Michael Coleman - Do Your Thing! (2000)

Written by bluesever Tuesday, 31 July 2018 15:05 -

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1. The Train - 4:38 2. Help Me - 6:42 3. Message of Love - 4:07 4. Cold, Cold Feeling -5:20 5. Do Your Thing! - 7:25 6. Messin' With The Kid - 3:15 7. You Don't Have to Go - 7:36 8. Black Magic Woman - 4:52 9. Let's Straighten it Out - 6:18 10. Dock of the Bay - 5:03 11. Tin Pan Alley - 6:36 12. Breakfast in Bed - 4:00 Bass – Sam Green (tracks: 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11), Willie "Vamp" Samuels (tracks: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12) Drums – Merle Perkins Harmonica – Matthew Skoller (tracks: 2, 6, 7), Todd Bartelstein (tracks: 3) Keyboards – Marty Sammon Strings – Vince Varco (tracks: 9) Tenor Saxophone – Hank Ford (tracks: 1, 5, 12) Trombone – Bill McFarland (tracks: 1, 5, 12) Trumpet – Kenny Anderson (tracks: 1, 5, 12) Vocals, Guitar – Michael Coleman

Do Your Thing! demonstrates that a bluesman doesn't have to be a fantastic vocalist to provide a meaningful album. Best known in Chicago blues circles for his ten years as James Cotton's guitarist, Michael Coleman isn't a singer's singer. He is an adequate singer with a relaxed, laid-back vocal style that owes a lot to Jimmy Reed, but as a guitarist, Coleman obviously has sizable chops. And thankfully, he takes a lot of guitar solos on Do Your Thing!, which has as much to do with pre-1980 soul and funk as it does with electric Chicago blues. Not that Coleman (who was 44 when this CD was recorded in July 2000) isn't an expressive singer -- he doesn't have massive pipes, but he still gets his points across on 12-bar blues numbers (including Reed's "You Don't Have to Go" and Robert Geddins' "Tin Pan Alley") as well as soul classics like Otis Redding's "Dock of the Bay," Isaac Hayes' "Do Your Thing," and Latimore's "Let's Straighten It Out." Meanwhile, Coleman pleasantly surprises the listener with an instrumental version of Fleetwood Mac's "Black Magic Woman," which was also recorded by Santana -- and which really gives him a chance to stretch out on guitar. And equally surprising is Coleman's interpretation of Jimi Hendrix's "Message of Love," which he changes from crunching hard rock to bluesy, rock-influenced soul. Do Your Thing! isn't a masterpiece, but it's a decent effort from an impressive guitarist who is also a likable, if limited, singer. ---Alex Henderson, AllMusic Review

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