

# LADY J HOUSTON

## GROOVE ME BABY

Earwig Music



Boom, an explosion of brass and vocal sound hits me right between the ears as Lady J grabs my attention with her beautiful distinctive voice, that tells me I'm gonna love this album. Old style brassy blues straight from the streets, a whole orchestra of vocalists and musicians and Lady J herself blowing up a storm on trumpet on tracks 2/5/6 and 11. When I listen to music it does a couple of things to me, it either kicks up a memory or it makes me visualise another place or time. Twelve tracks that seem to be making a movie of situations in my mind, especially one particular track, where Lady J's vocals almost shattered my wine glass. As I'm going through the script, I think to myself, can this album get any better, then Lady J throws in the classic Born Under a Bad Sign.

**“ an epic album that will get played over and over again**

A stunning version, worth buying the album alone for. Then, as I read the sleeve notes, the next song is Corona, You Make Me Sick, how wrong was I to think is this going to be a bit of a comedy song, I loved it and there's nothing funny about it, it's a soulful classic. Six songs in and I'm completely under her spell. Her timing along with the orchestra is second to none, this is big sound, this is bold sound, this is soul sound with a good dollop of blues folded into the mix. I start to imagine myself sat in a St Louis theatre, waiting for her to come on stage from behind a beautiful sash curtain, waiting for the brass and guitar to kick in. This is an epic album that will get played (by me) over and over again, how's it going to end, with the Classic Etta James song, At Last, and I say I'm glad I found you at last Lady J.

BARRY BLUESBARN HOPWOOD

Callahan took a few years off to raise her family, so this is her first release in eight years. However, on ten originals and two covers Deb sounds like she has never been away, singing well in front of her regular band, filled out by horns and producer Chris Arms' slide guitar on a couple of tracks. The album is dedicated to long-serving drummer Tom Walling who passed away after these recordings. Allen James' sweet guitar lines and the horns underpin Deb as she declares that she is what she is, What I'm

Working With, indeed. The soulful start continues with Crazy Ride, a funky rhythm with 70's sounding clavinet before Deb decides that it's time for her to put on her Big Girl Pants to face up to problems, a tough blues tune with plenty of chugging guitars. Deb rejects someone she classes as a Rogue, a gentler tune with delicate guitar, while A Few New Tricks shuffles along well, an autobiographical song about Deb's recent life changes. The first cover is a fairly straight version of Percy Mayfield's classic

Danger Zone, solid vocals and guitar here, before Still Fighting To Be Free adds a hint of the Delta with acoustic guitar and harp, a serious song about the continuing struggle for freedom for African Americans. Back to the funkier side with Don't Tread On Me, the second track with sax before two songs written solely by Deb: Cleaning House finds Deb working her way through old stuff, accompanied just by drumbeats and moody slide guitar; Thought You Were My Girl is a sad song about a former friend, beautifully sung and played. An upbeat tune is what is needed now, and Deb provides Just What The Doctor Ordered, funky, with the clavinet appearing again. Sean Costello's Anytime You Want is reprised from Sean's final studio album We Can Get Together to close the album on a rocking note. Deb Callahan is a strong singer and song writer, and it is good to see her back on the scene.

JOHN MITCHELL

## JENNIFER LYN & THE GROOVE REVIVAL

GYPSY SOUL

INDEPENDENT

North Dakota based musician with a 5 track EP of blues-rock penned by Lyn and bandmate Richard Torrance. Title track Gypsy Soul opens the CD with a swinging bluesy vibe proclaiming Lyn's love of rock & roll music and featuring tough vocals, stinging guitar and hot bar room piano from Barb Jiskra. Torrance contributes guitar and backing vocals and the pair occasionally duel on lead guitars as on the funky Low Down Dirty Shame a story of love gone wrong. The excellent band is completed by Chris Addison on bass and Jim Anderson on drums. Going Round In Circles is a blues ballad drenched in soul and features Lyn's emotional vocals set against Torrance's stinging reverb-soaked guitar fills. Nice one. Lyn and Torrance write and perform

well together and have produced some great music here. Give Me All Of Your Lovin' rocks hard telling a tale of an exciting night out at the local Jook Joint. All too soon we get to closing track You Can Take It All a well crafted stripped-down love song featuring Lyn and Torrance's sensuous harmonised vocals backed by sweet, chiming, guitar licks and wailing organ. I really enjoyed this well honed, masterful blend of styles and look forward to hearing more, please!

DAVE DRURY

## GENERATIONS OF BLUES

WEST SIDE LEGACY-WITH THE SOUL BLUES HEALERS

NOLA BLUE RECORDS

If ever there was an album fully laden with so many blues artists and musicians, then this is it. The Taylor family was one of the main artists and players many

