

David Gogo - Soul Bender (2011)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Please Find My Baby* [03:33] 02. *Slow It Down* [04:00] 03. *Was It Love* [03:23] 04. *Time Is Killing Me* [05:01] 05. *I Found A Love* [04:11] 06. *The Changeling* [04:05] 07. *Gettin' Old* [03:07] 08. *The Way You Make Me Feel* [04:02] 09. *Do You Know How It Feels* [03:20] 10. *Whiskey Train* [05:36] David Gogo – Guitar, Vocals Gerry Barnum - Harmonica Shelley Beeston - Vocals Doug Elliot - Bass Chad Geekie - Fender Rhodes Lincoln Gogo - Percussion Bill Hicks - Drums Rick Hopkins - Organ Tina Jones - Trombone, Trumpet Pierre Komen - Saxophone Jona Kristinsson - Vocals James Mark - Violin Southside Steve Marriner - Harmonica, Piano Charlie Quintana - Drums Jay Stevens - Bass Pat Steward – Drums

"I can't fit into my skinny black jeans anymore," laments veteran blues rocker David Gogo on the appropriately titled, hard-driving, Stones-inflected, and likely autobiographical "Getting Old." Only in his early forties at the time of its 2011 release, he's obviously not letting fears of his advancing years slow or dull his attack, as his sixth release in a decade shows. Gogo isn't a particularly distinctive guitarist, but as this disc's title implies (Soul-Bender is also the name of the Fulltone guitar pedal he uses); he infuses plenty of soul with his bluesy rock & roll. To that end, a crackling version of Michael Jackson's "The Way You Make Me Feel," played as a high-energy swamp rocker with female backing vocals and horns, seems like a Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes cover instead of a hit for the King of Pop. Gogo is in tough voice throughout, charging into the rugged "Slow It Down" and a slinky slide guitar-driven burner "Do You Know How It Feels?" with raw nerves exposed. As usual, he uncorks some terrific covers (in addition to Jackson's); stampeding his blues guitar leads on the Robin Trower/Procol Harum nugget "Whisky Train" and the Doors' underappreciated "The Changeling" with chops and imagination. Gogo slows things down for a bit of mid-album R&B/gospel on a terrifically moving "I Found a Love," first sung by Wilson Pickett with the Falcons, and "Time Is Killing Me" (there's that getting-old theme again), a self-penned gem with the sharply observant chorus of "I always thought I was just killing time/but time has been killing me." An opening Allman Brothers Band via "Statesboro Blues"-inspired romp with Elmore James' "Please Find My Baby" is raucous enough but doesn't jell with the rest of the set's vibe. Gogo double- and occasionally triple-tracks his guitar yet the production and especially the mixing keep the sound open, airy, and uncluttered. This is right up there with his finest work, and it's arguably his best, so despite

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his own misgivings about his age, Gogo might just now be hitting his musical prime. ---Hal Horowitz, AllMusic Review

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