

WARREN HAYNES

A powerhouse guitarist stands alone to put his stamp on a classic sound

BETWEEN HIS VERY HIGH-PROFILE DAY JOBS IN GOV'T Mule and the Allman Brothers Band, virtuoso guitarist Warren Haynes isn't lacking for musical outlets. But when he found himself with a batch of songs that weren't suited to either group, he diverted them to *Man in Motion*, his first solo studio album since 1993. "They were songs I'd written that I'd always wanted to record, but wasn't sure they fit with any project," Haynes says. "They seemed to cry out for a different treatment, more of a soul-blues treatment."

The tunes on *Man in Motion* were inspired by his love for classic soul by the likes of Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett and Sam & Dave, as



well as the fiery playing of blues' beloved three Kings—B.B., Albert and Freddie. "A lot of these songs could have been interpreted as Gov't Mule songs, but we've not gone quite that traditional in the past," he says. "So it made sense to make a whole record of songs that were a departure."

A few of the songs on *Motion* date back a decade or more, but Haynes wrote most of them over the past few years. He then headed to Willie Nelson's studio outside Austin, where he spent six days recording with a band comprising what he calls "a wish list of first choices": bassist George Porter Jr. of the Meters, keyboardist Ivan Neville, drummer Raymond Webber, saxophonist Ron Holloway and folk-blues singer Ruthie Foster, along with veteran Faces and Rolling Stones pianist Ian McLagan. "I was friends with everyone except Ian, who I didn't meet until we got into the studio," Haynes says. "But we became good friends, too."

Appropriate for a musician so well-versed in improvisation, Haynes let the songs take shape in the studio. "Nobody is playing a set part, we're just playing moment by moment," he explains. "Everybody's putting their personality into the music. Nobody knows what they're going to play until they hear what somebody else is playing. There is more jamming on this record than on the average soul record or blues record, but it's all based on call-and-response and communication." Haynes plans to make another Gov't Mule album next, and discussion of a new Allmans studio effort is afoot. Still, he hasn't ruled out making another solo album. "The next record would be coming more from a singer-songwriter direction, maybe starting with a lot of acoustic instruments," says Haynes, 51. "I listen to so many different types of music that at some point I'd like to make a lot of different records."

—Eric R. Danton

