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For Immediate Release

**WATERMELON SLIM & THE WORKERS WIN TWO TOP INDUSTRY HONORS
FOR 'BAND OF THE YEAR' AND 'ALBUM OF THE YEAR'**

**The NorthernBlues Music release *The Wheel Man* wins 'Album of the Year' over peers
Koko Taylor, Bettye LaVette and Jimmie Vaughan.**

Watermelon Slim & The Workers won a pair of awards at the Memphis-based Blues Foundation's 2008 Blues Music Awards (formerly W.C. Handy Awards) on Thursday May 8, 2008 at the Grand Casino Event Center in Tunica, Mississippi.

Watermelon Slim is a relatively new luminary of the blues, rapidly building a career behind four albums and constant touring. In 2008 Slim was nominated for six awards, a feat matched only by the likes of B.B. King, Buddy Guy, and Robert Cray. Slim has twelve nominations in the last two years, a feat unmatched in the event's 29 years.

Slim, his band and the album have been steadily building praise preceding these two Blues Music Awards. The legendary Jerry Wexler penned the liner notes of the award winning album which also won the Independent Music Award for 'Blues Album of the Year.' Watermelon Slim and the Workers have long been leading earners for their exclusive booking agency, Intrepid Artists. Among other accolades, the band also won the 2008 Maple Blues Award for 'International Artist of the Year.'

Blues Revue Magazine wrote of *The Wheel Man* "(Watermelon Slim) not only holds his own but defines a new genre – one that's the blues' answer to some of rock's greatest garage bands." Mainstream media such as *Paste Magazine* describes Slim as "the most exciting and authentic blues performer I've heard in years." The U.K.'s *MOJO Magazine* ranked Slim's last two records #1 on its annual 'Best Blues Albums of the Year' list.

The Toronto based world/roots/blues label NorthernBlues Music has released the last two Watermelon Slim & The Workers CDs. A self titled album was released in February 2006. '*The Wheel Man*' was released in April 2007 and debuted in the top ten on *Billboard's* Blues Charts. It was produced by Chris Wick and features keyboardist Dave Maxwell and Chicago blues legend Magic Slim on the title track. As mentioned earlier, Jerry Wexler wrote the liner notes yet had to decline a producer role due to health issues.

Owner of NorthernBluesMusic, Inc. Fred Litwin beams "I can't tell you how proud I am of Watermelon Slim - these awards show that the fans recognize he is the most authentic and honest bluesman out there." These are not lighthearted words considering Litwin's label launched the likes of Otis Taylor and Janiva Magness into worldwide recognition and their own bevy of awards.

Born in Boston and raised in North Carolina, Bill 'Watermelon Slim' Homans was schooled at Middleberry College until he enlisted in Vietnam. While laid up in an Army hospital he taught himself upside down left handed guitar with his military issued Zippo as a slide and a plastic pick cut from the top of a coffee can. He has been a truck driver, watermelon farmer, sawmill, funeral officiator and small time criminal. He's earned two masters degrees in history and journalism and hauled industrial waste. In the early 2000s, a near fatal heart attack clarified his focus on mortality and he hit the road on a new career as a singing/songwriting/guitar playing/harmonica blowing/ performing bluesman.

The highly anticipated follow up to 'The Wheel Man' is entitled 'No Paid Holidays' and features Lee Roy Parnell on slide guitar. 'No Paid Holidays' hits the street June 24, 2008 on NorthernBlues Music via Redeye Distribution.

For almost three decades, the Blues Music Awards (and previously the W.C. Handy Awards) have celebrated excellence in performance and recording of the blues. For more information about the Blues Foundation and the Blues Music Awards, visit www.blues.org.

www.watermelonslim.com & www.northernblues.com

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