

Smokin' Joe Kubek & Bnois King – Roadhouse Research (2003)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Healthy Mama* 3:56
02. *Tell Me Why* 3:41 [play](#)
03. *Cryin' Shame* 4:09
04. *Got To Get Paid* 4:09
05. *Better Be Getting It On* 3:44 [play](#)
06. *Runnin' Blind* 5:45
07. *The Blues Is Still With Us* 4:54
08. *Make It Right* 4:32
09. *I Need More* 5:09
10. *Standing In My Door* 7:13

Personnel:

Smokin' Joe Kubek- Guitar

Bnois King- Vocals, Guitar

Paul Jenkins- Bass

Ralph Power- Drums

Another young Texas axeman from the old school, Smokin' Joe Kubek issued his band's debut disc in 1991 on Bullseye Blues, *Steppin' Out Texas Style*. Kubek was already playing his smokin' guitar on the Lone State chitlin circuit at age 14, supporting such musicians as Freddie King. Soon, he formed his own band and began playing a number of bars across Dallas. In the '80s, he met guitarist/vocalist Bnois King, a native of Monroe, LA, and the duo formed the first edition of the Smokin' Joe Kubek Band. The Smokin' Joe Kubek Band began playing the rest of the Southwest in the late '80s. In 1991, they signed to Bullseye Blues, releasing their debut, *Steppin' Out Texas Style*, the same year. Following its release, the band launched their first national tour. For the rest of the '90s, the Smokin' Joe Kubek Band toured the United States and toured frequently and issued records like 1993's *Texas Cadillac*, 1996's *Got My Mind Back*, and 2000's *Bite Me*. In 2003 Kubek and guitarist/vocalist Bnois King released *Roadhouse Research*

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on the Blind Pig label. The duo's second release for Blind Pig, *Show Me the Money*, came out in 2004. A single-disc collection of some of the best tracks from the Bullseye Blues years, *Served Up Texas Style*, came out in 2005. A third album from Blind Pig Records, *My Heart's in Texas*, was released in 2006. Another joint effort with King, *Blood Brothers*, appeared in 2008. --*Bill Dahl, All Music Guide*.

Unfortunately for Joe Kubek and his shotgun-riding singer/rhythm guitarist partner Bnois King, in the wake of great Texas guitarists like the Vaughan Brothers, just being a really good Lone Star fret slinger gets overlooked. Which is a shame, because over the course of nine albums, Kubek and King crafted a workmanlike if understated catalog of R&B-influenced roadhouse blues. On their debut for Blind Pig, the duo churn up more of the same fare they refined the previous 12 years. Their blues-rock is genuine if derivative, and Kubek is a rugged six-stringer who makes up for his lack of a distinctive sound with gutsy meat-and-potatoes playing. Thankfully, King adds warmth and class with his smooth, soulful, and entirely unpretentious singing. His relaxed voice contrasts perfectly with Kubek's tensile, rough-and-ready licks, infusing this music with a yin-yang that elevates it far above bar-band standards. Soulful, nearly pop numbers like "Tell Me Why" allow King to croon outside the confines of a tightly constructed blues tune. Suave yet tight, this and the funky "Cryin' Shame" open up the approach and push at the genre's boundaries. Bugged down slightly by obvious lyrics and song titles like "The Blues Is Still With Us" (a thin rewrite of "The Blues Is Alright") and "Got to Get Paid," this remains down-to-earth, often moving music whose heart is as big as the artist's home state. --*Hal Horowitz. AMG*.

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