The Matthew Skoller Blues Band - These Kind Of Blues (2005)



01. Get Paid 4:11
02. Ghosts in Your Closet 4:36
03. Handful of People 4:49
04. These Kind of Blues 4:27 play
05. Let the World Come to You 6:27
06. Wired World 4:17
07. Stolen Thunder 4:12
08. Down at Your Buryin' 5:55
09. Julia 4:16 play
10. Where Can You Be 4:06
11. Handful of People 6:02

Personnel:
Matthew Skoller (Harmonica,Vocals)
Lurrie Bell, Larry Skoller (Guitar)
Johnny Iguana (Piano)
James Wingfield (Organ)
Willie Samuels Jr. (Bass)
Kenny Smith (Drums)
Brian Ritchie (Shakuhachi)
Willie Henderson (Baritone Sax)
Mike Avery, Bob Friedman, Willie "Vamp" Samuels Jr. (background vocals).

Hardcore blues fans might have noticed harpist Matthew Skoller's name in the backup band credits for artists such as Koko Taylor, Bernard Allison, Larry Garner, and John Primer, but unless you're a resident of Chicago, it's unlikely his work is familiar to you. Weekly gigs in the Windy City have sharpened Skoller's edge, and on his third indie album These Kind of Blues! he proves what blues musicians have known for years: he's ready for the major leagues. Like

Charlie Musselwhite, he's pushing the blues borders, even into rap on the G. Love-styled remix of "Handful of People," a song available in two versions. There are echoes of Paul Butterfield's thick, gutsy, amplified sound in Skoller's tone, as well as masters like James Cotton and Little Walter. His songs also traffic in edgier areas than those more closely associated with the blues, as with the politically charged "Handful of People," and the philosophical musings of "Let the World Come to You." The latter track is enhanced by soulful backing vocals and even Brian Ritchie's shakuhachi, not a typical blues instrument. The link to Chicago's fertile harp masters is emphasized by the appearance of guitarist Lurrie Bell, the son of legendary harmonica player Carey Bell. Skoller's vocals are husky and assured, bending around the lyrics and his rugged harp attack. Unlike many bandleaders, Skoller never overdoes his solos, bursting into songs with confidence and pulling out before the listener has fully absorbed his monstrous sound. In fact, there are times when you wish he would further emphasize his intense playing. A grinding, melancholy cover of James Cotton's "Down at Your Buryin'," one of only three covers, is a showstopping album high point, revealing his band's restraint, a terrific slow burn lead from Bell, and Skoller's masterful touch. It's only one highlight from a talented contemporary blues artist who respects his roots but isn't afraid to push the genre's boundaries. ~ Hal Horowitz

The Matthew Skoller Band is an outstanding group that expresses blues in the Urban or Chicago Blues idiom. This collection of gifted musicians rocks with innovative versatility. Skoller, a brilliant harpist and vocalist, is a minimalist on the Mississippi saxophone and his insightful riffs remind at once of Junior Wells or John Lee Williamson. Though the harmonica punctuates and anchors the mood or tone of this band; nevertheless superior craftsmanship on guitar, organ, bass and drums is not to be overlooked. Most notable are the surprising adept and original nuances reflected in Lurrie Bell's guitar works.

These Kind of Blues features Matthew Skoller out front vocally and on harp. It is safe to say that he has found his voice on both instruments. Skoller's vocal evocations are personal and reflect the utterance of someone with total conviction in what he says. This singer's voice is clear and he uses its vocal range to testify in lyrics ranging from the socially conscious "Handful of People" to the lyrically poignant "Let the World Come to You." Matthew Skoller is a rarity. He is a blues artist who orchestrates his mastery of blues idioms, blues traditions, blues harmonica, and blues singing to forge a highly individualized and personal vision expressing blues in its magnificent contemporary wardrobe. Skoller is not someone covering blues standards made famous by someone else. He is an artist squeezing every drop of wine from meanings gleaned from his experience.

Several examples show how Skoller's songwriting is anchored in a historical body yet exhibited in contemporary wardrobe." Handful of People, telling the Whole World how to Live" is an example of lyrics and song that could refer to the foreign policy of this nation in a contemporary gesture, or it may refer to any small group with too much authority over others. The theme of "Handful of People" is anchored firmly in veins of today's realities. This song further privileges the contemporary by being presented in both genres of Chicago Blues and Rap.

The Matthew Skoller Band: Lurrie Bell and Larry Skoller, guitars; Sidney James Wingfield, Hammond organ and piano; Vamp Samuels, bass; and Kenny Smith, drums is a superb ensemble. The outstanding percussion work of Samuels and Smith lays down a sturdy foundation while Wingfield embellishes it with his rhythms. Also to be noted is the poignancy with which Larry Skoller's guitar comments on "Down At Your Buryin'." It is always a rare opportunity to witness vintage Lurrie Bell. Perhaps no one playing today is as sure and original with guitar licks. On These Kinds of Blues his genius is blended within the expression of an excellent band.

Finally, These Kind of Blues offer Matthew Skoller as a brilliant and significant songwriter, arranger, harpist, vocalist, and bandleader. His songwriting echoes the spirit and craft of a poet: "things won't get no better / till you face your fears" or "a fist full of give me / and a heartful of never give." The blues language of Skoller incorporates the cell phone and computer language. All in all, he presents contemporary blues with silhouettes of Junior Parker, James Cotton and Jimmy Reed. Skoller is someone to watch and contend with. He refuses to compromise his intelligence and roots and presents the necessary blues. These Kind of Blues is living and breathing the pathos of tradition and history. --Sterling Plump - University of Illinois Chicago)

download: uploaded yandex anonfiles mega 4shared mixturecloud ziddu mediafire

back