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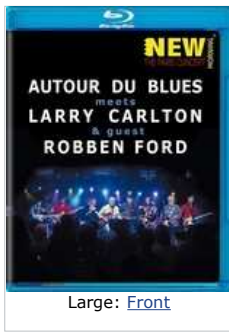
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Autour du Blues meets Larry Carlton & guest Robben Ford Blu-ray

in-akustik | 2006 | 101 mins | Not rated | Jul 14, 2009



Large: [Front](#)

Video
 Video codec: VC-1
 Video resolution: 1080i
 Aspect ratio: 1.78:1

Audio
 Music: DTS-HD Master Audio 5.1
 Music: LPCM 5.1
 Music: Dolby Digital 2.0

Subtitles
 None

Disc
 25GB Blu-ray Disc

Price
 List price: \$24.95
 Amazon: **\$19.99** (Save 20%)
 Third party: **\$15.99** (Save 36%)
 Usually ships in 24 hours

Blu-ray review

Movie		4.0
Video		4.0
Audio		4.5
Extras		1.5
Overall		4.0

Playback
 Region A (B, C untested)

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Autour du Blues meets Larry Carlton & guest Robben Ford Blu-ray Review

You may not recognize the name Autour du Blues, or even in fact Larry Carlton or Robben Ford, but this is a blistering blues performance by some great musicians.

Reviewed by Jeffrey Kauffman, February 6, 2010

Perhaps you, like I, have done some non-scientific sociological research and have come to the conclusion that there are two types of people: those who read credits and those who don't. I am one of the former. At films, I resolutely refuse to leave my seat until the credits crawl has ended, something that has been occasionally reinforced by little filmic codas like those found in *Young Sherlock Holmes*, for example. From my earliest days of buying music (and I'm old enough to go back to those ancient things called LP's), I would pore over album covers trying to learn as much as I could about the players on any given project. In fact, it used to drive me crazy when I couldn't glean relevant information about any given album, something the internet at least partially helped to ameliorate. This has led to some kind of funny interchanges. For example, one of my elder sisters had an album by a sort of Mamas and Papas knockoff group called The Collage, where none of the members (who sang beautifully) were credited with full names. However, arranger Perry Botkin, Jr. (of "Nadia's Theme" and "Bless the Beasts and the Children" fame) was, and I managed to track him down once the internet took off. Unfortunately, Mr. Botkin, like so many working musicians who have done thousands of sessions in their career, had little if any recollection of the project.

Larry Carlton may have that same lack of memory about some nooks and crannies of his long career, and in fact a lot of the reading public may not initially recognize his name, but I can tell you as an inveterate credits reader I started noticing his name on all sorts of 1970's albums by such favorites of mine as Steely Dan and especially Joni Mitchell. In fact Carlton's luscious work with members of the group L.A. Express on Mitchell's superb "Court and Spark" drew me into Larry's own instrumental work with the Express, and from there I avidly followed his subsequent career.

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The band takes the stage.

Carlton's replacement in the L.A. Express, ace sideman Robben Ford, is the other "name" guest star on this 2006 outing taped at Paris' New Morning nightclub (as part of the club's 25th anniversary celebration festivities), which otherwise features the cream of French studio musicians in an informal assemblage known as Autour du Blues (Around the Blues). There's obviously nothing lost in the translation here, as this Franco-American mélange blends beautifully together. While I doubt few if any stateside will recognize many, if any, of the non-American musicians, they include Francis Cabrel, Denys Lable, Michael Jones, and Patrick Verbeke. This is music that is both wonderfully loose and incredibly tight. The looseness shows in the relaxed arrangements and friendly atmosphere permeating all of the performances. The tightness comes from the acute playing of the rhythm section, which works here like a well oiled machine, punching just the right accents and keeping the bulk of the evening nicely propulsive.

Though the blues are one of the most popular of all musical idioms, they often get bad mouthed by the cognoscenti, who decry their harmonic tropes, almost always based on dominant seventh structures built around the tonic, subdominant and dominant. While that may in fact be undeniably true, this set shows off how versatile the genre can be. We get everything from smoldering New Orleans vamps with some delicious slide guitar and harmonica ("Rock Me Baby") to more uptempo shuffle tunes like "Got My Mojo Working." One of the highlights is the penultimate selection, a soulful rendition of "A Change is Gonna Come" helmed by vocalist Beverly Jo Scott. Through it all Carlton exposes the same glistening guitar work that made all those shiny major ninths in Joni's tunes from the 1970's sound so chic. The camaraderie with Ford is also palpable, and the two coax quite a variety of sounds from their axes while simultaneously forging a very strongly blended sound.

The set list for this concert is:

- Black Night
- Got My Mojo Working
- Rock Me Baby
- Stormy Monday
- Reconsider Baby
- Ain't That Peculiar
- You Gotta Move
- Down in Mississippi
- Mama Talk to Your Daughter
- Blackjack
- Bad Bad Whiskey
- A Change is Gonna Come
- She Belongs to Me

Video **BBBBB**

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This is one of the better New Morning Blu-rays from an image quality standpoint. Like all the others in the series we're offered a 1080i VC-1 encoded image. Perhaps because the bulk of the camera work is closer to the band than is some of the other in-Akustik Blu's in this series, detail is better, sharpness is certainly better, and colors are nicely rendered and beautifully saturated. Carlton's chartreuse shirt pops nicely throughout the concert and the rest of the band members look great as well. The stage, as is usual, is on the dark side, but the stage lighting is adequately reproduced here with good to excellent contrast and consistent black levels. The backlighting is especially effective throughout the concert, giving a nice glow to the proceedings.

Audio BBBBB



Again as has been standard with these in-Akustik Blu releases, two 5.1 mixes, a DTS-HD MA and an LPCM, are offered, as well as a Dolby Digital 2.0 mix. Both of the 5.1 offerings are extremely clear and robust, with a good, thumping low end and brilliant clarity in the mid and high ranges. Vocals are clear and the surround channels are utilized well, without overwhelming audience ambience noises to distract from the actual performance. Separation is quite good throughout this concert and you'll clearly hear Carlton and Ford, for example, emanating from discrete channels at various points throughout the evening. There are absolutely no anomalies or dropouts of any kind to report. The 2.0 fold-down is also quite good, without an overly compressed (spatially speaking) sound to the track, and good to excellent dynamic range and fidelity.

Supplements BBBBB



Two extra performances are included, "So Fine" (3:45), a nice, straight ahead blues with layered harmonies, and "Hand in Hand With the Blues" (5:11), a Carlton-Ford duet which has a proto-R&B feel that may remind some listeners of Carlton's long association with The Crusaders.

Final words **B B B B B**



This is a fiery evening of some great blues featuring two stellar sidemen from the United States easily communicating with their French counterparts. One of the more unusual offerings in the New Morning series should delight lovers of the blues in particular, but any pop-rock music lover generally.

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