

Delta Moon - Goin Down South (2004)

Written by bluesever

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1. *That's It, You're Done*
2. *All She Wrote*
3. *I'll Die Trying*
4. *Nightclubbing*
5. *Shake Something Loose*
6. *Stone Cold Man*
7. *Poplar Grove*
8. *County Farm*
9. *Goin' Down South*
10. *Dreams Come Real*
11. *Nobody Knows (Bonus Track)*

Musicians: Scott Callison: drums Tom Gray: vocals, steel guitar, piano, dulcimer Mark Johnson: guitars, mando guitar Gina Leigh: vocals Jon Schwenke: bass

With their twin-lead slide guitar approach, it would be easy, even natural, for Atlanta quintet Delta Moon to sling out an approximation of the screaming, dueling Lynyrd Skynyrd Southern rock boogie sound. But with their roots and influences in classic R&B, the band thankfully steers clear of anything so obvious, preferring to wallow in a far more greasy, subtle, and creative blend of rock, blues, folk and swamp. Lead vocalist Gina Leigh's tough, sexy voice is perfect slithering around Vassar Clements' fiddle on "Stone Cold Man" as both guitarists ride a groove that is sure-footed yet snake-like. Guitarist Tom Gray's grits-and-gravy moan takes lead on the sensual "Dreams Come Real" as Leigh joins him on the chorus. The band covers country bluesmen J.B. Lenoir, R.L. Burnside and, in one of the album's most gripping performances, even the David Bowie/Iggy Pop "Nightclubbing." But they twist and rearrange the songs to make them sound like Delta Moon tunes, a tricky yet seemingly effortless task that shouldn't be taken for granted. Gray's and Mark Johnson's guitars never step over each other, but play in unison, sometimes gradually splitting apart in a call and response trade-off similar to gospel vocal groups. "Shake Something Loose," a co-write with Athens, GA neighbor Randall Bramblett, sets up a crisp, mid-tempo vibe with Leigh vamping the lyrics against the multitalented Gray's piano

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making the air as charged as the song's emotions. This album shows them gradually moving further from blues to incorporate elements of pop and rock, yet Delta Moon never goes commercial and retains their individuality by crafting their finest release yet. As it's title infers, Goin' Down South is a perfect example of contemporary Southern roots music at its most affecting. ---Hal Horowitz, allmusic.com

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