

David P. Stevens - Mr. Guitar (2014)

Written by bluesever

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01. Headphones 02. For You 03. Moon Walkin' 04. One for Grover (feat. Andrew Neu) 05. Innocence (feat. Jeanette Harris) 06. Step Slow 07. In the Pocket (feat. Elan Trotman) 08. Give Me the Night 09. No Greater Love (feat. Jamie Knight) 10. A Child's Heart 11. Together We Dance (feat. Jethaniel Nixon) 12. Breath Away (feat. Gail Jhonson) 13. Fans (feat. Chase Lamar Smith) 14. All Night Long (feat. Jaguar Wright)

Guitarist David P. Stevens has been on the scene long enough to know how to concoct a great R&B/jazz/world formula to his specifications. Going even a step further, he adds a touch of light-hearted humor — and a touching moment of solemnity — here on his latest, Mr. Guitar. David P Stevens CD

There's a superb mix of approaches here as the guitarist glides through such smoothers as "For You," "Moon Walkin'," and "One For Grover" (featuring saxman Andrew Neu) — all the while displaying his guitar prowess and lightning riffs somewhat reminiscent of George Benson, Nick Colionne, and Norman Brown.

Showing off his soulful, lazy groove, he slides into tracks like "Innocence" (featuring saxophonist Jeanette Harris) and "In the Pocket" (featuring saxophonist Elan Trotman), "No Greater Love" (featuring vocalist Jamie Knight), and "Breath Away" (featuring keyboardist/Norman Brown musical director Gail Jhonson – wonderful backing vocals here by Michelle Ayers, Evelyn Keene, and Stevens himself) almost effortlessly.

The touching moment of moments comes in his "A Child's Heart" short track where the voices of little ones offer their hopes and prayers for harmony and peace. Simply heart-melting.

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Along with a very well-done cover of the tune Benson made a household classic “Give Me the Night,” Stevens tosses in a vibrant island groove, sounding much like a Steve Oliver venture, with “Together We Dance.” Throwing the full party mood at you with tracks like the funky and slick “Step Slow” and an original let-it-all-hang-loose tune “All Night Long” (featuring vocalist Jaguar Wright), he truly makes this a more than palatable project.

All of this would have been sufficient for a really decent album, but, at one point (track 13, to be exact) he goes further and adds a humorous track depicting an overzealous and persistent fan who catches up with the guitarist and tries to convince him to allow him (the fan) to play guitar on a track that he claims Stevens stole from him. Hilarious. Something to which most artists can relate at some point, no doubt. Everybody is a star, as R&B/funk legend Sly Stone once said.

All in all, Stevens offers a well-rounded album of cool and solid tracks to capture and hold you in place as you witness a true display of talent and class. Here, he proves to be as the album’s title points out, Mr. Guitar...with imagination and feel. ---Ronald Jackson, thesmoothjazzride.com

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