

Opera House

BY ROB EARNSHAW
Times Correspondent

E clectic entertainment continues to find itself on a historic Valparaiso stage as the Memorial Opera House presents a night of blues music next Friday featuring the legendary Donald Kinsey, Northwest Indiana's Planetary Blues and The Energy Commission.

"We're being more versatile here at the opera house," said Brian Schafer, Memorial's business director and executive producer.

"We want people to look at the opera house for their entertainment needs."

What they'll get is Donald Kinsey, a singer and guitarist born in Gary and known for fronting The Kinsey Report with brothers Ralph and Kenneth, as well as Ron Prince. Kinsey has toured with the likes of Roy Buchanan, Albert King, Peter Tosh, Bob Marley and his father, late blues performer Lester "Big Daddy" Kinsey. Grand Rapids, Mich., recently has become home for Kinsey, where he's finding new energy and doing new things in the studio.

"It's been working out good for me," Kinsey said.

"I wake up in the morning and can't wait to get into music. I've been in this a long time. Gary's my hometown, I love it. But there are times when you just have to make a move."

Kinsey said he's looking forward to performing live because for him it's the "highest of high" he can accomplish.

"There's nothing in life that can give me that," he said. "When you play live you should come directly from your soul. I give it my everything."

So what can the opera house expect from Kinsey?

"I'm just gonna do what I do, man," he said.

Valparaiso-based Planetary Blues has organized shows with Son Seals and the Kinsey Report, as well as performing at the Chicago Blues Festival. Planetary, which has been

playing Midwest bars and festivals for nearly a decade, consists of three brothers: Martin Schaefer-Murray (guitar/lead vocals), Bobby Schaefer-Murray (bass) and Michael Schaefer-Murray (guitar).

The Energy Commission is the "genre defying" collective of Planetary, Double Dragon, and singer/songwriter Danielle Cales. Defined as "hip hop with hippie soul, folk sensibility and the attitude of rock 'n roll, The Energy Commission is the brainchild of Double Dragon's Jay Weinberg, who gained international attention in May when he performed his song "Price Gouge'n" during a protest atop a Valparaiso gas station.

"We cover everything," Weinberg said of the collaboration. "It really runs the gamut."

Weinberg and Energy will certainly perform "Price Gouge'n," and he'll also perform with Cales (his wife of one year) on a song they cowrote, "The Damage."

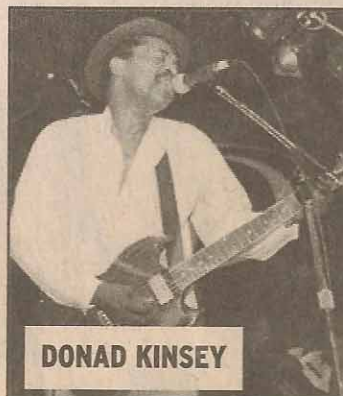
"In the bars it's a big hit," Cales said.

Weinberg and Cales are equally looking forward to occupying the opera house stage.

blues

Region's own Donald Kinsey, Planetary Blues

and The Energy Commission to perform in Valpo



DONAD KINSEY

PHOTOS PROVIDED

"There's no distraction," Cales said.

"People will be paying attention. They are actually going to be sitting and watching."

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The Memorial Opera House presents blues music

When: 7 p.m. Sept 12

Where: Memorial Opera House, 104 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso

Cost: \$20

FYI: Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Kinsey will headline the concert and take the stage at approximately 9:15 p.m. Tickets are available through the Memorial Opera House box office, by phone at (219) 548-9137, or in person. Box office hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays. Tickets are also available at mohlive.com.