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Professor Louie and the Crowmatix - *Crowin' the Blues*

Woodstock Records

www.professorlouie.com

CD: 13 Songs, 50:25 Minutes

Styles: Texas Blues, R&B, Roots, Americana

When I saw the band name of New York's Professor Louie and the Crowmatix, my hyperactive right brain immediately cried, "Aha! 'Crowmatix' is a homophone of 'chromatics,' which are chromatic harmonicas. I sure hope to hear some!" Alas, 'twas not to be. None of the members of this fantastic Grammy-nominated ensemble plays such an instrument. Nevertheless, they're still *Crowin' the Blues* with melodic mojo. Even though they realize that good vocals are an essential ingredient in blues music, their instrumentals are truly standout works. On thirteen tracks, four originals and nine covers, they pay homage to old masters such as Jimmy Reed (on "Bright Lights, Big City") as well as add their own masterful material ("Blues & Good News" and "Love is Killing Me," plus two more). They provide a groove and a mindset so sweet and easy to fall into, like a cold pool on a hot summer day. If you love Texas blues, R&B, roots and Americana, this CD will be your cup of tea. If you're hooked on harder stuff, though, perhaps not. What they lack in shrieking shredder and lewd lyrics, they make up for in good humor.

Professor Louie and his posse have more than a Grammy nomination under their belt. States their Web bio, "[They] began as the studio backing band for Aaron 'Professor Louie's' musical productions for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees, The Band. Rick Danko christened him Professor Louie due to his work and friendship with The Band.

"This...group plays 150 shows a year in the US and worldwide. They have performed at the Thunder Bay, London & Windsor Festivals in Canada, The Tondor Festival, Falcon Ridge Festival, The Sellersville Theater, PA - BB Kings in NYC, - The House Of Blues in LA - The Sportsmen's Tavern, Buffalo, NY, - The Bearsville Theater, Woodstock, NY and many more venues...Professor Louie has performed twice on The Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise."

Performing with the keyboardist, accordionist and lead vocalist Professor are guitarist/vocalist John Platania; Gary Burke on drums; vocalist/keyboardist/percussionist Miss Marie; and bassist and vocalist Frank Campbell. Special guests include electric guitarist Josh Colow and Michael Falzarano on rhythm guitar.

The following three original tunes are the swingiest, catchiest, and all-around best on the album.

Track 04: "Love is Killin' Me" – With mellow nightclub piano and a touch of '70s funk, especially on the bassline, the fourth feature of this CD is the perfect one for slow-dancing. "I've got to read between the lines, strain my eyes till I go blind. Never gonna give you up looking for that golden key. People say 'beware'. They don't know what's hidden there behind the scenes."

Track 05: "Blues & Good News" – The title may confuse those who don't know the genre well: why would the blues be associated with good news? However, this instrumental shows this combination is possible. Short and sweet, it invokes the spirit of an earlier time in the midst of our chaotic age. Miss Marie provides peppy whistling to perk up one's mood in a flash.

Track 13: "Blues for Buckwheat" – Zydeco and blues go together like beignets and powdered sugar, or shrimp and gumbo. Professor Louie's accordion is as hot as almost all Cajun sauces, and seeing as that instrument is a voodoo witch to play, his talent is on magnificent display here. In the opinion of yours truly, this last song should have come first.

New York's Professor Louie and the Crowmatix fly stratosphere-high when they're *Crowin' the Blues!*

Reviewer Rainey Wetnight is a 37 year old female Blues fan. She brings the perspective of a younger blues fan to reviews. A child of 1980s music, she was strongly influenced by her father's blues music collection.

