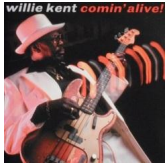


Willie Kent - Comin' Alive (2001)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 13 September 2016 15:07 -

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01. *Lonely Streets* (4:44) 02. *Born In The Delta* (8:07) 03. *Check It Out* (3:48) 04. *Look Like It's Gonna Rain* (4:11) 05. *Lonesome Whistle Blow* (5:32) 06. *Someone Like You* (4:10) 07. *Sittin' Here Thinkin'* (5:37) 08. *Bad Luck* (4:49) 09. *Don't Tell Me Your Trouble* (4:07) 10. *I Can't Stop Lovin You* (6:01) 11. *Something New* (3:24) 12. *Someone You Should Know* (6:06)

Willie Kent - vocals and bass; Haguy F. King - guitar; Jacob Dawson - guitar; Dave Jefferson - drums; Allen Batts - piano and organ; Erskine Johnson - piano; Willie Henderson, Kenny Anderson, Larry B.J. Weathersby & Bergess Gardner - horns; The Gospel Supremes - background vocals on track 12.

Kent, the Chicago blues bassist, was a sideman to Little Walter, Muddy Waters, Louisiana Red, Eddie "The Chief" Clearwater, and Junior Wells, to name a few. Willie is finally getting the recognition this bass legend deserves; W.C. Handy Awards: Best Blues Instrumentalist, Bass 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005. Additional awards: Library of Congress Award for Best Folk/Blues album, Living Blues Magazine Award for Best Bassist for seven years and Chicago Music Society Album of the Year. Wow, that's a lot of accomplishments to a well deserving bluesman.

Comin' Alive takes listeners down to the Delta to Chicago's West Side. There are songs that'll make you want to dance and others a bit gospel. All but songs #1 & 10 are original tunes, written by Willie. --- stlblues.net

Willie Kent has been making albums for many years now, but "Comin' Alive!", his debut for the

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Blue Chicago label, marks another couple of firsts for the premier bass player. Kent is the first solo artist to be signed to the small, but well-respected label, and it is the first time he has sat in the producer's chair (alongside Twist Turner and guitarist Haguy F. King). ,/

Although generally associated with Chicago--his home for nearly half a century--Kent thinks of himself as a Delta bluesman, and "Comin' Alive!" owes at least as much to Memphis and the south as it does to the windy city. This quickly becomes apparent on the excellent opening rendition of Sterling Plumpp's "Lonely Streets". Kent is in top form on vocals and bass, and Haguy F. King's on guitar sounds uncannily like his namesake Albert. Add a pinch of horns, and the result is something close to a Memphis Soul Stew. Kent further acknowledges his roots on the ensuing autobiographical "Born in the Delta", which features some very neat piano by Allen Batts.

The quality of material barely wavers throughout (Kent wrote 10 of the 12 tracks), and there is enough variety to keep everybody interested. Particular favorites include the soul/funk workout of "Look Like It's Gonna Rain" (the second of four tracks where the horn section get to strut their stuff), the excellent "Bad Luck", and the Gospel-like "Someone You Should Know" which rounds things out in fine style, helped by the harmonizing of the Gospel Supremes (Shirley Johnson, Diane Womack, and Joi Fit ).

The Blue Chicago label have struck gold yet again with "Comin' Alive!". This is Willie Kent at his very best, working in tandem with a band he knows and trusts implicitly. There seems little doubt that "Comin' Alive!" is going to be up among the front-runners when they hand out the awards for best album of 2001. ---Gordon Baxter, mnblues.com

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