

Roy Buchanan - When a guitar plays the blues (1990)

Written by bluesever

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1 *When a Guitar Plays the Blues* 2 *Chicago Smokeshop* 3 *Mrs. Pressure* 4 *A Nickel & A Nail* 5 *Short Fuse* [play](#) 6 *Why Don't You Want Me See* 7 *Country Boy* [play](#) 8 *Sneaking Godzilla Through the Alley* 9 *Hawaiian Punch*

Personnel: Roy Buchanan (vocals, guitar); Otis Clay, Gloria Hardiman (vocals); Criss Johnson (guitar); Steele "Sonny" Seals (tenor saxophone); Bill Heid (keyboards); Larry Exum (bass); Morris Jennings (drums).

WHEN A GUITAR PLAYS THE BLUES is one of Roy Buchanan's finest studio dates. A hand picked group of Chicago blues musicians--including Gloria Hardiman, who lends her gospel-charged soprano to "Why Don't You Want Me?," and the irrepressible Otis Clay, who tears it up on a version of O.V. Wright's "A Nickel And A Nail"--keep things at a high simmer. As always though, it is Buchanan's virtuosity that burns most brightly. While the fare here is primarily traditional hard-driving blues, the range of Buchanan's versatility and grab bag of effects (including double-string bends, over-the-top harmonics, snarls, scratches, and delicate, melodic underplaying) help transcend the genre. ---cduniverse.com

One of Buch's most distinguishing characteristics is his manipulation of tonality and volume-knob dynamics (his approach sometimes bear a resemblance to the complex, evocative shadings of avant-jazzster Bill Frisell), a quality particularly notable on the title cut, which opens with a quote from a Bach fugue. The full range of his instrumental power is on display on the pounding "Short Fuse," the Elmore James-influenced "Hawaiian Punch" and the epic "Sneaking Godzilla Through The Alley." In all, a superior set. Roy Buchanan was one of the best axe slingers of all time. Why he never got the recognition he truly deserved is beyond comprehension. I've had this album for a couple of years, and it sounds as fresh today as it did

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when i first bought it.From the title track (When a guitar plays the blues),to the last song on the album (hawaiian punch).this album is great.Being the first album that ROY produced and mixed himself,he said it felt like it was his first recod.And in his own words,this album is really me.he also thought this was the best album he had ever released.If you like great blues then this is a must own album. ---William J. Christian

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