

ROCKTALK

Jimmy O Says He Looks for the Bright Side of the Blues

■ The Burbank-born musician brings his brooding band to the Classroom in Northridge.

By JAMES E. FOWLER
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Jimmy O doesn't know why they call it "cry-in-your-beer" music, the blues always makes him feel good.

"It's a very uplifting kind of music, very healing," he says. "The blues is not sad, it's supposed to make you feel better."

Jimmy O, who's playing at the Classroom in Northridge this Saturday and at the Santa Clarita Brewing Co. next week, is a born and bred Valley blues man.

"I was born in the same hospital as Willie Dixon died, St. Joseph's in Burbank," Jimmy says. "Maybe it's an omen or something."

With a little spurt of facial hair on his lower lip and dark shades to match his mood, Jimmy O looks like a guy who's been around, in front and in back, inside and out of 12 bars for a long time. And he sounds that way too.

He plays the blues and nothing else and that ain't bad. His guitar and voice both growl with a moral authority that's common among the better blues artists.



Jimmy O has been promoting his album, "Bolt From the Blue," released last spring.

Jimmy works full time these days promoting his album, "Bolt From the Blue," which was released last spring on Smokestack Records. The album features Jimmy performing six original tunes plus some

very respectable covers of several blues classics including Dixon's "I Don't Trust Myself," B.B. King's "Ask Me No Questions," and "The Hunter" by Booker T. Jones & the MGs.

Backing him up this weekend will be "Commando" Cody McDonald on harmonica, "Cool Cat" Pat Gillham on drums, Dennis Cottone on bass and Margaret Rainsford on keyboards.