Todd Wolfe Band - Stripped Down At The Bang Palace (2009)

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01 - Wing Of A Dove 02 - Stranger Blues 03 - She's Nineteen Years Old 04 - Bad Boy 05 - Black Night 06 - Roll Over 07 - Come In My Kitchen <u>play</u> 08 - Evil 09 - Mississippi Queen <u>play</u> 10 - Three O'clock Blues 11 - It's All Over Now 12 - Light Of Day 13 - Wreck My Life

Personnel: Todd Wolfe (vocals, guitar, mandola); Sarah Ayers (vocals); Rich Frikkers (percussion); Suavek Zaniesienko (background vocals).

This is the best disc Todd Wolfe has made, and that is saying quite a lot. Again Todd Wolfe brings the guitar fire and the searing vocals he is known for, although everything here is better than I expected it to be. It's a blues trio disc with Todd Wolfe's regular band--Todd on guitars and vocals, Suavek Zaniesienko on bass and backing vocals, and Roger Voss on drums and percussion. The only guests on this set are Sarah Ayers on vocals, (and she adds a great Bonnie Bramlett-style vibe) and Rich Frikkers on percussion. It was recorded and engineered by Theo Aronson at The Bang Palace in Bethlehem, PA. It is obvious that Todd Wolfe and the band feel very comfortable in the space--things are smooth and powerful and tightly musical

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throughout.. Highlights include a great version of Muddy Waters' "She's Nineteen Years Old" that updates the original, a spooky "Black Night" that would have been perfect for Halloween, a very fine version of Howlin' Wolf's "Evil" that is like the proverbial watched pot--it's a slow boiler, but it gets there. There's a fine cover of BB King's "Three O'Clock Blues," and a soulful Delaney & Bonnie duet style take of "Come In My Kitchen," and a fun cover of the old Mountain chestnut "Mississippi Queen" with Wolfe playing what sounds like an acoustic National steel body slide guitar. There's a powerful cover of "It's All Over Now" that sounds like it could be by Tommy Castro--and shows just how far Todd Wolfe has grown from his days as Sheryl Crow's guitar player. And he throws in these little touches--a bit of the Allman Brothers on "It's all Over Now," a bit of Led Zeppelin on "Roll Over"--that remind me how this music is supposed to be fun.

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