



After 29 years on the road, Bonnie Raitt guitarist George Marinelli decided to take a break. Stepping into the role will be Boston native Duke Levine.

The youngest of five, Levine had older brothers with Stones and Beatles records along with Paul Butterfield albums featuring Michael Bloomfield on guitar. One brother, Rick, had a band that rehearsed in the basement almost every day. His parents were supportive and didn't mind the sound of equipment being loaded into the house at midnight after a gig.

Levine's first guitar was a Yamaha FG75 his dad bought for \$42 when Duke was nine. Three years later, he and his Gibson SG Special were in their first band, Landslide, with a bus, a manager, professional sound and lighting, and an abundance of friends serving as roadies.

After high school, he toured for four years with Walter and Valerie Crockett, playing a newer Les Paul and a '70s Strat. On the recommendation of his teacher, Rich Falco, Levine attended the New England Conservatory of Music. Following graduation, he worked with jazz drummer Bob Moses for four years in the world-beat band Mozamba, and started playing sessions with the multitude of singer/songwriters in

Boston. He did two European tours with Otis Rush, then toured with the Del Fuegos for two years.

Next came a stint with Jonatha Brooke and Jennifer Kimball, a folk-rock duo known as The Story. In 1992, film composer Mason Daring released Levine's first album, *Nobody's Home*, a collection of country and roots songs, followed by two more on Daring Records.

In 1994, working with The Story brought Duke to the attention of Mary Chapin Carpenter's management, and the following year, he joined her band.

"I had never done anything on that scale before," he said. "It was her first headline tour, playing arenas."

Duke has played on seven Carpenter albums, including *A Place in the World*, *Party Doll*, *Time Sex Love*, and, most recently, *The Dirt and The Stars*. At her encouragement, the end of the record has a three-minute guitar solo.

In 2002, Levine stopped touring with Carpenter and began working with Peter Wolf, doing shows supporting *Sleepless*. Backing Wolf has been his main gig since.

Prior to becoming part of her band, Levine had played with Raitt once, sitting in on "Angel from Montgomery" when she and Carpenter were on the bill for the 1997 No Nukes concert in Washington, D.C.

James "Hutch" Hutchinson, who has been Raitt's bass player for 40 years, is a good friend, and when the position became available, Hutch and others recommended him to Raitt. In September of '21, he got a call during which Raitt assured him that she doesn't expect anyone to play exactly what someone else played all the time.

After eight January rehearsals in a small Northern California studio, full rehearsals moved to Southern California in March. Levine and Marinelli worked well together; Marinelli will play a number of shows, and at times they'll both be onstage, Levine says, "We'll figure it out when it happens."

"I love being a side man," he adds. "Leading my own band helped me as a side man because it gives insight to what someone you're working for is going through." With Bonnie, "In general, there's a lot of leeway and the song doesn't have to be the same from beginning to end every night."

Summarizing his career so far, he says, "I never had a plan. You're just playing with people and one thing leads to another."

Levine's main guitar for the tour is a blond '63 Tele supplemented by a Supro Duo Tone with the neck pickup removed, a '50s Relic Strat, and a recently acquired '70s Greco Spacey Sound he calls "a find." His amp is an early-'60s AC30 head through a Vox cab with two Eminence hempcone speakers. Effects are a Mad Professor Deep Blue delay and Royal Blue overdrive, a Rattler distortion, a Harmonious Monk tremolo, a Waterfall chorus/vibrato from JAM Pedals, and a Source Audio Nemesis delay.

Last year, he released *Left to My Own Devices*, an EP of solo-guitar arrangements that started as Youtube videos produced in his basement during the pandemic.

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