

King Mud - Victory Motel Sessions (2016)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 24 February 2016 17:13 - Last Updated Thursday, 25 March 2021 20:40

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1. *Rat Time* (5:12) 2. *Smoked All My Bud* (4:20) 3. *Back It Up* (2:52) 4. *Arthur's Hooked* (3:56) 5. *Keep It Out Of Sight* (2:41) 6. *Take A Look* (5:57) 7. *War Dancers* (3:27) 8. *I Can Only Give You Everything* (3:38) 9. *Suzy's Cookies* (6:39) 10. *Blood River* (3:11) Freddy J IV - Guitar, Vocals Patrick French - Harp Alex "Jm" Galvan - Organ (Hammond) Parker Griggs - Guitar Wojtek Pilichowski - Bass Jaxon Lee Swain - Bass Van Campbell - Drums, Percussion, Vocals (Background)

If you're going to sing the blues, it helps to have a reason, and dirty blues-rock combo King Mud sure have one on their debut album, 2016's *Victory Motel Sessions*. "Smoked All My Bud" is an amped-up stoner's lament about running low on reefer and hoping your significant other will be willing to replenish said stash; as bummed-out songs about weed go, it won't replace Bill Kirchen's "Down to Seeds and Stems Again Blues," but King Mud's variation on the theme sure does rock harder, and has the thick smoky vibe that true THC enthusiasts will be sure to endorse. While King Mud aren't any more obsessed with marijuana than the average band of 21st century blues-rock howlers, the album's stripped-down approach, focusing on plenty of guitar fireworks and muscular percussion grooves, should certainly go over well with interested members of the stoner rock community. King Mud is a duo featuring guitarist and vocalist Freddy J IV from the band *Left Lane Cruiser* and drummer Van Campbell of the *Black Diamond Heavies*, and the two musicians have managed to combine the down-and-dirty virtues of their respective groups on these sessions while avoiding some of the attitudinal overkill that occasionally marred their work (though Freddy still sounds like he spent a lot of time practicing his rootsy growl in a room with a good echo).

King Mud's two-man attack helps the band sound focused and tight on *Victory Motel Sessions*, and they have the good sense to know when to add some extra flavors to the mix (especially Parker Griggs of *Radio Moscow*, who plays guitar on two cuts, and Alex J. Galvan, whose Hammond organ licks give the material a suitably late-'60s/early-'70s touch). It's worth noting that the two best songs here are the two covers (Dr. Feelgood's "Keep It Out of Sight" and

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Them's "I Can Only Give You Everything"), but considering King Mud wrote and recorded this album in a mere five days, Victory Motel Sessions is a promising start, and hopefully they won't be bogarted next time they hit the studio. ---Mark Deming, allmusic.com

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