

Cathy Lemons Blues Band - Dark Road (1998)

Written by bluesever

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[4:17] 1. *Rolling And Tumbling (Feat. Steve Freund)* [3:45] 2. *Hard Headed Man (Feat. Rusty Zinn)* [4:01] 3. *Dirty Man (Feat. Steve Freund)* [4:37] 4. *Let Me Be Good (Feat. Tommy Castro)* [5:22] 5. *Worry Worry (Feat. David Maxwell)* [3:04] 6. *Sayin' It Plain (Feat. Steve Freund)* [5:51] 7. *Good Morning Little Schoolboy (Feat. Steve Freund)* [6:05] 8. *Dark Road (Feat. Steve Freund)* [3:23] 9. *Lonesome Whistle Blues (Feat. Steve Freund)* [5:54] 10. *Takin' A Train (Feat. Tommy Castro)* [3:44] 11. *I Need You So Bad (Feat. David Maxwell)* [3:42] 12. *Just Got To Know* [4:14] 13. *Little By Little (Feat. Rusty Zinn)* [4:07] 14. *You Belong To Me* Cathy Lemons – vocals Tommy Castro, Steve Freund, Rusty Zinn – guitar David Maxwell – piano

Cathy Lemons' critically acclaimed CD "Dark Road" has won her some hard fought for recognition both as a songwriter and as soulful and expressive blues talent. BLUES REVUE hailed "Dark Road" as "a burnished, scintillating disc and certainly one of the finest debuts from a contemporary female blues singer this year." VINTAGE GUITAR says this of Lemons' vocal style: "She presents an almost classical quality to her voice. A dangerous approach to a tradition? You bet! But Lemons makes it work. The more you listen to this self-produced effort, the more you realize that it is a very individualistic emotional approach." And LIVING BLUES calls Lemons "a skillful and expressive singer" delivering blues "in a wide range of styles" from "dance-floor soul grooves" to "the occasional ballad."

The quality of this CD is strengthened by an all-star line up. TOMMY CASTRO delivers his own fiery brand of guitar licks on the Lemons penned funk "Let Me Be Good," and his wailing solo work on the slow blues "Takin' a Train" (another original) can only be described as electrifying.

RUSTY ZINN plays some raw Elmore James-style licks on another Lemons original "Hard Headed Man" and his "nasty tone and wild note bending" guitar work on the Junior Wells classic "Little By Little" leaves the listener wondering if this young "golden boy" might be from another

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generation of players.

But is it STEVE FREUND who is the guitar star on this CD. Kisliuk writes that Freund "fills in the edges around the snowmelt slow 'Dirty Man' with restraint and aching beauty." DH of Vintage Guitar says that Freund's "Lockwood-style finesse in tone and articulation work perfectly" with Lemons' "delicate style." Freund plays with beauty and intensity on the title cut "Dark Road," creating a melancholic undertone, which builds as the song progresses. Freund's 30 years in the blues business has indeed made him an exquisite accompanist.

DAVID MAXWELL is the pleasant surprise of this CD. His brilliant, jazz-influenced riffs on the Magic Sam classic "I Need You So Bad" create a richly textured rhythmic flow and his sinuous, Spann-like scales during his solo on the haunting "Worry, Worry" are rendered with magnificent feeling and precision.

JOHNNY ACE, Lemons' partner and session leader, makes contributions with both bass and back up vocals. Ace's style is simple and direct. He has an uncanny ability to follow Lemons in all her subtlety and zone in on just the right bass line to create a sexy, low-down groove. Ace becomes the very pulse, the very heart beat of the music. Nobody can play blues bass better than Johnny Ace.

So, as Mark A. Cole says of "Dark Road" in his Big City Blues review, "This is an excellent CD in that it combines Texas-rhythm influences with Chicago lead configurations. Lemons vocal work is top of the line ... Definitely a winner! This CD has more talent and depth than you can imagine!"

CATHY LEMONS is a blues-singing legend who has performed regularly in the Bay Area for 25 years. She has been described as "the finest light-skinned female blues vocalist in the U.S." (Real Blues, 2010) with a "velvety and hypnotic voice resonant of a female Howlin' Wolf" (Fulltimeblues, 2010). Hailing from Dallas, Cathy honed her chops with Anson Funderburgh, performed with Stevie Ray Vaughan, and has worked with some of the greatest names in blues, including John Lee Hooker (she toured as his send-off singer in 1987), Tommy Castro, and Ron Thompson. She has 3 CD's to her own credit, 2 of which were released on Vizztone. Her latest from 2014, "Black Crow," received national attention and was a DownBeat magazine "Winners' Pick." ---cdbaby.com

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