Joyann Parker - Hard To Love (2018)

01. Bluer Than You 3:07 02. Dizzy 2:43 03. Envy 3:40 04. Evil Hearted 3:59 05. Hard To Love 3:19 06. Home 6:26 07. Jigsaw Heart 5:06 08. Memphis 4:07 09. Ray 3:23 10. Take My Heart And Run 2:17 11. What Happened To Me 3:17 12. Who What When Where Why 4:02 13. Your Mama 3:46 Joyann Parker - vocals, guitar, piano, trumpet Mark Lamoine - guitar, back vocals Tim Wick - piano, organ Michael Carvale - bas Alec Tackmann - drums, percussion Gunhuld Carling - horn on "Who What When Where Why"

When does Joyann Parker's voice sound sassy, commanding, strong and/or beautiful?…Whenever she moves her lips. Her voice, music and lyric writing aren't average, there is something major league brewing here. The combination of her powerfully controlled voice in tandem with well written and performed songs is really something special. Guitarist Mark Lamoine is spot on and he is the co-writer here. Tim Wick's keyboards along with a sturdy rhythm section prop up the proceedings.

A thumping bass intro leads into "Memphis", a greasy honky-tonk burner that benefits from Joyann's sassy in command vocal that locks in with the lyrics. Mark Lamoine adds some nicely slithering slide for good measure. A funky guitar riff enlivens the Memphis style soul of "Envy". Her voice takes on a deeper tone on "Home", A gospel tinged slow burner enhanced by a beautifully toned guitar solo, not to mention Joyann's usual powerful vocal.

Way funky rhythm & blues is the stuff of "Dizzy". The earnest and strong vocal over funky wah-wah guitar enhance the dynamics of "Jigsaw Heart". Gunhild Carling contributes horns to "Who What When Where Why", a song with a tough vocal and Memphis style guitar. A nice piano intro kicks off "Bluer Than You" that includes trumpet courtesy of Joyann. The New Orleans shuffle of "Ray" portrays a love-hate relationship. Of course it has the necessary New Orleans piano to create the proper atmosphere. "Evil Hearted" is a smoldering heart felt

confession.

Down home blues slide guitar meets R&B in “Take My Heart And Run”. Jazzy guitar underscores the meddling mother-in-law has to go saga of “Your Mama. It has a great vocal with lots of swagger. The barrel housing R&B “What Happened To Me” has Mark Lamoine cranking out Chuck Berry guitar riffs. Great boogie-woogie piano as well. Joyann puts on her lovely voice for the piano fueled ballad “Hard To Love”. The narrator describes her lover as “like a beautiful mess”. Yes, this is the same lady that delivers those powerhouse vocals. Talk about versatility.

What a find here in this Minneapolis, Minnesota based dynamic vocalist. The singing and music gel perfectly with the creative lyrics. There is absolutely no reason why this gem of a singer doesn’t rise to the top among the current crop of R&B influenced singers. Do yourself a favor and get this CD as soon as possible. ---Greg "Bluesdog" Szalony, bluesblastmagazine.com

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