

Johnny Winter - I'm A Bluesman (2004)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 28 October 2009 19:49 - Last Updated Tuesday, 16 March 2021 22:36

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1. *I'm a Bluesman* 2. *Cheatin' Blues* 3. *I Smell Smoke* 4. *Lone Wolf* 5. *So Much Love* 6. *Monkey Song* 7. *Shake Down* 8. *Sweet Little Baby* 9. *Pack Your Bags* 10. *Last Night* 11. *That Wouldn't Satisfy* 12. *Sugar Coated Love* 13. *Let's Start All Over Again* Johnny Winter (vocals, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, slide guitar); Paul Nelson (guitars); Reese Wynans (keyboards); Scott Spray (electric bass, bass guitar); Tom MacDonald, Brad Hallen (electric bass); Tom Hambridge (drums, percussion, background vocals); Wayne June (drums); James Montgomery (harmonica).

Yes, he's a bluesman -- has anyone at all familiar with Johnny Winter ever thought anything else? But his first album of new material in almost eight years was certainly very much in the straightforward blues-rock mold, emphasis on the "blues" over "rock." There was nothing to either disappoint longtime fans or excite the unconverted, as it was about exactly the set you'd expect from Winter, setting energetic if predictably formatted material to solid electric blues arrangements. His accomplished guitar playing sometimes bore a tarter tone than some of his past recordings, and his vocals as always were not as impressive as his axe work, though they were serviceable. The songs were a mixture of originals, contributions from past and present sidemen and producer Tom Hambridge, and covers of Lazy Lester's "Sugar Coated Love" and Hop Wilson's "That Wouldn't Satisfy." Although this is acceptably competent, good-natured blues-rock, it's the acoustic "That Wouldn't Satisfy" that provides the most inspired moments. Winter's slide guitar on this track is superb, whetting one's appetite for an entire album of such outings should he ever be in the mood to go unplugged. --- Richie Unterberger, allmusic.com

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