Big Apple Blues - Energy (2014)

1. Wake-Up and Do Something 4:06 2. I-278 Grind 6:11 3. Morning Jive 4:52 4. Remembering Eni 7:31 5. Lost in Thoughts 5:57 6. Day Dreaming 7:16 7. Happy Hour 4:54 8. Unwind 5:00 9. Energy 3:07 Zach Zanis – guitar Anthony Kane – harmonica, vocals Barry Harrison – drums Admir 'Dr. Blues' Hadzic – bass High Pool – guitar, vocals

The album "ENERGY" tells the tale of a day in the life of innately frenetic, hyperurban megalopolis of New York. The cannonade at daybreak: "Wake up and do something" kicks off the day with an iPhone alarm giving way to a galvanic beat as one showers or gets ready for work. The track could just as well serve as a punchier replacement for the all-important elixir that first coffee of the day— as it was written as an antidote to the morning slumberous torpor. "I 278 Grind" follows and further fans the vibe with the crank of an Oldsmobile's engine, sounding off the start of a drive to the city on a heavy traffic-laden highway. The sinuous harmonica (Anthony Kane) and guitar (Zach Zunis) hover above the snarled stretches of asphalt, all thickly padded with the caress of a B3 organ (Jim Alfredson). As the Oldsmobile pulls into a parking space, the slams of the door and resolute footsteps reaffirm a steely determination about to be poured into the work day. Thereafter, "Morning jive" cranks the gear to another level while the work is being done. Its joie de vivre is starkly contrasted, its exuberance undercut by the somber notes that follow as the work crowd breaks up midday for the funeral of a friend. "Remembering Eni" keeps everyone's thoughts together, evoking memories of a prematurely departed Enisa, while the pealing of church bells and the howling wind underscore the prevailing grief. Back at work, the fleeting afternoon mood slowly picks up the pace with "Lost in thoughts" and "Day dreaming". As the feeling of vulnerability slowly gives way to human resilience, the crowd from work tops the day off with a happy hour at a local bar. Back at home, "Unwind" abates the everyday concoction of hyper-urban tempo and the emotional residue from the day, culminating in a night cap. The title track, "Energy" is a secret remedy in the medicine cabinet, a sort of quadruple espresso infused with an energy drink. The album is an eclectic confluence of genres (blues, R&B, soul, funk, rock, jazz…) we classified as "Blues Fusion," being unable to differentiate among the known genres. However, whichever way one classifies this compilation of original work that makes up ENERGY, a single listen will leave no one doubting that this piece of music comes from a foundation of subterranean blues whose pulse

vibrates from deep beneath. If in doubt, the listener is advised to pick up or download Big Apple Blues' previous traditional blues releases ("Live at O'Flaherty's"or "Brooklyn Blues"—both on StoneToneRecords label) and all will be reassured! The story behind ENERGY is an interesting one. Since the founding of Big Apple Blues in late 2000s, its various members played in a number of music projects and touring bands. When in town, however, the BAB musicians regularly recorded and played city-wide. Over one brutally cold weekend in December of 2012, the band gathered to crank out some new ideas at Smash Studios on 36th Street between 8th and 9th Avenue in NYC. As per routine, the band kicked off the day in Studio A with a Chicago blues shuffle. The combination of raunchy blues guitar of Zach Zunis, Anthony Kane wailing on the blues harmonica, and Barry Harrison laying down a shuffle to die for, instantly brought about a synergy in the room. Indeed, the band is made up of true blues aficionados who know how to lay down a barstool-rattling shuffle that could make the dead come alive. As we smiled after the warm up, we began pulling out a series of grooves and scratch recordings conceived on Dr. Blues' transatlantic flights between NYC and Brussels to see his Flemish woman in Leuven. As all musicians contributed creative bits and pieces to "ENERGY", we played several hours without interruption, barely taking notice of the ever-busy recording engineer Tazz who kept darting in and out of the control room to check the mic placements and signal levels. As we took our first break in the control room, we casually listened to what was recorded over Dunkin' Donuts coffee and a few Cliff Bars. The rough mix of freshly laid down, live tracks purred back at us from a pair of 215 Tannoy monitors suspended on chains from the ceiling in the Control Room. Right then and there we knew we were about to give life to something extraordinary. Next, we flew in an amazing B3 organ player, Jim Throdore Alfredson III, from Lansing, Michigan, and another superb session drummer, Tom Papadatos, to help with the next few live sessions. The magical and powerful concoction, "ENERGY" further benefitted from overdubs of congas and shakers (Bruce Tyler, Tom Papadatos), Chris Emenizer's horn arrangements, and the mixing and special effects wizardry of Matt Becker. ENERGY was conceived and recorded as an all-live album, with an amalgam of vibes, feels, rhythms and instrumental melodies, pieced into music totally capable of playfully gilding the daily grind. ---Dr Blues, bigappleblues.com

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