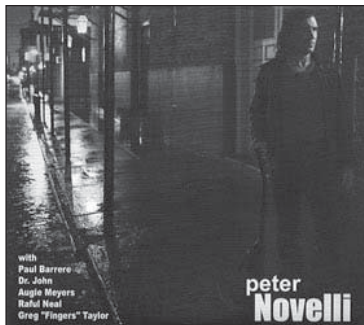

PETER NOVELLI

Self-Titled

Chalet Music

Guitarist Peter Novelli's music seems to strut through a New Orleans neighborhood, dance at a fais-do-do, and relax with the blues along a country levee all in the same sweep. About a decade ago, the Syracuse, N.Y., native relocated to Louisiana where he fell in love with not only the music, but with the people's respect for their environment. That move has had a profound influence and his music, a combination of blues and R&B with elements of funk and country.

Novelli's handled this well on his debut CD, creating songs that seem to breathe with the tempo of the region.



His guitar solos are crisp and direct, always accenting the song and never overrunning the intent. The grace of his approach is evident in the self-penned "Since The Hurricane," which sounds like it should have been written by Randy Newman and features Novelli's tasty guitar with a tremendously agile piano solo by Dr. John.

Notables such as Little Feat's Paul Barrere on slide, Joe Krown on B-3,

Fingers Taylor on harmonica, and Tex-Mex rocker Augie Meyers all add to the flavor of this rich CD. Eight of the songs were written or co-written by Novelli, with covers gleaned from the works of Delbert McClinton/Gary Nicholson, Rusty Kershaw, and John Hiatt.

The New Orleans influence is heavy, with funky touches to the blues and songs that match the city's offbeat spirit and perspective. When Novelli sings, "She may not be a lady, but she's woman enough to be my baby," he may just as well have been serenading the quirkiness of New Orleans.

There's also a historical element to this CD as Novelli includes interviews with Slim Harpo's friends James Johnson and Rafal Neal and drummer "Big" Johnny Thomassie, who explains how drummers play the distinctive second-line beat. Novelli joins them and Dr. John for a fine

version of “Te-Ni-Ne-Ni-Nu” and then subs Neal on harmonica and Meyers for Dr. John on keyboard for a version of “Scratch My Back.” Although enlightening, however, these tracks seem to out of place on this CD.

– *Michael Kinsman*

MATTHEW CURRY & THE FURY

If I Don't Got You

Self-release

It's getting so it's nothing new to hear of

with picking, fretting, and slide work. He closes the album with a passionate cover of Warren Haynes' “Soulshine.”

For someone so young, Curry's voice and guitar licks sound weathered and practiced, like someone who's been through the ringer of life's experiences for years. And his music is truly diverse and well