

Johnny Rivers – Blue Suede Shoes (1973)

Written by bluesever

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1 - *Blue Suede Shoes* 2:46 2 - *Medley Searchin', So Fine* 3:51 3 - *It's Alright* 3:07 [play](#) 4 - *Hang On Sloopy* 4:19 5 - *I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better* 2:51 6 - *Solitary Man* 2:41 7 - *Over The Line* 4:15 8 - *Willie And The Hand Jive* 5:01

[play](#)

9 - *Got My Mojo Workin'* 5:25 10 - *Turn On Your Love Light* 5:20

Personnel: Larry Carlton/Guitar Gary Coleman/Conga, Percussion, Sound Effects Chuck Findley/Horn Chuck Finley/Trumpet Michael Georgiades/Vocals, Vocals (Background) Jim Gordon/Drums James Hendricks/Vocals, Vocals (Background) Jim Horn/Sax (Baritone), Sax (Tenor), Saxophone Jackie Kelso/Sax (Tenor), Saxophone Larry Knechtel/Piano Michael Omartian/Keyboards, Organ, Piano, Vocals, Vocals (Background) Joe Osborn/Bass Dean Parks/Guitar, Slide Guitar Herb Pedersen/Banjo, Vocals Johnny Rivers/Guitar (Rhythm), Vocals

Blue Suede Shoes had the renowned '60s rock & roller reaching back a decade or more, while in the company of top L.A. session men Joe Osborn, Jim Gordon, Larry Knechtel, Jim Horn, Dean Parks, et al. The resulting album, a mix of classic '50s rock & roll and soul, augmented with a few mid-'60s gems ("I'll Feel a Whole Lot Better," "Solitary Man"), was about as straightforwardly pleasing a roots rock record as one was going to find in 1973, and the tragedy was that few people were listening at the time. In an era in which they were mostly known to oldies buffs and most often heard as Richard Nader's nostalgia-fests, the prominently featured songwriters were Leiber & Stoller, Johnny Otis, and Carl Perkins (and Curtis Mayfield, Gene Clark, Neil Diamond, etc.). He even displayed a cleverness in the song selection, juxtaposing "Hang on Sloopy," with its "feel so good" chorus and vamp, with "Feel a Whole Lot Better," the latter stripped down and punched up in a manner that anticipated the Flamin' Groovies' adaptation of the song. It's also fascinating to hear Neil Diamond's "Solitary Man" stripped of its horns and redone as a slightly harder rocking ballad. The entire production was superb, lean, and sinewy, without any excesses, and the whole album came off as worthy successor to Rivers' classic '60s releases. --- Bruce Eder

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The American rock & roll singer-songwriter and music producer Johnny Rivers was born John Henry Ramistella, on the 7 of November 1942, in New York City; at the age of five his father moved the family to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Rivers' father began teaching him to play the guitar at the age of eight and his recording career began in 1956 at the age of 14 while still in junior high school. At 16, while on a trip to New York City, Rivers got his first break when he met rock and roll pioneer DJ Alan Freed who hooked Rivers up with a recording contract. Rivers' soulful, bluesy Louisiana rock was not popular when his first few records were released, but when he started performing at the Whisky a Go Go on Sunset Strip, his sound found an audience; it quickly became known as the "Go Go sound".

Rivers eventually ended up with many hit songs, including "Seventh Son", "Poor Side of Town", and "Secret Agent Man", from more than 30 albums. It was as producer for 5th Dimension, who were signed to Rivers' own record label Soul City Records, that eventually led to his only Grammy Award. Rivers has continued to record, with his most recent release, Last Boogie in Paris: The Complete Concert (live), released in 2007. His last Top 10 chart entry was in 1977 with "Swayin' to the Music (Slow Dancing)". ---amazon.com

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