

Raven (US) - Raven (1969)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Feelin' Good* 2:52 2 *Neighbor, Neighbor* 4:27 3 *Green Mountain Dream* 4:36 4 *No Turnin' Back* 3:34 5 *Let's Eat* 5:46 6 *Howlin' For My Baby* 4:36 7 *Frumpy* 3:06 8 *None Of Your Jive* 3:32 9 *Bad News* 10:00 Bass – Thomas J. Calandra Drums – Gary Mallaber Guitar – John Weitz Keyboards – James Frank Calire Vocals, Harp – Tony Galla

Produced by John Hill, "Raven" was one of those album's that took awhile to grow on me. Their sound was buried in blues-rock, with an occasional jazzy interlude, but with an intense, raw edge, that made them somewhat un-commercial. Not that being un-commercial was necessarily bad. Galla had an outstanding voice; gruff and rugged and near perfect for the genre, but like a lot of singers, his natural reaction was to try to power his way out of corners, which occasionally turned things screechy ("Feelin' Good"). As I said, the album didn't have instant appeal when I first heard it. Yeah, their stab at getting funky ('Frumpy') was fun, and 'Howlin' for My Baby' found them turning in a decent Willie Dixon cover. It just took awhile to get accustomed to their intensity ... It was worth the effort though since there's only one truly lame effort on the album - Calire's throwaway blues number 'None of Your Jive'. Elsewhere there were lots of hidden treasures - the pounding blues rocker 'Neighbor, Neighbor' and the extended closing blues jam 'Bad News'. As much as I've come to enjoy Galla, the band's secret weapon was lead guitarist John Weitz. He certainly wasn't showy, but when he got a crack at the spotlight, Weitz was consistently mesmerizing. Be sure to check out his work on the closing rocker 'Bad News'.
---johnkatsmc5.blogspot.com

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