

Marcia Ball - Roadside Attractions (2011)

Written by bluesever

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01. *That's How It Goes* 02. *Roadside Attractions* [play](#) 03. *Between Here and Kingdom Come* 04. *We Fell Hard* 05. *Look Before You Leap* 06. *I Heard It All* 07. *Believing In Love* 08. *This Used To Be Paradise* 09. *Everybody's Looking for the Same Thing* 10. *Sugar Boogie* [play](#)

11. *Mule Headed Man* 12. *The Party's Still Going On*

Marcia Ball - vocals, piano, Wurlitzer piano Dan Bechdolt - Sax (Tenor) Don Bennett - Bass Steve Butts - Trumpet Joel Guzman - Accordion Jim Hoke - Sax (Baritone), Sax (Tenor), Soloist Colin Linden - Guitar, Mandolin Damien Llanes - Drums Steve Mackey - Bass Wendy Moten - Vocals (Background) Mike Schermer - Guitar Thad Scott - Saxophone Lynn Williams - Drums Greg Wilson - Sax (Baritone) Reese Wynans - Hammond B3 Mingo Fishtrap Horns

Marcia Ball, born on the Texas/Louisiana border, has long been a superb performer, delivering her swampy blend of zydeco, blues, and gritty R&B with all the force of a Saturday night locomotive, and through 12 albums, she has never let that energy go. *Roadside Attractions*, her fifth release for Alligator Records, is no exception -- it cooks and rattles and rocks with Ball's typical joyous energy and powerful piano. None of her many fans will be disappointed by this outing, but it is a little different for Ball in one respect -- for the first time on one of her albums she has either written or co-written every song on it, and all of them draw on her thousands of hours on the road bringing her infectious brand of swampy boogie to the world. Song after song here roars by in a lightning-soaked tumble of piano-driven words until it feels like her own personal diary of America tumbling past the tour bus window -- and it isn't all barbecues, picnics, and big concert stages, either. Love is found, lost, and found again out on the road, and Ball captures the kinetic feel of all of that here, and she's arguably never sung better, her voice full of the smoke of life on the road. You can tell she loves singing these songs. The opening track, "That's How It Goes," stomps with joy right out of the gate, and song after song builds things forward, with Ball's singing and lyrics on cuts like "Between Here and Kingdom Come" and "Believing in Love" in constant motion. The whole album is full of motion and life, and it's easily Ball's best and most personal statement to date. But don't worry -- she still knows that all paths lead to the dancefloor, and once there, as she sings on the album-closing "The Party's Still Going On," you better be ready to dance. This wonderful album will insist on it. ---Steve

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Leggett, AllMusic Review

On her new CD, *Roadside Attractions* (her 15th solo recording), Marcia Ball's songwriting is at the forefront, ranging from tales of wild parties to stories of twisted motel affairs to declarations of the enduring power of love and family. It is inspired by her years on the road and from insights gained from everyday life, making it her most autobiographical album. *Roadside Attractions* is certainly more than capable of starting a no-holds-barred bash. But more than that, it's a tour-de-force of Marcia's seemingly endless talent, and among the most emotionally moving recordings she has ever made. Produced by famed songwriter, musician and producer Gary Nicholson (Delbert McClinton, Wynonna Judd, T. Graham Brown), *Roadside Attractions* finds Marcia Ball at a creative peak. Ball wrote or co-wrote every song--something she had never done over the course of her forty-year career. Throughout the proceedings, her stellar musicians add power and nuance to the music, perfectly complementing Ball's expert piano playing, slice-of-life lyrics and melodic, storytelling vocals.

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