



Professor Louie and The Crowmatix

"Crowin' The Blues"

Woodstock Records

By Peter "Blewzzman" Lauro © February 2017

So when I read on the one sheet enclosed with the disc that "Crowin' The Blues" was Professor Louie And The Crowmatix thirteenth release, I literally shook my head in bewilderment as to how and why I don't have any of the previous twelve. Having not heard of this talented bunch until now I'm feeling more like Rip Van Winkle than I do the Blewzzman. That said, I immediately went to www.professorlouie.com for a little history lesson and damn did I get one! The bands extensive and impressive bios, which I'll refrain from getting into but suggest you do, then jarred my memory - the one that I was warned about losing back in the sixties.

Those band members are: Aaron "Professor Louie" Hurwitz on vocals, piano, Hammond organ and accordion; Marie "Miss Marie" Spinosa on vocals, percussion, piano and whistling; Gary Burke on drums; Frank Campbell on bass and background vocals; John Platania on electric & acoustic guitar; and guest guitarist's Josh Colow (lead) and Michael Falzarano (rhythm) on "Love Is Killing Me".

Of the thirteen tracks on "Crowin' The Blues", four are originals with the rest being great blues songs of various styles. One in particular is a very well done yet unlikely melding of two totally different style songs with a masterful outcome, but I'll get to that later.

The disc opens with "I'm Gonna Play The Honky Tonks" (Robey/Adams), and it sounds just like what you'd expect to hear while at one. The hot, organ led rhythm and honky tonk piano make it a perfect dance song and the catchy chorus line is just right for those dancers to sing along to.

One of the most beautiful songs on the disc is an original titled "Love Is Killing Me". Although it features outstanding musicianship - especially the piano and guitar leads - the vocals run away with this one. With and without the outstanding backup vocal help, the things Miss Marie does with her voice are absolutely stunning. Easily one of the disc's best.

"Blues And Good News", another original, is a short instrumental with one of those feel good island beats. The smile it put on my face was partially from the melodic whistling Miss Marie was blowin'. Whistling is a lost art and hearing it made me think of my dad. As a kid, I remember him whistling to every song he'd hear no matter where we were. There was no one better than him - always on key and in tune with the song. For someone who had half a lung removed early in his life, he could really belt it out. Thanks Marie, you made this one really special for me.

The Crowmatix do quite a fine job on Elmore James' "Fine Little Mama". With Gary and Frank smokin' on the drums and bass behind them, The Professor is nailing the soulful vocals and John's got the Elmore guitar thing down pat.

The most interesting track of the lot is The Crowmatix version of the Jimmy Reed classic, "Bright Lights, Big

City". Reason being, the song is done to the tune of the George Benson classic, "On Broadway". Everything about this laid back performance is flawless; The Professor's soulful vocals are pleasingly smooth; the rhythm and piano leads are soothing; the guitar leads are soft as silk; and the precision percussion perfectly blends in. Summing this track up in word, I'd have to use mesmerizing.

As I did, before I even started writing this review, I'm recommending you go to www.professorlouie.com to find out more about this talented and interesting band. When you do, please tell them the Blewzzman sent you.