

Jim Suhler & Monkey Beat - Starvation Box: The Best Of Jim Suhler & Monkey (2003)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Where Were You When The Lights Went Out?* [02:51] 02. *Deja Blue* [03:54] 03. *Ain't Comin' Home Tonight* [03:48] 04. *Snake Hips* [04:32] 05. *Prayin' For Rain* [05:12] 06. *Little Boy Blue* [04:16] 07. *Blame It On Love* [03:40] 08. *Snake Bit* [04:04] 09. *U Gotta Move* [05:32] 10. *Starvation Box* [05:17] 11. *Chupacabra* [03:27] 12. *Shotgun Shack* [04:31] 13. *Love Ain't Enough* [04:49] 14. *Don't Stand Still* [05:28] 15. *Shake* [04:22] 16. *Radio Mojo* [03:33] 17. *Lonesome Dog Blues* [03:24] Tim Alexander - Accordion, Keyboards Paul Hollis - Composer, Drums, Percussion Carlton Powell - Bass, Composer, Vocals (Background) Jim Suhler - Guitar, Vocals

For a change, here is a best-of collection that is 17 cuts of dynamic music, instead of two or three well-known songs and a bunch of filler tracks. This is truly almost 73 minutes of some of the most innovative blues from Jim Suhler & Monkey Beat. Whether it is the best is going to vary depending on individual taste; however, there is not a weak cut out of the 17 included. This is Suhler and some of his friends playing the electrified blues in a manner that very much brings the music alive and takes his brand of blues played with Monkey Beat to a different level. He also plays with most of this same crew in a more acoustic country mode, and there the blues are just as vibrant, although more low-key and quiet. Give a listen to "Love Ain't Enough." Here the playing is more hard-driving, and what you might call cruise-control music. Consider yourself warned: if you are playing this in the car and you aren't on cruise control, you could be pulled over and given a ticket for either speeding or driving erratically. This disc features songs with a diversity in both tempo and feel; from the slow pushing blues of "Prayin' for Rain" and the incendiary slide work on "Little Boy Blue" to the long open-road vistas of "Deja Blue," this disc contains some of the tightest playing around. Suhler's slide guitar work can stand up with most anyone playing today, and Monkey Beat is one expressive blues band. Of the 17 songs, Suhler wrote or co-wrote 14 of them. He included one each by Robert Johnson, Elmore James, and Sam Hopkins to show how he was shaped and to pay tribute. A disc that should not be missed by blues fans and those who just love energetic, well-played music that speaks a truth. ---Bob Gotlieb, allmusic.com

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