

Malverde Blues Experience - Malverde Blues Experience (2014)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Love Gone Bad* (3:31) 2. *Gimme Back My Mojo* (4:25) 3. *Black Heart Woman* (2:55) 4. *Mean Black Spider* (4:00) 5. *Blues Demon* (5:20) 6. *Southbound* (2:59) 7. *Tamazula River Mama* (4:10) 8. *La Mala Vida* (3:52) 9. *Big Bad Wolf* (3:44) 10. *Fix My Kicks* (3:53) 11. *Calling Dr. Johnson* (3:55) 12. *All In Vain* (2:51) Alberto Prieto - Guitar Whiskey Soaked Man - Vocals, Harp Jesus Osuna - Bass Dick Saenz – Drums

Roberto Fernandez concedes that it's sometimes lonely being a bluesman in Culiacan. The capital of the Mexican state of Sinaloa, Culiacan is best known for the banda or grupera sounds that also provide the drum beat to the narco-culture and violence that's enveloped the region. "There's no blues scene," Fernandez chuckles. "We are the only ones." The frontman for the Malverde Blues Experience, Fernandez is a big man with a voice to match. His stage projection recalls in some ways Leslie West of the old US rock group Mountain, and Fernandez's band mates lay out a thundering sound with slices of heavy-metal, soul and the Texas boogie of ZZ Top.

As for the name of the group, Fernandez offers two explanations, both of them riddled with Mexican experiences of immigration, contraband smuggling, banditry and myth-making. The name "Malverde" (literally "Bad Green"), says the lead singer, is taken from an Indiana friend's bumper high on marijuana that could be considered a "blues experience." Pressed further, Fernandez accepts that Malverde, of course, is also the patron saint of Sinaloa's narcos and poor people who revere the outlaw figure outside the formal rituals of the Roman Catholic Church. "The name seemed perfect to me because it situates us in that mythic context, which in the final analysis is the basis of all societies," Fernandez muses. The music of Malverde Blues Experience, he adds, not only speaks to the realities of a violent hometown but to "universal situations that happen anywhere." --- Kent Paterson, thecuttingedgenews.com, 2012

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