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Album review: JEFF FETTERMAN – Bottle Full Of Blues

Posted on June 20, 2015 by [petefeenstra](#)

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Green Tea Music [Release date 2015]

Jeff Fetterman ticks all the right boxes on 'Bottle Full Of Blues', a rock solid blues-rock album that works hard to convince you of its stature.

Jeff's a tasty guitarist, decent songwriter who leads a good band that loves nothing more than stretching on a mix of funky grooves and SRV inspired workouts.

His lyrical veer from personal narratives to the metaphoric imagery as on his deal with the devil on the impressive title track, which will surely gain him plenty of radio plays. He's a classy guitarist with a sinuous, flowing style that weaves in and out of the arrangements with all the grace and style you'd expect from a feel player.

Listen to the closing break on the album opener 'Paradise' as he leaves his calling card, but never overstays his welcome. It's a good example of how he transforms an SRV and Hendrix feel to his own end with deep tone solos topped by his own gruff voice.

That track like the album in general has all the hallmarks of a quality club act, who have plenty of ability but probably just fall short with their material which is slightly too generic and probably not quite memorable enough.

That said, Jeff is smart enough to look for different ways to introduce variety to his rock blues template and does so deep into the album with a combination of Otis James's mighty harp solo and his own wah-wah inflected solo on the funky 'Down & Out'.

He also adds gospel style bvs on one of his best songs, the melodic blues ballad 'Wash My Blues Away', and the Ralph Reiting 111's funky bass-led break down on the closing 'T-Bone & The Ghost'.

'Bottle Full Of Blues' doesn't break any new ground, but it's the sort of album that you can crank up whenever you need a straight-to-the-vein shot of unadulterated rock/blues. You could of course opt for SRV himself, but that would be to miss out on an artist who adds enough of his own ideas to stamp his own personality on a decent album.

Jeff's durable vocals range from the gritty to the hoarse, but it fits the blues-rock genre well. On songs like 'Talk To Me' he cleverly adds harmony and backing vocals, not only to offset his own lead vocals, but to bring enough variety to create the illusion of layering the piece, before topping it with searing guitar.

'Out Of Time' is full of gritty funk with Anthony Brown's organ solo and Jeff's own sinuous solo, while the suitably titled 'Southbound' is an FM radio friendly (does FM still exist?) slice of harp inflected southern rock, with evocative lyrics to match.

'Funky Candy' is a stylistic departure but the opening bv's give way to a deep funky groove on which the band stretches out impressively

There's more than a hint of a road tested band on the train-time 'Devil's Shuffle' on which Jeff, Otis James and Anthony Brown excel on guitar, harp and keyboards respectively, over the tightest rhythm section in Pennsylvania.

'Bottle Full Of Blues' is an impressive effort for a totally self recorded and produced album from an artist who has been knocking on the door for sometime now.

Jeff copped the 'Best Up & Coming Blues/Rock Guitar' award on WREO radio in Ohio and has enjoyed high profile supports with the likes of Kenny Wayne Shepherd and Chris Duarte. There's no denying his dirt in the track roadhouse blues style that permeates all 11 tracks here.

'Bottle Full of Blues' doesn't quite have the necessary unique selling point to stand out in a crowded rock-blues market place, but there's an undoubted quality here. And no matter how many SRV and Hendrix inspired moments there may be on this album, by the time you've bluesed, grooved and funk'd you way through a guitar driven blues-rock journey to arrive at 'T-Bone & The Ghost' you'll be pleased you stumbled across a sizzling guitar slinger from Pennsylvania by the name of Jeff Fetterman. ***1/2

Review by Pete Feenstra