Angela Strehli - Blue Highway (2005)

1 Austin's House Of Blues 4:44 2 Blue Highway 4:17 3 Hello My Lover 3:36 4 SRV 4:29 5 Slipped, Tripped And Fell In Love 3:38 6 I Don't Know Why 4:06 7 Lord, Don't Move The Mountain 3:20 8 Headed South 4:51 9 Always Love You 4:21 10 C.O.D. 5:37 Acoustic Guitar – Tom Duarte (tracks: 8) Backing Band – Donnie Bledsoe (tracks: 5 to 7, 9) Backing Vocals – Claytoven Richardson (tracks: 5 to 7, 9), Larry Batiste (tracks: 5 to 7, 9) Bass – Sarah Brown (tracks: 1), Steve Ehrmann, Tommy Shannon (tracks: 10) Drums – Chris Layton (tracks: 10), George Rains (tracks: 1, 10), Paul Revelli Guitar – Gary Vogensen, Jimmie Vaughan (tracks: 10), Mike Schermer, Stevie Ray Vaughan (tracks: 10) Guitar, Piano – Denny Freeman (tracks: 1) Harmonica – Mark Kazanoff (tracks: 1) Keyboards – Dr. John (tracks: 10) Piano, Organ, Tenor Saxophone, Backing Vocals – John Lee Sanders Slide Guitar – Derek O'Brien (tracks: 1) Vocals – Marcia Ball (tracks: 2), Maria Muldaur (tracks: 2), Paul Thorn (tracks: 3) Vocals, Mixed By, Producer – Angela Strehli

Singer/songwriter Angela Strehli has been a fixture on the Austin blues scene for decades now, but as her first studio album in seven years demonstrates, her range extends beyond the blues and well into country, soul, and roots rock. At 60 years old, her voice is strong and slightly gritty around the edges, and her delivery is powerful and authoritative. She manages to take material like the Ann Peebles classic "Slipped, Tripped and Fell in Love" and Ernie K-Doe's "Hello My Lover" and make it all her own (though she has help on the latter from singer Paul Thorn), and her originals are mostly quite good as well. (Her tribute to the late Stevie Ray Vaughan, titled "SRV," is sweet but maybe just a bit on the overly sentimental side.) Fellow blueswomen Marcia Ball and Maria Muldaur join her on the rollicking title song. But the album's finest moment comes at the very end; the last track is a live version of the old blues song "C.O.D.," performed by Strehli with Vaughan and his band, Double Trouble, at Carnegie Hall in 1985. The combination of her powerful voice and his blockbusting guitar is amazing. Recommended.
---Rick Anderson, AllMusic Review

Angela Strehli may have departed Austin and the nascent blues community she helped nurture at the storied Antone's Nightclub for northern California fifteen years ago, but as she makes clear from the first notes of "Austin's Home Of The Blues" on her first solo studio album in seven years, she never left Texas blues and Antone's behind. How could she, since she was queen mother of a scene that produced Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jimmie Vaughan, Kim Wilson, Lou Ann Barton, and Marcia Ball, among others? Blue Highway is part road trip back to that place and time, paying tribute to her young protege with "SRV", documenting their professional relationship with the inclusion of "C.O.D." (the Albert King composition she performed with Stevie and his expanded big band at Carnegie Hall in 1985), and covering Ernie K-Doe's "Hello My Lover" (a duet with Paul Thorn) and Ann Pebbles' "Slipped, Tripped, And Fell In Love". But other tracks such as the funky, molasses-on-the-pavement "Blue Highway" and the dirty blues croon of "I Don't Know Why" really tell this tale; contemporary female blues vocalists don't come smokier or more coolly understated than this. ---nodepression.com

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