just to sleep for a night. I drive back to New Orleans just about everyday when I am in Louisiana. I've struggled not to write this song for quite some time, all the while knowing sooner or later, it would be written.*

**And now, I walk the streets all alone  
Familiar things are all gone...  
is this new land my new home  
And then, each passing day I knew so well  
now only greets me fare ye well  
Goodbyes I don't do very well**

**And now, the August rain I still recall  
The constant waters, wind and  
all are ever present, ever strong  
And then, before the changing of the tide  
I knew my heart, I knew my mind  
Now all is changed and I just cry**

**I am alone  
I've made the quietness my new home  
I've come accustomed to the loneliness,  
the bitterness and the peacefulness  
Where has it gone?  
The life I've known for so long  
So now I'll take the quietness and the sadness  
I'm a stranger in my own home**

Davell Crawford - Vocals, Piano, Keyboards  
Nicholas Payton - Trumpet  
Michael Esnault - Conductor  
Derwin 'Big D' Perkins - Lead Guitar, Bass  
Joe Dyson, Jr. - Drums  
Violins: Amy Thiaville, Burton Callahan, Zorica Dimova, Razvan Constantin, Judith Fitzpatrick, Kate Withrow, Elizabeth Overweg, Natalia Cascante  
Violas: Bruce Owen, Lisa McGibney, Raul Gomez, Rafal Zyskowski  
Cellos: Allen Nisbet, Dimitri Vychko  
Bass: Yong Pan  
French Horns: Mollie Pate, Joshua Paulus  
Flute: Heather Zinninger  
Clarinet: Rex Gregory

# 12 - until i see you in a while

Written and arranged by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

*October of 2005 I was called to do a recording session in New York with my friend the late Marva Wright. Though I was a little reluctant to record after Katrina, I agreed to fly up and record with her. The day of the recording session was the first time I'd seen Marva since the beginning of July, earlier the same year. I called to invite Marva to a Sunday morning gospel brunch hours before the New York recording session. I wanted to sorta get us into a groove and prepare our spirits to record. She kept asking, "What are we going to do?" and my response was, "I don't know." After a while she stopped asking and told me that she wasn't worried at all because she knew that whatever it was it would be just fine.*

*Well, in the 15-minute car ride to the studio I wrote "Until I See You In A While" for Marva and I to sing as a duet. Unfortunately, it never made the record. It never made the record because it was never recorded! When we arrived at the studio, I went straight to the piano with my notes, etc. for the song. I told Marva to listen while I'd sang her part. As soon as I starting playing the intro and sang the first line, Marva started crying. Marva cried and cried, and then cried some more. We stopped several times to try and gather our emotions but it just didn't work. Each time Marva tried to sing the song, she started crying...she just couldn't hold back. We never got through this song. Actually, Marva never really made it through any song that day. Instead, in my post-crying voice, I solemnly struggled through another of my songs, "Gather At The River." Still today, when I hear "Gather At The River" I think of Marva and the song "Until I See You In A While."*

When I sing his song I think of the days that's passed me by  
The melodies and harmonies that made us laugh and cry  
The songs we've sang, the times we've shared  
Will never be forgot  
Close your eyes and think of me until I see you in awhile

The times have changed our lives into gypsies  
that care forgot  
All we've got are sweet memories to keep us late at night  
And though they're miles between us  
Just keep this on your mind  
Close your eyes and just think of me until I see you in awhile

It won't be long until I get home  
Until we laugh and sing and play a brand new song  
But until then when miles become just one mile

Keep this song until I see you in awhile  
Keep this song until I see you in awhile  
Keep this song until I see you in awhile

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano  
Derwin "Big D" Perkins - Acoustic Guitar  
Mark Brooks - Bass  
Joe Dyson, Jr. - Drums

# 13 - going back to Louisiana

Featuring Dr. John and the Davell Crawford Singers

Written and arranged by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

*I originally wrote and recorded this song six years ago as a serious foot stomping, square dancing, halfway mountain hillbilly, but Louisiana (Looziana) country song (if you can figure out just what that is) with banjos, guitars, fiddles, my background singers and all! But for this record, I wanted the song to stop in the two cities of Louisiana that have meant the most to me in my life, Lafayette and New Orleans...and what better people than Doc and Steve to help accomplish that! Also during its stop in New Orleans the song kinda wanted to visit a church!!! Ha! Go figure!*

Davell Crawford - Piano

Dr. John - Vocals

Steve Riley - Accordion, Fiddle

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joe Dyson, Jr. - Drums

The Davell Crawford Singers - Background

Vocals: Valeria Maxwell, LaTasha S. Jordan,

Shawn Hampton, Min. Jackie Tolbert,

Veronica Downs-Dorsey. Additional singers:

Eric Pointdexter, Emmanuel Burke.

**I'm going back to Louisiana...back to where I'm from  
and I won't stop until I hear the rhythm of the drum  
The moonlit sky's by the summer nights the life  
we live for fun I'm goin' back to Louisiana...back to  
where I'm from**

**I'm going back to Louisiana...back to where I'm from  
to hear the guitar play and hear the church bells ring  
at dawn Life we live by the moonlit sky's life we live  
for fun I'm goin' back to Louisiana...back to where  
I'm from**

**Mississippi water, Louisiana mud...  
Creole country life  
Black man, white man, red man  
we all together intertwined  
all together intertwined  
we all together intertwined**

**I'm going back to Louisiana...back to where I'm from  
To see the Indian dance and hear the  
big chief beat the drum  
The second-line be on the streets all day  
The choir singing in a Gospel way  
I'm going back to Louisiana back to where I'm from**

**Mississippi water, Louisiana mud...  
Creole country life  
Black man, white man, red man**

**we all together intertwined  
Mississippi water, Louisiana mud...  
Creole country life  
Black man, white man, red man  
we all together intertwined  
all together intertwined  
we all together intertwined**

**I'm going back  
Back to Louisiana, back to where  
I'm from I'm going back (3x)  
Back to Louisiana, back to where I'm from**

**You know dey got all l'em Mississippi water  
we all part a 'dat da Louziana mud...  
we all part a dat  
Can you dig dat?  
Cause we da Who Dat!  
And we dat!  
And you dat!  
And if you don't know dat...  
WHAT DO YOU KNOW?**

**Cause, we all part of it  
Cause we love it...and we love it  
And can you dig it...can you dig it  
Sho' can you hear it...can you hear it**

**And we love it. Can you dig it? Can you hear it? (2x)**

# 14 - can't find my way home

Written by Steve Winwood (Warner-Tamerlane Pub., BMI O/B/O F.S. Music Ltd., BMI)

Arranged by Davell Crawford

*Jay Jay French of Twisted Sister asked me to learn this song for a side band we were putting together just for the hell of it. I'd heard the song before and liked it, but never really listened. Well, being a little pressured for the upcoming gig forced me to learn it. The song "Can't Find My Way Home" did something to and for me - it began to take root, then sprout in and around my soul. So, today, I sing this song with my own interpretation of the lyrical meaning. I encourage you to do the same - listen, and interpret as you wish.*

Davell Crawford - Vocal, Piano, Hammond B-3, Keyboards

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joseph Dyson, Jr. - Drums

Bernard Grobman - Electric and Acoustic Slide Guitars

Anthony Bailey - Background Vocals

Davell Crawford - Background Vocals

Shawn Hampton - Background Vocals

LaTasha S. Jordan - Background Vocals

# 15 - ode to louisiana

Written by Davell Crawford (Crawpita Music, BMI)

Arranged by Davell Crawford & Michael Esnault

*I watched the movie Ray with Jamie Foxx in 2005 and was forever changed by the fact that Ray Charles was banned from performing in the state of Georgia because of his refusal to perform for a whites-only audience. Immediately the song "Georgia On My Mind," which I'd been performing since my early teens, took on new meaning. Suddenly, I understood.*

*...Other arms reach out to me, other eyes smile tenderly, still in peaceful dreams I see, the road leads back to you.*

*After watching Ray, I couldn't help singing the song differently. My fingers played the song differently - with more compassion and understanding. I suddenly felt Ray's pain - Ray's longing for acceptance in his home state of Georgia. My song "Ode to Louisiana" was written mostly out of the same feelings of pain, loneliness, and lack of appreciation in my own homeland*

*while experiencing much acceptance in foreign lands. After all these years, my longing to be in Louisiana still remains. I just simply cannot get back. Ray Charles's longing never stopped. He simply could not get back. For both of us, the pain never stopped... Our childhood memories never left us.... My allegiance to Louisiana and his allegiance to Georgia never wavered. I wrote this song as my gift to Louisiana, much as Ray's "Georgia On My Mind" was his gift to Georgia. And as I'm sitting here writing these notes, something else hits me...how ironic it is that after Hurricane Katrina, the state of Georgia - the state that rejected Ray Charles - opened up its doors to me. I lived in Atlanta, Georgia for two years before moving to New York....*

*In tribute to all who love Louisiana, especially those away and still misplaced by the effects of Hurricane Katrina - Ode to Louisiana.*

**Louisiana, I love you  
for all you've given to me  
I promise never forget you  
as I travel o've the stormy sea**

**There's no one more beautiful to me  
green pastures and blue skies and all  
I'll travel the whole wide world over  
and sing of your beauty and love**

**I'll never roam too far away  
and at the close of the day  
remember me please...oh pray for me  
when I'm three thousand miles away**

**Louisiana, I love you  
for keeping me so long  
I promise never forget you  
and I promise to someday come home (3x)**

Davell Crawford - Vocals, Piano

Michael Esnault - Conductor

Mark Brooks - Bass

Joe Dyson, Jr. - Drums

Violins: Amy Thiaville, Burton Callahan, Zorica Dimova, Razvan Constantin, Judith Fitzpatrick, Kate Withrow, Elizabeth Overweg, Natalia Cascante

Violas: Bruce Owen, Lisa McGibney, Raul Gomez, Rafal Zyskowski

Cellos: Allen Nisbet, Dimitri Vychko

Bass: Yong Pan

French Horns: Mollie Pate, Joshua Paulus

Flute: Heather Zinninger

Clarinet: Rex Gregory



Thanks to everyone  
and  
a special thanks to everyone else.

Conceptualized, Written, Arranged, Produced and *Pur*-formed by:  
Davell Crawford™ for Soulspel Music™

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