

***“Feral blues guitar...non-stop gigging has sharpened his six-string to a razor’s edge...his eloquence dazzles...he achieves pyrotechnics that rival early Jeff Beck and Eric Clapton.” –Rolling Stone***

***“One of modern blues’ greatest guitarists and performers.” –Vintage Guitar***

***“Rugged, burning and riveting...Tinsley Ellis is a powerful and commanding presence, both on guitar and as a gruff, full-throated vocalist. It’s hard to overstate the raw power of his music. It’s impossible not to enjoy the ride.” –Blues Music Magazine***

***“Powerful, spine-tingling guitar and gritty, soulful vocals...an inspired and passionate fusion of blues and Southern rock.” –Relix***

World renowned Southern blues-rock guitarist, vocalist and songwriter Tinsley Ellis—like every other musician—was caught off guard when the pandemic shutdown hit in March 2020. Ellis was forced to cancel the tour promoting his just-released album, ***Ice Cream In Hell***, only six weeks into the 60-date run. This would be the first time in 40 years he’d be off the road, and as he drove the 2400 miles home from Reno to Atlanta, he was already formulating his future plans.

Ellis resolved to dedicate his pandemic-forced downtime to creating new songs and growing as a songwriter. To get back to his musical roots, he began composing on amps and guitars that he hadn’t used for decades. He explored obscure studio and live recordings from some of his greatest musical heroes, such as the Allman Brothers, Freddie King, Michael Bloomfield, B.B. King and beyond, and was inspired by his favorite artists all over again. Eighteen months later, Ellis had written an astonishing 200 new songs.

Explains Ellis, “There was a lot of time to experiment. In my downstairs studio I set up every guitar and amp that I owned, plus a Leslie cabinet, an old wooden Wurlitzer electric piano, an old Maestro Echoplex tape delay and 30 or 40 glass, steel and brass slides. Experimenting with different gear set ups inspired the songwriting. Plus, I was able to listen to more music than I had since the 1970s. My imagination was fired up!”

As early as April 2020, he began regularly releasing his new material online, keeping his thousands of fans engaged and soaking up their comments and responses. He knew, thanks to the reactions of his fans to his new songs, that he needed to make a record and get back on the road as soon as possible. Ellis whittled his massive song list down to ten, enlisted his friend and co-producer, keyboard master Kevin McKendree, and headed for Franklin, Tennessee’s famous Rock House recording studio. The result is Ellis’ new Alligator album, ***Devil May Care***, a record Ellis says, “is for the fans as much as for me.”

***Devil May Care***, Ellis' 20th album, contains ten of his most dynamic original compositions, mixing muscular rock 'n' roll and hard blues into his own instantly recognizable sound. Highlights include the Southern rock-tinged opening trio of songs—*One Less Reason*, *Right Down The Drain* and *Just Like Rain*—to the slow-burning *Don't Bury Our Love* to the Hendrix-y *Step Up* and *28 Days*. The emotionally-charged guitar solos soar in full service to the songs, as if Ellis is living and breathing the sound rather than simply playing the notes. "The goal," says Ellis, "was to make the guitar sing."

Tinsley Ellis has been immersed in music his whole life. Born in Atlanta 1957 and raised in southern Florida, he acquired his first guitar at age seven, inspired by seeing The Beatles perform on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. He took to guitar instantly, developing and sharpening his skills as he grew up. Like many kids his age, Ellis discovered the blues through the back door of British Invasion bands like The Yardbirds, The Animals, Cream and The Rolling Stones as well as Southern rockers like the Allman Brothers. One night in 1972, he and a friend were listening to Al Kooper and Michael Bloomfield's *Super Session* record when his friend's older brother told them that, if they liked *Super Session*, they should go see B.B. King, who was in town that week. Tinsley saw that show from the very front row. As fate would have it, King broke a guitar string while playing, and after changing it without missing a beat, he handed the broken string to young Tinsley. And yes, he still has that string.

Less than three years later, Ellis, already an accomplished teenaged musician, left Florida and moved to Atlanta. He soon joined a hard-driving local blues band, the Alley Cats. In 1981, along with veteran blues singer and harpist Chicago Bob Nelson, Tinsley formed The Heartfixers, a group that would become Atlanta's top-drawing blues band. After cutting two Heartfixers albums for the Landslide label, Ellis was ready to step out on his own.

***Georgia Blue***, Tinsley's first Alligator release, hit the unprepared public by surprise in 1988. *The Chicago Tribune* said, "Tinsley Ellis torches with molten fretwork. Ellis takes classic, Southern blues-rock workouts and jolts them to new life with a torrid ax barrage." His next four releases—1989's ***Fanning The Flames***, 1992's ***Trouble Time***, 1994's ***Storm Warning***, and 1997's ***Fire It Up***—further grew his reputation as well as his audience. (His song *A Quitter Never Wins*, a highlight of ***Storm Warning***, was recorded by Jonny Lang, selling almost two million copies.) Features and reviews ran in *Rolling Stone*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, and in many other national and regional publications.

In the early 2000s, Ellis released albums on Capricorn Records and on Telarc, returning to Alligator in 2005 with ***Live-Highwayman***, which captured the fifth-gear energy of his roof-raising live show. He followed it with two more incendiary studio releases, 2007's ***Moment Of Truth*** and 2009's ***Speak No Evil***. He self-released four successful albums on his own Heartfixer label before coming back home to Alligator in 2018, releasing the fan favorite ***Winning Hand***. The album debuted at #1 on the *Billboard* Blues Chart and earned him Blues Music Award (BMA) nominations for Blues Rock Album Of The Year and Blues Rock Artist Of The Year. 2020's ***Ice Cream In Hell*** further cemented Ellis' reputation and put him on the cusp of even greater success before all touring was brought to a halt that March. Now, with ***Devil May Care***

and a new nationwide tour booked, Ellis is more than ready to get back on the road and make up for lost time.

Ellis has been a road warrior ever since his Alligator debut. He has captivated and amazed fans in all 50 United States, as well as in Canada, all across Europe, Australia and South America. He's also earned the love and respect of many of his fellow musicians, including Warren Haynes, Oliver Wood, Jonny Lang, Buddy Guy, the Tedeschi Trucks Band, Gov't Mule, Widespread Panic and more. Additionally, he's shared stages with blues legends including Stevie Ray Vaughan, Otis Rush, Willie Dixon, Leon Russell, Son Seals, Koko Taylor and Albert Collins. Mega-star guitarist Joe Bonamassa calls Ellis "a national treasure." But no matter where or with whom he performs, Ellis always plays with grit, soul and unbridled passion.

According to *AllMusic.com*, "Ellis' playing underscores the emotional depth in the lyrics. His meaty solos dig deep." With ***Devil May Care***, Ellis proves that true again, with ten jaw-dropping, career-topping performances. As he continues adding more dates to his already packed tour schedule, Ellis will bring his high-energy Southern blues-rock to fans all across the country. "It's been a long 18 months," he says, "and now folks are ready to have some fun."