

ZZ Top – Fandango! (1975)

Written by bluesever

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01. Thunderbird – 4:09 02. Jailhouse Rock (Jerry Leiber, Mike Stoller) – 1:55 03. Backdoor Medley – 9:50 including: a). Backdoor Love Affair (Gibbons, Bill Ham) b). Mellow Down Easy (Willie Dixon) c). Backdoor Love Affair No.2 (Gibbons) d). Long Distance Boogie 04. Nasty Dogs And Funky Kings – 2:41 05. Blue Jean Blues – 4:42 06. Balinese – 2:36 07. Mexican Blackbird – 3:05 08. Heard It On The X – 2:23 09. Tush – 2:15 10. Heard It On The X (live) - 2:36 11. Jailhouse Rock (live) - 1:53 12. Tush (live) - 3:41 Personnel: - Billy Gibbons – lead guitar, slide guitar, harmonica, lead vocals - Dusty Hill – bass, backing vocals, lead vocals (02,06,09,11,12), co-lead vocals (08,10) - Frank Beard – drums, percussion + – Bill Ham - producer

Blessed with their first full-fledged hit album, ZZ Top followed it up with Fandango!, a record split between a side of live tracks and a side of new studio cuts. In a way, this might have made sense, since they were a kick-ass live band, and they do sound good here, but it's hard not to see this as a bit of a wasted opportunity in retrospect. Why? Because the studio side is a worthy successor to the all-fine Tres Hombres, driven by "Tush" and "Heard It on the X," two of their greatest songs that build on that album by consolidating their sound and amplifying their humor. If they had sustained this energy and quality throughout a full studio album, it would have been their greatest, but instead the mood is broken by the live cuts. Now, these are really good live cuts -- and "Backdoor Medley" and "Jailhouse Rock" were fine interpretations, making familiar songs sound utterly comfortable in their signature sound -- and Fandango! remains one of their better albums, but it's hard not to think that it could have been even better. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, All Music Guide

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