

Tomislav Goluban - Chicago Rambler (2019)

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Niedziela, 12 Kwiecień 2020 11:36 -

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1 *Pigeon Swing* (3:29) 2 *Locked Heart* (3:52) 3 *Bag Full Of Troubles* (4:55) 4 *Jerry Ricks On My Mind* (4:15) 5 *Can't Find Myself* (2:51) 6 *Home Made Honey* (4:14) 7 *One Way Ticket* (4:20) 8 *Do The Right Thing* (3:15) 9 *Little Pigeon* (5:33) 10 *Jerry Ricks On My Mind (Acoustic)* (3:24) 11 *Searchin' For My Baby* (3:46) 12 *I'll Go To My Cottage* (2:59)

Tomislav Goluban - harmonica, vocals Eric Noden - guitar E. G. McDaniel - bass Beedy Eyes Smith - drums + Joe Filisko - harp

Chicago blues by way of Croatia as long time blues harmonica player-singer-songwriter from afar Tomislav Goluban chose to come to the source for this his tenth album. Tomislav composed all the songs that pay musical homage to the blues tradition. He is an harmonica ace. While trying to rein in his accent his vocals at times sounding stilted. It limits his ability to exude unrestrained energy.

The jump blues instrumental “Pigeon Swing” showcases his undeniable harp skills. The title is a nod to his moniker of pigeon. He charges through like a whirlwind. “Locked Heart” explores Slim Harpo territory as the tune has an obvious similarity to the swamp blues master’s “Raining In My Heart”. Joe Filisko adds his harmonica to “Bag Full Of Troubles”. The liner notes don’t specify if both men handle the harp chores on this one, but whatever the case it’s first class all the way. Great guitar as well. His tribute to his mentor Philadelphia Jerry Ricks has a moving sentiment that is marred by an awkward delivery. His always tasty harp and Nodens’ slide guitar redeem the song. The acoustic version is more of the same.

Noden’s slide takes on a mournful tone along side the harmonica on the melancholy “Can’t Find Myself”. “One Way Ticket” gets the Sonny Terry style harmonica train imitation while the lyrics are rather mundane. The Bo Diddley beat appears on the upbeat “Do The Right Thing”. The band dusts off a slow Chicago blues groove for the autobiographical “Little Pigeon”.

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More nice Chicago style playing on "Searchin' For My Baby". Croatian lyrics set against a Chicago groove on "Isel budem v kleticu(I'll Go To My Cottage)". Tomislav is obviously more comfortable singing in his native tongue.

The vocal delivery throughout detracts a bit, but there is no denying the superior quality of all the musicians involved. It's heart warming to see international appreciation of America's beloved blues music. ---Greg "Bluesdog" Szalony, bluesblastmagazine.com

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