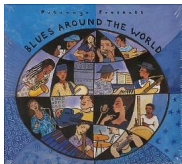


Putumayo Presents: Blues Around The World (2006)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 16 April 2016 15:57 -

Putumayo Presents: Blues Around The World (2006)



1 –*The Unseen Guest Listen My Son* 2 –*Blues Etílicos Canceriano Sem Lar* 3 –*Big Mama & Victor Uris No Way Out* 4 –*Jarabe De Palo La Flaca* 5 –*Bonnie Raitt & Habib Koité Back Around* 6 –*Amar Sundy Quallache* 7 –*Otis Spann I Got A Feeling* 8 –*Eric Bibb, Rory Block & Maria Muldaur Don't Ever Let Nobody Drag Your Spirit Down* 9 –*Long-g Playing Mahjong* 10 –*Botafogo Slide Blues* 11 –*Taj Mahal Meets The Culture Musical Club Of Zanzibar Catfish Blues*

What happens when Putumayo, a label built entirely on the realm of world music, takes on a genre known as one of the few purely American musics? The answer: they find performers worldwide with their own regional twists on the blues, and present a surprisingly coherent collection. Well beyond the spread up Highway 61 decades ago, Putumayo Presents: Blues Around the World presents the blues from nearly every continent, often finding a home with musicians looking to the roots of the rock & roll that have taken over regional pop scenes. The album opens with a piece by the duo Unseen Guest sounding straight out of the Mississippi tradition, at least until you note the tabla in the background. Brazilian group Blues Etílicos has a bumping, rolling country feel somewhere on the spectrum between Taj Mahal and John Lee Hooker. Big Mama and Victor Uris (from Barcelona and Mallorca, respectively) make a nice show of the Piedmont style and Jarabe de Palo provide the first noticeable departure from straightforward American blues with "La Flaca," a Cuban-inspired, Spanish-made piece. There's a nice give and take pattern between Bonnie Raitt's slide stylings and Habib Koité's kora-inspired picking style on "Back Around," and with a fuller sound Amar Sundy combines the Chicago sound with some Tuareg influences. With the strongest showing of the American electric blues, there's an old Otis Spann track that also features Muddy Waters and James Cotton -- this is as good as the blues gets, quite simply. The newer sound of American blues (inspired by the folk movement as well as Southern gospel) is represented by Eric Bibb, Rory Block, and Maria Muldaur, and the talking blues come all the way from Taiwan. Argentina's Botafogo plays some strong Delta blues, and the album finishes on Taj Mahal and a Zanzibar musical club with an adaptation of the old "Catfish Blues." Given the massive set of possibilities that could be taken for musics influenced by the blues, and with relations to the blues, what's incredible on this album is the similarity of the sounds. Despite coming from highly varied

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traditions, and in highly varied languages, the music here has almost a singular feel. It's all undeniably the blues, and with almost no exception one can only hear the particular twists given by the artists as they develop their personal sounds, and not necessarily the crushing influences of a larger music culture. The performances are all exceptional at the least, and the coherence of the album really is a marvel. ---Adam Greenberg, Rovi

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