

## Guy Belanger - Crossroads (2010)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 09 October 2015 15:57 - Last Updated Tuesday, 02 February 2021 21:45

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1. *Where The Buffalo Sleeps* 2. *Got The Blues* 3. *Catch That Train* 4. *Don't Try To Explain (Avec Kim Richardson)* 5. *Essaouira* 6. *Who's Been Talkin'* 7. *Chassé-Croisé* 8. *Crossroads* 9. *Jack Of Hearts* 10. *Blue (Avec Éric Lapointe)* 11. *Kamikaze* 12. *Pleasin' You* 13. *Coyote* 14. *Sporting Life* 15. *1-2-3... Harmo* Guy Belanger – vocals, harmonica Gilles Sioui – guitar (acoustic), vocals André Lachance – guitar, vocals Rob MacDonald – guitars Claude Fradette – guitar Karl Surprenant – bass Kim Richardson – vocals Jean-Fernand Girard – piano Marc-André Larocque – drums Mélissa Lavergne – percussion

This is his second solo CD and they both take the harmonica to some unexpected places. A 'Crossroads' is a meeting place of various paths but here it's also the name of the album's centerpiece song. This is not the Robert Johnson composition but another one that was a hit in Europe for a transplanted Texas country singer named Calvin Russell. Bélanger's arrangement is so bluesy & personalized, you might not ever guess its origins. Guitarist Gilles Sioui also handles the vocals, as he does for most of the CD. The CD opens with a tribute to the late Norton Buffalo and pays tribute to Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee as well ("Catch That Train" & "Sportin' Life"). Kim Richardson handles the vocal on another highlight, Keb' Mo's "Don't Try To Explain", a wonderful soul blues. A couple of columns ago, I reviewed a CD of Quebec pop stars singing blues and I wondered if Eric Lapointe's version of the Tom Waits tune "Blue Valentine" would have a life in another context. Well here he is with Lucinda Williams' song "Blue" and another fine performance, with Bélanger & the band. Bélanger does do one vocal and it's an Anders Osborne song "Pleasin' You". He does a fine job, with Kim Richardson on hand as a whole chorus (a specialty of hers). There are several harmonica instrumentals among the 15-song program including "Jack Of Hearts" which provides a most welcome change of pace after the eight-minute "Crossroads" and "Kamikaze" which features Bélanger on several harmonicas. This is one crossroads you may want to visit. I think you'll be returning often. --- John Valenteyn, [torontobluesociety.com](http://torontobluesociety.com)

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