

Mississippi Millie - Acoustic Delta Blues (2009)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 21 June 2014 16:00 -

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1. *Handful Of Trouble* - 4:02 2. *Hush Child* - 4:07 3. *Relationship* - 3:46 4. *Doing That Magic Thing* - 4:52 5. *Black Cat Blues* - 4:18 6. *Good Biscuits* - 3:05 7. *Shame On You* - 2:42 8. *Retribution* - 7:36 9. *You Pick That Thing* - 4:27 10. *Gonna Be Missin'* - 4:51 11. *Mississippi Woman* - 5:15
Mississippi Millie McLain – vocals Daniel Pierce – acoustic & slide guitar, mandolin, dobro, vocals Joe Pointer – bass fiddle, harmonica, vocals Rags Murtagh – harmonica Jeff Lang – acoustic, slide guitar, foot base C.J. Pierce – washboard, percussion, drums

A tiny woman with hair big as the Mississippi, Millie stands at the microphone, a long lanky guitar player at her side. She counts 1, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4! The guitar picker takes up a riff and Mississippi Millie smiles. Go Tiger, you pick that thing! she says. And pick that thing Tiger does, working the guitar with the bottleneck slide, pumping out a rhythm that sets Millie to dancing.

Then, Millie starts singing, quiet-like at first, drawing you in. Her singing tells a story, that timeless story of misery and joy. She moves her arms, gesturing and waving like a magician conjuring a spirit. Her voice builds until it fills the room, while at the same time tearing right into your heart, ripping down through your gut all the way into your soul to ignite that place that makes you feel alive. And the audience is happy, too; they're smiling too as she sings, and when she's done, it's the applause that fills the room.

This is The Blues. Millie was born into it, in Mississippi, of the where some folks called it Devil's Music. But to Millie, the Blues sounded as natural as the willows above and the rich earth below. She would sneak into the local party houses and rundown joints every chance she could, so she could get up on stage and sing with the 'bad boys.'

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But, when she was just nine years old, Millie's mother moved her and her family away from Mississippi to Pennsylvania. The Mississippi musical spirit known as the Blues stayed in her, though. In the years that followed, whether performing as part of the blossoming Philly soul scene, singing standards, studying opera vocal technique, or taking on Rock 'n'Roll, Millie always drew on the Delta Blues if not in repertoire, then in feeling for inspiration and motivation. Eventually that spirit became so strong in Millie that she made a full-blown return to performing Delta Blues exclusively.

Meanwhile, far from the Mississippi Delta, in a tiny town in the mountains of Northern New Mexico, a 12-year old boy heard Elmore James Sunnyland and was thunderstruck. Tiger Gagan then grabbed a guitar, put a slide on his finger, and spent his days trying to get that sound and that feel that Elmore had taken from the Mississippi Delta and amplified so powerfully. Tiger went on to play many kinds of music rock, jazz, Top 40, punk, country, world beat but, as was the case with Millie, the Blues were always looming in the background. And, his love affair with the slide guitar is now in its fourth decade.

It was in Nashville that the Blues brought together these two characters from such different backgrounds. Despite this difference, Mississippi Millie and Tiger Gagan share a love for Delta Blues music and its artists, a love for the spontaneity at the heart of the Delta Blues, a love for making music, and a love for entertaining people and making them happy. When they perform, the joy that the Blues bring Mississippi Millie and Tiger Gagan pours out of them and sweeps the audience up in its path. --- mississippimillie.tigergagan.com

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