Buddy Guy - Blues Singer (2003)

1. Hard Time Killing Floor - 2:48
2. Crawlin' Kingsnake - 5:17
3. Lucy Mae Blues - 3:33
4. Can't See Baby - 4:04
5. I Love The Life I Live - 2:47
6. Louise McGhee - 5:24
7. Moanin' And Groanin' - 3:30
8. Black Cat Blues - 4:29
9. Bad Life Blues - 3:45
10. Sally Mae - 4:28
11. Anna Lee - 4:15
12. Lonesome Home Blues - 5:00

Personnel:
Buddy Guy - vocals, guitar
Tony Garnier - upright bass
James 'Jimbo' Mathus - guitar
And
Eric Clapton - guitar
Jim Keltner - drums
B.B. King – guitar

Arriving after the unexpected blast of raw energy that was 2001's Sweet Tea, 2003's Blues Singer could idealistically be seen as the acoustic flip side of that high-voltage, raw electric blues. Like Sweet Tea, Blues Singer is supposed to exist deep down within the Delta blues tradition, only finding Buddy Guy armed with an acoustic guitar and the occasional minimal accompaniment; it's even recorded at the same Mississippi studio that gave its name to the 2001 platter and is helmed by the same producer, Dennis Herring. If only it were that simple!

Instead of being an extension or a mirror image of its predecessor, this record is a sleepy comedown from an exhilarating peak. Where Sweet Tea was filled with unpredictable song choices, this plays it safe, hauling out such familiar items as "Hard Time Killing Floor," "Crawlin' Kingsnake," "I Love the Life I Live," and "Sally Mae." And while this retains Jimbo Mathus on guitar, when other musicians pop up, it's not the lively Fat Possum crew, it's studio pros like Jim Keltner, or guest shots by superstars Eric Clapton and B.B. King. While this does afford listeners the rare opportunity to hear B.B. on acoustic, it gives the affair the audience-pleasing veneer that weighed down his mid-'90s efforts. Plus, when it comes right down to it, Guy simply is off on this record, with lazy, mannered vocals and by the book guitar. Despite a few good acoustic duet sessions with Junior Wells, acoustic blues is not really Guy's forte, and the highly disappointing Blues Singer illustrates exactly why. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, allmusic.com

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