

Debbie Davies - Love Spin [2015]

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Sobota, 12 Sierpień 2017 13:01 -

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1. *Life Of The Party* - 3:48 2. *Love Spin* - 4:00 3. *Let The Heartaches Begin* - 4:15 4. *Don't Change It Up* - 4:31 5. *It's All Blues* - 3:33 6. *Talk Real Slow* - 3:37 7. *I'm Not Cheatin' Yet* - 2:56 8. *Two Twenty-Five-Year-Olds* - 4:20 9. *A Darker Side Of Me* - 4:32 10. *I Get The Blues So Easy* - 5:05 11. *Way Back Home* - 2:48
Debbie Davies – guitar, vocals Paul Opalach - keyboard, lap steel, bass Wilbo Wright – bass Scott Spray - bass Don Castagno – drums + Terry Hanck - saxophone Dana Robbins - saxophone Dave Keyes - piano Jay Stollman – vocals

Debbie wrote four of the songs, Don Opalach five and there are two covers. Debbie's four songs bookend the album. "Life Of The Party" is dedicated to the late John Juke Logan and finds Debbie playing some fine lead over her funky rhythm work and makes for a great opener to the album. The title track follows with Debbie trading licks with Paul's moody lap steel. Debbie has always been a strong guitarist (playing with Albert Collins will do that for you!) but her vocals here are also very good and fit the songs well. The last two cuts on the album find Debbie in contrasting moods: "I Get The Blues So Easy" finds Debbie in a panic about all her worries, but concludes that it will all come good in the end: "I'm looking towards the future, gonna shake these blues in time". Debbie plays some stinging guitar and duels with Terry's funky sax. The final track "Way Back Home" has Debbie on swampy slide as she sings of coming full circle in life. The slide gives the song a classic Mississippi sound and it's a short but sweet finale to the album.

Don's songs start with the almost country ballad "Let The Heartaches Begin" which was originally released in 1997 but in this version features Terry's languid sax as the main instrument as Debbie and Terry share the vocals. "Don't Change It Up" finds Debbie sharing the vocals with Jay on a catchy R n' B number with some fluid guitar from Debbie and funky bass from Scott. "It's All Blues" is a slower tune that leans a little on Miles Davis' tune of a similar name. Debbie's guitar rings out and the tune also features Dana Robbins whose sax underpins the rhythm. "I'm Not Cheatin' Yet" is swinging rock and roll with Dana's rasping sax

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and Dave's piano both getting solo space and the lyrics adding a sly sense of humour. In fact Debbie's albums have always featured some funny songs and here it's Don's tale of the boastful character who declares that he is capable of doing better than his current deal: "If you wanna dream now baby let your dreams be bold; you say you're gonna trade me in for two twenty-five year-olds". Debbie's lead lines are strong and Dave is again on hand for some boogie style piano.

The two covers are very different vehicles for Debbie. Lenny McDaniel's "Talk Real Slow" is a nicely mid-paced number with Debbie delivering some sensual lyrics about her man and a dramatic wah-wah soaked solo. Swedish bluesman Sven Zetterburg is the source for "A Darker Side Of Me", a song that Debbie states in the sleevenotes that she wishes she had written herself. As the title suggests, there is a darker side to us all and Debbie is no exception: "I'm sorry if I scared you but you just saw a darker side of me". The playing here is gentle in tone with Don using brushes and an overall late-night jazz club feel.

Debbie has made a lot of good albums over the years but this one struck this reviewer as one of her best: strong songs, good vocals, fine guitar playing and a judicious selection of guest players to widen the sonic scope from the trio format. Consequently this one comes with a 'recommended' tag. ---John Mitchell, bluesblastmagazine.com

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