**SUSAN TEDESCHI – *JUST WON’T BURN (25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION)***

**BIO**

Susan Tedeschi is one of the most celebrated blues and American roots musicians of her generation, and her unyielding commitment to her craft – both as a solo artist and in Tedeschi Trucks Band – has earned her multiple Grammy nominations and the adoration of audiences around the world.

But for Boston native Tedeschi, who began performing in plays and musicals at the age of five and in real bands by 13, such success was all the more surprising given how comparatively late in life she’d discovered blues as an art form while singing with friends at early ‘90s Boston-area jam sessions. Before that, there were a succession of formative experiences: a nameless teenage group in Scituate with Terry Stebbins, which played yacht clubs and private parties; a high-school era combo with the Thompson Brothers, which played the prom; Ted Larkin’s The Smoking Section, which had a weekly gig at the Francis Cafe on Route 109; and a job as a singing waitress on the Spirit of Boston tourist cruise.

Buoyed by this supportive community of fellow musicians, Tedeschi eventually quit her high-paying but soul-draining gig in a top 40 wedding band, traded her trusty acoustic guitar for an electric, wood-shedded the work of Big Mama Thornton, Koko Taylor, Freddie King, and T-Bone Walker, and began garnering significant regional acclaim while playing live with an ever-changing cast of friends.

“If you’ve never seen one of Tedeschi’s concerts, you won’t appreciate the depth of one of the best new artists of the ‘90s,” raved *Billboard* editor-in-chief Timothy White at the time. “When her band erupts and she starts to sing, her vocals seethe, swoop, and roar with enough sensual bluster to break the seals on whiskey bottles and tear the leaves from trees.”

It all coalesced with the 1998 release of her solo debut, *Just Won’t Burn*, on which Tedeschi put the wider music world on notice that she was a true force to be reckoned with. In celebration of its 25th anniversary, the album will be reissued in expanded form on Sept. 22 via Fantasy Records, complete with several previously unreleased studio and live tracks.

“Making *Just Won’t Burn* was a pivot,” Tedeschi says of the album, which features musicians such as guitarists Adrienne Hayes and Sean Costello, harmonica player Annie Raines, percussionist/songwriter Tom Hambridge, and keyboardist Tom West tackling her original songs in tandem with material popularized by Ruth Brown (“Mama, He Treats Your Daughter Mean”), Junior Wells (“Little by Little”), and John Prine (“Angel From Montgomery”).

“All of a sudden, I was working with different groups of people, new musicians, new songwriting collaborators,” she adds. “We had no idea how it was going to turn out. I think the thing that held it all together was the blues. Blues is a language that I love. You can take it anywhere in the world and communicate with people, which isn’t necessarily true about other forms of music. And being a white artist in a black milieu, you just have to let the music speak.”

Speak it did, as *Just Won’t Burn* went platinum (a rare achievement for a blues-based album at that time) and earned Tedeschi a Grammy nomination for Best New Artist in 2000 (alongside the of-the-moment cast of Britney Spears, Macy Gray, Kid Rock, and Christina Aguilera). It would be the first of five Grammy nominations for Tedeschi as a solo artist, with each of her next three solo releases earning nods for Best Contemporary Blues Album.

“The way people react to *Just Won’t Burn* has always been heartwarming and surprising,” Tedeschi enthuses. “I used to get letters from a prisoner who identified with the songs and found hope in them, and then I started getting letters from the rest of the prisoners on the cell block because it was the only cassette they had.”

With the accolades came invitations to tour with the Rolling Stones, B.B. King, John Mellencamp, and Bob Dylan. Tedeschi performed at Lilith Fair with Sheryl Crow and the Dixie Chicks, at VH-1's "Concert for the Century," where she met Bill & Hillary Clinton, and Farm Aid with Willie Nelson, Dave Matthews, Neil Young, and Steve Earle, which made a profound impact on her musically.

Even after 25 years, the past-decade plus of which have seen Tedeschi rise to even greater heights with her husband Derek Trucks in Tedeschi Trucks Band, *Just Won’t Burn* remains a touchstone of blues-based rock’n’roll. For the anniversary edition, Tedeschi unearthed a series of outtakes and unreleased cuts that widen the album’s scope, including two never-before-heard recordings (a cover of Koko Taylor’s “Voodoo Woman” and the Tedeschi original “Waste of Time”) and an alternate version of “Looking for Answers” tracked with Costello and a different rhythm section of drummer Mike Levesque and bassist Norm DeMora.

“I liked recording with those guys because we’d try different things,” she says. “Sean thought about his solo as if it was going to be played backwards, so he played it backwards in his mind and then we flipped the tape. It sounded weirdly amazing and cool. That was my first taste of experimenting like that in the studio. Back then, I didn’t know what was really going to fly. ‘Waste of My Time’ and ‘Looking for Answers’ let me try different approaches. It’s not all exactly what you think it might be.”

Also included are contemporary live renditions of “Looking for Answers” and the album’s title track performed by Tedeschi Trucks Band, demonstrating how Tedeschi’s music continues to grow and change. “It’s a classic blues tune, and it fits with all the blues-y rock stuff we play live,” Tedeschi says of “Looking for Answers.” “When Derek and I started dating, he was like, hey, you wrote a song in open tuning for slide? He plays in open tuning and is, as you know, the world’s best slide player, so he was like, we should do that song. It’s really fun to play and also timeless.”

“Sometimes when I look back on the 25 years since the release, I think about the places I’ve been and the adventures I’ve had, and I feel like Forrest Gump,” she continues. “I say, ‘No! You’re a baseball mom. You didn’t do all that!’ But I must have. The blues has its demands. You have to be honest — musically, emotionally, and personally — above everything else, and that can lead to some uncomfortable truths. But the blues hasn’t burned me. It hasn’t hurt me. It’s my main resource. I can express myself and get stuff out about my life – or, like B.B. always said, ‘whatever ails you.’ The blues got me here.”