

Magic Slim & The Teardrops - Bad Boy (2012)

Written by bluesever

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01 – *Bad Boy* 02 – *Someone Else Is Steppin' In* 03 – *I Got Money* 04 – *Sunrise Blues* 05 – *Girl What You Want Me To Do* 06 – *Hard Luck Blues* 07 – *Gambling Blues* 08 – *Champagne and Reefer* 09 – *How Much More Long* 10 – *Matchbox Blues* 11 – *Older Woman* 12 – *Country Joyride* Magic Slim (vocals, guitar); Jon McDonald (guitar, background vocals); Andre Howard (bass guitar, background vocals); B.J. Jones (drums, background vocals).

Magic Slim turned 75 in 2012, but his growling vocals have the fire and brimstone of a Young Lion and his guitar playing is still as razor-sharp as it was when he turned pro in the '50s. Slim doesn't bring many modern touches to his music; he plays in the classic Chicago style that laid the foundation for today's rock and blues and that's just fine. With his backing Teardrops -- Jon McDonald on guitar, Andre Howard on bass, and B.J. Jones on drums -- he continues making first-class albums that sound like they were cut in 1955 and that's a good thing. Denise LaSalle's "Someone Else Is Steppin' In" gets a humorous reading with Howard singing a high lead vocal to complement Slim's growl, which often slips into a Howlin' Wolf-like growl. "Champagne and Reefer," a Muddy Waters tune, is taken at a smoky laid-back pace, as befits the subject matter, with Slim's vocal inflections suggesting Muddy in his prime. "Older Woman," first cut by Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials, is taken at a leisurely pace that suggests the slow, smoldering tempo of mature love, although Slim sets off plenty of sizzling sparks with his bristling solos. Slim's originals are just as solid as the covers. "Sunrise Blues" is an old-fashioned slow shuffle with smooth Albert King-meets-Chuck Berry guitar work. "Gambling Blues" and the mostly instrumental "Country Joyride" give Slim a chance to show off his considerable chops, showcasing solos full of thick comped chords, distorted bass runs, and clear chiming lead lines. ---j.poet, allmusic.com

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