Barbara Blue – Sell My Jewerly (2003)

01.Trouble With A Capital "T" - 3:48 02.Back By Popular Demand - 4:05 03.Toolbox Blues - 3:33 04.Don't Lead Me On - 5:55 05.Road Blues - 4:07 06.Can't Get Your Lovin' Off My Mind - 3:06 play 07.Sell My Jewelry - 3:22 08.From the Delta To The Golden Gates - 4:23 09.Low Down Cheatin' Blues - 3:34 10.Drunken Angel - 3:40 11.Brought Together By The Blues - 3:11 play 12.Turtle Blues - 5:14 Personnel: Lead Vocals: Barbara Blue Bass: Larry Fulcher Keyboards: Mike Finnigan Guitars: Johnny Lee Schell Drums and Percussion: Tony Braunagel Texicali Horns: Joe Sublett, tenor sax and Darrell Leonard, trumpet Background vocals: Teresa James, and Tamara Champlin on tracks 1,2, and 7 Johnny Lee Schell on tracks 3, and 10 Special guest appearance by John "JUKE" Logan on Harmonica.

Barbara Blue is a fixture of the Memphis Blues scene and performs many nights of the week on historic Beale Street. When you are there you owe it to yourself to check out this classic rockin Blues belter. Until then you can check out her second CD, Sell My Jewelry. It's been out awhile, but it is worth your time, if only for the great backing by Taj Mahal's backup band, The Phantom Blues Band.

Blue sets the pace for this album with the opening cut, EG Kight's and Richard Fleming's "Trouble With A Capital 'Ti" Blue sings a bit like Kight, but is more on the dirty side of Blues Street. ,.Joe Sublett of the Texicali Horns offers a tasty solo and the background vocals fill in great. From the outset this album is well produced and the band is tight. This is followed up by a little bit jazzier take on the Jodie Seigel/Tony Bra unagel (who also produced the album and played drums) song, "Back By Popular Demand".

A couple of songs later Blue gets down and dirty on the slow Blues "Don't Lead Me On." The Texicali Horns do a good job of building the chorus up and letting Blues' voice pick it up in the

wake. On the fifth track Blue is back to wailing on her own song, “Road Blues,” but this time with the accompaniment of John “Juke” Logan on harp who really squeezes out the treble end. This is the kind of roaring song that Blue can really get a hold on in a Janis Joplin sort of way. In fact Joplin is one of the most obvious references one falls back on when listening to Blue, and Memphis Minnie, but in a different sort of way. Another good song is the Blue/Finnigan/Braunagel written title cut, “Sell My Jewelry,” which swings with some fine honky-tonk piano from Mike Finnigan. --- Blues Wax, cdbaby.com

I tossed this disc in the player like I do so many and headed up the stairs on a mission to clean house. I try to listen to the music I am about to review without 'knowing anything" that might skew my perceptions of what I'm about to hear. That way, I decide if it kicks ass or not based on what I hear. But you know what they say about the best laid plans. My ears perked up instantly when I heard the unmistakable wail of Mike Finnegan's B-3, and I knew this one was something special. Within 10 seconds, I was down the stairs with the case in my hand, and the hell with cleaning the top floor. I went to www.barbarablue.com instead and checked this babe out! It turns out that Barbara Blue is the current reigning Queen of Memphis, performing nightly on historic Beale Street. To record this album, she borrowed the entire Phantom Blues Band from the man himself, Taj Mahal. Besides that, she's the best-kept secret on the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise. By the middle of the disc, she had a very enthusiastic new fan.

Twelve tracks in length, the recording is about evenly split between original material and covers. Versatility is definitely a long suit. Whether she is wailing like Sippie Wallace or singing deep, raw blues from the center of her soul like Janis Joplin, her voice is captivating and powerful. She opens the disc by just flat-out tearing up that Georgia songbird E.G. Kight's "Trouble With A Capital T". James Solberg's "Tool Box Blues" takes a sultry win when she sings it, and Janis Joplin's "Turtle Blues" is very nicely done indeed. But the best track on the album, in my opinion, is Ms. Blue's cover of Lucinda Williams instant classic "Drunken Angel". This track achieves perfection with her voice, the musicians, the arrangement and the song itself all coming together beautifully. A talented songwriter as well as a vibrant and enchanting performer, she offers a heartfelt tribute to the late, great John Lee Hooker with the moving, melodic "From the Delta to the Golden Gates". The title track is a standard 1-4-5 blues number with catchy lyrics and instrumental hooks that will have the listener singing along before the song is through. In fact, most of the songs on the disc can stake that claim. There is not one track on the disc that I skip over when I play the disc, and believe me when I tell you, this one is getting a lot of play! --- K.T. "Trouble" Booth, Kansas City Blues Society

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