

Created by: Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta

## John Mayall at City Winery, New York City, NY, USA



**“The Godfather of British Blues”** [John Mayall](#) and his band consisting of **Rocky Athas** on lead and rhythm guitar, **Greg Rzab** on bass guitar and percussion, and **Jay Davenport** on drums delivered an exceptional evening of music at [City Winery in New York City, New York](#). Great music and a working winery with great wines available in the heart of New York City made for a very enviable and delightful pairing.

Singer, songwriter, musician, and producer John Mayall (born November 29, 1933) is a dedicated and dynamic performer, and his performance on September 16, 2014 at City Winery was no exception. Since the 1960s, the impressive list of talent who have played with John Mayall over the years include Eric Clapton, Peter Green, Mick Fleetwood, John McVie, Jack Bruce, Mick Taylor, Harvey Mandel, Walter Trout, and Coco Montoya. Make no mistake though, his new band consisting of Rocky Athas who hails from Texas, and Greg Rzab and Jay Davenport who hail from Chicago, is equally impressive and well able to keep up with the legendary John Mayall, dubbed “The Godfather of British Blues” who was recognized and awarded an O.B.E. (Order of the British Empire) for his lifetime music contribution.



**John Mayall at City Winery, NYC**

John and the band opened with two cuts off his latest release, **A Special Life** on the [Forty Below Records](#) label (read the review in the [Music Scene](#) section), beginning with the Clifton Chenier song, *Why Did You Go Last Night*, and then segued into the Eddie Taylor song, *Big Town Playboy*, with John playing harmonica. Next in the line-up was *Dirty Water*, the Albert King song, *Floodin’ In California*, which is also on the *A Special Life* release, followed by the Bukka White song, *Parchman Farm*.

He introduced his next song, *One Life To Live*, as one that he wrote during his time in the military in Korea, followed by *Congo Square* off *The Bluesbreakers &ndash; A Sense of Place* release. Next there was the title cut, *A Special Life*, with the lyrics, “I lead a special life ... freedom is my middle name,” which could be the anthem for John’s life. Changing the pace, he slid into a slow and sexy blues number entitled, *Have You Heard About My Baby*, with its enticing lyrics, “Before I met you baby, never knew what I was

missing..”



**Greg Rzab and John Mayall**

John Mayall is a generous performer and throughout the evening’s performance, each of the band members had their solo time to shine. Jay Davenport laid down an explosive drum solo, Greg Rzab contributed some nice guitar riffs, Rocky Athas showed his prowess on the guitar, and simply watching John in action singing and working his magic on the guitar, keyboards, and harmonica, was a delight to experience.

He closed out the performance with the song, *California*, and when the audience requested just one more, John and the band came back onstage to leave the fans with one for the road to round out a memorable Tuesday evening of music with John Mayall and his band at the City Winery in New York City.



**Rocky Athas at City Winery, NYC**

After the show, we had the opportunity to catch a quick chat with John who described the inspiration for his latest release, *A Special Life*, as having come from stories from his life. Growing up, two of his many musical influences included listening to the Mills Brothers and “Lead Belly” the nickname for American folk and blues musician Huddie William Ledbetter (January 20, 1888 &ndash; December 6, 1949). We wonder how many countless musicians John has influenced throughout his long career.



### **Greg Rzab at City Winery, NYC**

When someone asked him what his secret was, he replied, "I love the music." Clearly as do his fans, who met with John both pre-show when he was meeting and greeting and selling his CDs and after the show as well, when he took time to speak with fans and also pose for photos.

"Founded by Michael Dorf, City Winery has four locations: New York City, Chicago, Napa, and Nashville. After making his first barrel of wine in California with his brother Josh and wine maker David Tate, formerly of Ridge Winery and now at Barnett Vineyards, Michael caught the bug: "For a long time I'd been enjoying wine as a fan - drinking it, taking classes, attending wine dinners - but it was not until I actually started participating in the process of working with the grape, turning it into wine, putting it into a bottle, and watching it develop over time, that I really started to understand wine. And when I would give my friends a bottle of wine with my name on it, most would respond by saying: 'I wanna do that too!' It was this experience that led Michael to conceptualize and start working on the City Winery business plan in 2006."



### **Greg Rzab and John Mayall**

"The core target audience of City Winery - urban wine enthusiasts who desire the experience of making their own wine, but who are not going to leave their comfortable Manhattan lifestyle to decamp to a vineyard - immediately became clear. But Michael wanted to create more than just a custom crush facility. Beyond making wine, Michael also wanted to focus on the enjoyment and satisfaction that comes from sharing wine with friends, and to capture the unique social bond that occurs when communities of like-minded people gather over a bottle of quality Cabernet, while dining on a freshly-prepared meal and listening to their favorite artists perform."



**The Band backing John Mayall**

**Rocky Athas, Greg Rzab, Jay Davenport**

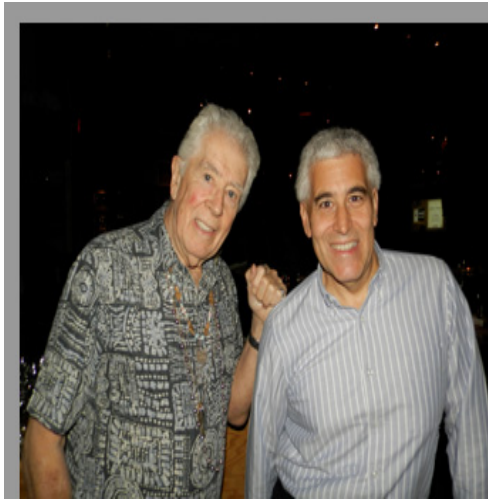
“In addition to a functioning winery and 21,000 square foot restaurant and event space, City Winery is also equipped with a full stage, state-of-the-art sound system and in-house A/V - making it one of the most interesting venues in Manhattan. Whether you are planning a private party, a public concert or an intimate evening of music and spoken word, City Winery's stage and staff can accommodate a variety of live performances and cultural activities that will appeal to sophisticated New Yorkers and wine connoisseurs alike.”



**John Mayall jamming**

City Winery is an all-ages venue, however they ask that under-21 guests do not choose seats at the bar or consume alcohol. There is no required minimum on food or drink, but a full menu and bar selection is available throughout the show.

The Box Office is open Monday through Friday from 11:00 am until 6:00 pm. There is no formal dress code; it is a very casual venue.



**John Mayall and Edward Nesta**

For information on upcoming performances, please visit the website: [www.CityWinery.com](http://www.CityWinery.com).

**A few of the many upcoming shows at City Winery in New York City:**

10/14 &ndash; 15/2014

John Hiatt Solo with Luther Dickinson

10/17/2014

An Evening with John Sebastian and David Grisman

10/22/2014

An Evening with Joe Purdy

10/27/2014

Sinéad O'Connor &ndash; I'm Not Bossy, I Am The Boss



**City Winery**  
**155 Varick Street (between Spring and Vandam Streets)**  
**New York, NY 10013**  
**United States**  
**Telephone: +1-212-608-0555**  
**Website: [www.CityWinery.com](http://www.CityWinery.com)**  
**Facebook: [www.Facebook.com/CityWineryNYC](http://www.Facebook.com/CityWineryNYC)**

For information on **John Mayall's** upcoming performances, please visit the website: [www.JohnMayall.com](http://www.JohnMayall.com).

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Listen to a sampler of John Mayall &ndash; A Special Life at [www.FortyBelowRecords.com](http://www.FortyBelowRecords.com)

Read the review of John Mayall's latest release, John Mayall &ndash; A Special Life in the Music Scene of Luxury Experience

[www.LuxuryExperience.com/Music\\_Scene/Music\\_Artists/John\\_Mayall\\_-\\_A\\_Special\\_Life.html](http://www.LuxuryExperience.com/Music_Scene/Music_Artists/John_Mayall_-_A_Special_Life.html).

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