

John Lee Hooker, Jr. - Blues With A Vengeance (2004)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Suspicious*
2. *Check Yourself*
3. *Blues Ain't Nothin' But a Pimp*
4. *Dimples*
5. *She Wasn't Nothin' But a Devil*
6. *Boom Boom*
7. *Keep It Real*
8. *I'm Leavin'*
9. *Goin' Down to Baghdad*
10. *Stormy Monday*
11. *Groove Thang*
12. *One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer*

John Lee Hooker, Jr. (vocals);
Craig Robinson, Kim Turner (vocals);
John Garcia, Jr., Jeff Horan (guitar);
Will "Roc" Griffin (keyboards);
Frank "Tebo" Thibeaux (bass instrument);
John Handy Jr. (drums).

His name is John Lee Hooker, and he is a blues singer with a Motor City connection. But he isn't the John Lee Hooker; the bluesman heard on *Blues With a Vengeance* is John Lee Hooker Jr., and he was named after his legendary father (who passed away in 2001 after a very long and productive career). Hooker Jr. has been quoted as saying, "If I tried to fill my father's shoes, I'd get cramps just trying to take one step" -- which is a sensible attitude because Hooker Sr. was truly irreplaceable. Hooker Jr. isn't pretending to be his dad, and truth be told, they don't sound a lot alike; stylistically, *Blues With a Vengeance* is much closer to the electric-urban blues of Buddy Guy, Muddy Waters, and B.B. King. This 2004 release lacks the moody, dusky,

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swampy qualities one associates with Hooker Sr., who was greatly influenced by Mississippi Delta blues -- and while the older Hooker had a unique, unorthodox way of turning the 12-bar format inside out, Hooker Jr. is more likely to embrace those 12 bars in a straightforward fashion. Nonetheless, Hooker Jr. doesn't ignore his father's legacy on this CD, which includes performances of "Boom Boom" and "One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer" -- and by tackling a few gems that are so closely identified with his dad and putting his stamp on them, Hooker Jr. makes it abundantly clear that he is his own man. Hooker Jr.'s own songs, however, dominate this CD, and his wild sense of humor is a definite plus on spirited originals like "Blues Ain't Nothin' But a Pimp," and the topical "Goin' Down to Baghdad." Blues With a Vengeance has no problem demonstrating that the younger Hooker is a promising bluesman in his own right. --- Alex Henderson, allmusic.com

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