Eden Brent - Mississippi Number One (2008)

01. Mississippi Flatland Blues (Brent) 3:14 02. He'll Do the Same Thing to You (Brent) 3:58 03. Darkness on the Delta (Livingston, Neiburg, Symes) 3:21 04. Love Me 'Til Dawn (Brent) 3:26 05. Fried Chicken (Phillips) 3:55 06. Mississippi Number One (Brent) 3:56 07. The Man I Love (Gershwin) 4:10 08. Careless Love (Traditional) 3:47 09. Meet You Anywhere (Brent) 3:25 10. Why Don't You Do Right (McCoy) 4:15 11. Afraid to Let Go (Brent) 3:42 12. Close the Door (Brent) 2:36 13. All Over Me (Brent) 3:34 14. Trouble in Mind (Milburn) 5:52 15. Until I Die (Brent) 4:21 Eden Brent: vocals, piano (1-15) Jimmi Kinard: bass (1, 2, 6, 11-13, 15) James Robertson: drums (1, 2, 6, 11-13, 15) Rick Steff: organ (2, 13, 15) Rick Chancey: guitar, harmonica (5) Jim Spake: tenor saxophone (2, 9, 13, 15) baritone saxophone (9) Marc Franklin: trumpet (2, 9) Sam Shoup: double bass (4, 9) Tom Lonardo: drums (4, 9) Kevin Lewis: alto saxophone (4, 11) Jackie Johnson: vocals (9) Reba Russell: vocals (9) Jack Holder: guitar (11, 13) vocals (15) (Van Duren, Darrell Bonner, Daunielle Hill, Joyce Cobb, Jackie Johnson, Reba Russell.

Blues pianist Eden Brent is a relative newcomer to the blues music scene, but she's no wet-behind-the-ears rookie. Raised in moderate posterity in the poverty-stricken Mississippi Delta, she caught the blues music bug as a teen. Brent attended the University of North Texas to study jazz composition, but received her advance degree in blues piano by apprenticing under Delta blues musician Abie "Boogaloo" Ames. Brent traveled with the elderly pianist for 16 years, driving him to gigs, performing alongside Ames, and ultimately earning the nickname "Little Boogaloo." After Brent took first place in the "Acoustic Blues" category at the Blues Foundations' 2006 International Blues Challenge, she finally began work on what would become her debut album, Mississippi Number One.

Brent's piano style is a sophisticated blend of barrelhouse blues (with a boogie-woogie edge) and jazzy, 1940s-and-50s-styled pop. As she shows with a cover of the Gershwin Brothers' stately "The Man I Love," Brent isn't afraid to tackle a classic. She delivers wonderfully sublime, torch-song-styled vocals above the rich, shifting sound of her dancing ivories.

Brent is excellent working with sparse instrumentation, as displayed by the country-blues stomp of "Fried Chicken," which features Brent's twangy vocals above guitarist Rick Chancey's fine fretwork and squawking harmonica.

Brent is at her finest on Mississippi Number One when she places her piano play up front and center. The slow-dancing "Love Me 'Til Dawn" is a jazzy, late-night ballad with elegant piano work and Brent's sultry vocals. "Why Don't You Do Right" features menacing, bluesy piano that strives with Brent's dusky vocals for your attention, the slightly syncopated rhythm driving the song strongly towards Tom Waits' side of lonely street.

The gospel-tinged "Until I Die" features one of Brent's best vocal performances, a swooning and soaring wail above a jubilant choir of backing voices and Rick Steff's hymnal organ work. --- Reverend Keith A. Gordon, blues.about.com

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