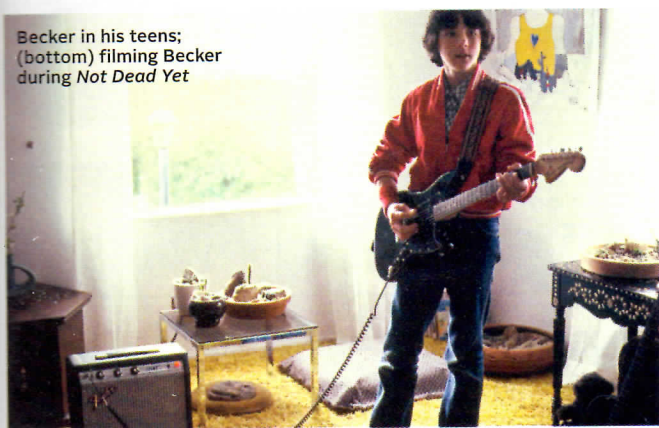


Becker in his teens; (bottom) filming Becker during *Not Dead Yet*



"This was a difficult film to make."

— JESSE VILE

beat the odds. Today, 23 years since learning he has ALS, Becker is still alive and, despite being paralyzed, making music.

Now his enduring spirit has been captured in filmmaker Jesse Vile's *Jason Becker: Not Dead Yet*, a 90-minute documentary that chronicles the guitarist's extraordinary life. The movie will be shown at festivals worldwide throughout 2012 and released on DVD in 2013.

"I've wanted to make a film about Jason since I was a 15-year-old kid," Vile says. "My guitar teacher at the time was turning me onto neoclassical shred and recommended *Perpetual Burn* [Becker's 1988 solo album] and the *Cacophony* albums. I couldn't believe how much feeling and emotion this guy exuded in his music, and he was just an 18-year-old kid. Then I learned more about Jason and thought it was the most

incredible story I'd ever heard."

Vile was still in film school, in 2000, when he originally reached out to Becker about making the documentary. Becker loved the idea, but Vile was unable to secure funding until 10 years later. In November 2010, he began shooting *Not Dead Yet*, with the majority of it filmed in the guitarist's hometown of Richmond, California.

Vile spent several weeks at the guitarist's home, sifting through family movies, talking to Becker's parents and close friends, and traveling around the San Francisco Bay Area to speak with key figures in Becker's life. The film includes interviews with a number of musicians, including Friedman, Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, Gregg Bissonette, Richie Kotzen and Steve Hunter. And, of course, the documentary is packed with Becker's music, highlighted by older demos, two new tracks and an 11-year-old Jason singing Bob Dylan's "Meet Me in the Morning."

"This was a difficult film to make," Vile says. "I think people will see how hard it is and how long it takes for Jason to continue writing music, and what determination that takes."

Tommy Bolin Gets a Star-Studded Salute

WARREN HAYNES, PETER FRAMPTON AND OTHERS BRING HIS FINAL TRACKS TO COMPLETION ON *GREAT GYPSY SOUL*. by Ted Drozdowski



▶ THE NEW TOMMY BOLIN album *Great Gypsy Soul* is a blast from the past—and the present. Coproduced by Warren Haynes and Greg Hampton, the project blends unused tracks that

the late guitarist cut for his debut solo album *Teaser* in July 1975—just five months before his death at age 25—with newly recorded licks and leads by a coterie of current guitar heroes. The results can be heard on 11 blistering rockers and a five-track bonus disc that features Haynes, Hampton, Derek Trucks, Steve Morse, Nels Cline, Peter Frampton, John Scofield, Brad Whitford, Sonny Landreth, Oz Noy, Steve Lukather and Joe Bonamassa.

For Haynes, who puts his own blowtorch brand of slide on

an alternate version of Bolin's "Teaser," and Hampton, whose reputation for sonic expressionism thunders throughout the bonus disc, the project is payback for one of their early guitar heroes. "In Europe and Japan, Tommy gets more of the recognition he deserves," Haynes says. "In America he's not recognized as much, partially due to the musical climate change that took place in the late Seventies and early Eighties. Like Jimi Hendrix, Duane Allman and Paul Kossoff, he was just getting started. Maybe this album will

help people understand what an amazing contribution he made to music in such a short time."

During his life Bolin recorded just two solo discs, replaced Ritchie Blackmore in Deep Purple for *Come Taste the Band*, and put his fiery fingerprints all over drummer Billy Cobham's fusion classic *Spectrum* and a few other albums. He opened for both Frampton and Jeff Beck on his last concert appearances prior to his death, on December 4, 1976, from a heroin overdose.

Great Gypsy Soul was conceived by Hampton while he was producing the Bolin rarities collection *Whips Roses I & II* in 2004. "For people who've never heard Tommy, this is going to be an eye-opener," Hampton says. "It's because he was such an innovator and had so many dimensions to his playing that we were able to get such a wide variety of fantastic players involved."

RON BECKER (TOP); COURTESY OF OPUS POCUS FILMS (MIDDLE); FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS/BETTY IMAGES (BOLIN)