

Tab Benoit - Fever For The Bayou (2005)

Wpisany przez bluesever

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1. *Night Train* 2. *Little Girl Blues* 3. *I Smell A Rat* 4. *Fever For The Bayou* 5. *Lost In Your Lovin'* 6. *Golden Crown* 7. *I Can't Hold Out* 8. *The Blues Is Here To Stay* 9. *Got Love If You Want It* 10. *Blues So Bad* 11. *My Bucket's Got A Hole In It* Tab Benoit-Guitar, Vocals Carl Dufrene-Bass Daryl White-Drums Cyril Neville-Percussion, Vocals Big Chief Monk Boudreaux-Percussion, Vocals Jimmy Carpenter-Tenor Saxophone

Looking at the cover photo of Tab Benoit's new recording, *Fever for the Bayou*, one would fear that the big label creep might have cleaned up Mr. Benoit a bit too much. The guitarist/singer is sporting a crisp purple (mauve, as my wife would say) shirt, a stylish gelled haircut, and perfectly cultivated five-o'clock shadow. Is this the same artist who delivered the staggering *Nice and Warm* in 1992, representing the greatest hope for the blues since Stevie Ray Vaughan?

Well, yes. Telarc is revered as a label dedicated to the accurate sonic capture of music, be it classical, blues, jazz, or crossover. Aside from a few minor quibbles, *Fever of the Bayou* is a great blues recording—2005 style.

Holding my breath, I queue up the first track in my car. "Night Train" begins with a teeth-gritting blues rock vamp and never veers from that message. Benoit's power trio is perfectly captured as if live. There are no guitar overdubs behind him as he solos. Just bass and drums, the rhythm section of bassist Carl Dufrene and drummer Daryl White insistently propelling the beat of the song: two chords and a hundred years of music.

"Little Girl Blues" illustrates Benoit's lo-fi approach to guitar playing. He plays his hollow-bodied

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Telecaster like an acoustic guitar—no frills, no technical wizardry. Benoit stays faithful to this philosophy throughout the recording. "I Smell a Rat" is a minor-key blues where the guitarist shows both his strengths and weaknesses, making the song that much more real. "I Smell a Rat" is the fulcrum of the recording, demonstrating why Tab Benoit is the most original blues guitarist since Stevie Ray Vaughan. Benoit betrays no influence of Vaughan, as scores of other guitarists (including Johnny Lang and Kenny Wayne Shepherd) do. But Benoit does not claim a unique designation until...

...he stokes up that coon-ass-crayfish two-step beat on "Fever for the Bayou." This is the most comfortable music on the disc. However, it does leave the innocent listener wondering when the real shit will break loose. That occurs when the backbeat of "Golden Crown" kicks in and a zydeco transfusion takes place. All that is missing is Clifton's accordion. While things are still hot, Benoit opens Elmore James' "I Can't Hold Out" with those familiar triplets, turning the classic into a convincing juggernaut.

The disc closes with an acoustic "My Bucket's Got a Hole in It." Benoit strips the novelty piece down to its bare bones and issues it in an authentic manner, both musically and vocally. Fever for the Bayou is a superior blues release from a most promising artist. ---C. Michael Bailey, allaboutjazz.com

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