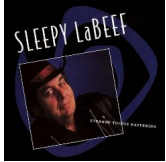


## Sleepy LaBeef - Strange Things Happening (2018)

Written by bluesever (Bogdan Marszałkowski)  
Wednesday, 14 October 2020 11:37 -

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## Sleepy LaBeef - Strange Things Happening (2018)



1 *Sittin' On Top Of The World* 3:03 2 *Playboy* 3:03 3 *Young Fashioned Ways* 5:08 4 *Waltz Across Texas* 4:01 5 *I'll be there* 2:38 6 *I'll Keep On Loving You* 1:54 7 *Strange Things Happening* 5:21 8 *Trying To Get To You* 2:30 9 *You're My Baby* 4:21 10 *Life Turned Her That Way* 3:38 11 *Standing In The Need Of Prayer* 3:54 12 *Just Call Me Lonesome* 3:06 13 *Inside Looking Out* 2:53 14 *Stagger Lee* 5:02 Scott Billington - Harmonica Billy Conway - Drums Jake Guralnick - Guitar Dave Keyes - Piano Sleepy LaBeef - Guitar, Guitar (Electric), Mandolin, Vocals E.J. Ouellette - Guitar (Acoustic), Guitar (Electric), Mandolin Michael Ward - Bass

Sleepy LaBeef is a bawdy, exuberant performer whose musical skills are slightly above average, but whose heart and energy are kingsize. He rips through Western swing, rockabilly, R&B, and rock on this 14-track set, doing originals and vintage pieces with equal ferocity. LaBeef doesn't coast through any song; he sings "Standing In The Need Of Prayer" and "Strange Things Happening" with the same aggressiveness as "Sittin' On Top Of The World" and "Stagger Lee." His slashing guitar riffs and authoritative vocals setting the pace, Sleepy LaBeef makes music for those who feel the spirit, no matter what the song. ---Ron Wynn, AllMusic Review

"My hair may be turning gray," Sleepy LaBeef sings on his new album, "but that don't affect the way I feel. There may be some snow up on the mountain, but there's a lot of fire down on the

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hill." The song is Muddy Waters' "Young Fashioned Ways," and LaBeef sounds just like what he is: a restless 59-year-old hillbilly musician singing the blues. The hillbilly and blues elements in LaBeef's music have never quite blended and they bump up against each other as if he were reinventing rock & roll every time he makes a recording. His new one, "Strange Things Happening," comes closer to the unpredictable excitement of LaBeef's live shows than anything he's ever done in a studio.

Coproduced by music historian Peter Guralnick and his brother Jake, "Strange Things Happening" jumps all over the musical map--from Wynn Stewart's Bakersfield-sound "Playboy" to Johnny Cash's rockabilly "You're My Baby," from Ernest Tubb's self-described "Waltz Across Texas" to Sister Rosetta Tharpe's gospelshout title tune. Believe it or not, that's a typical set list for LaBeef, who reportedly knows more than 6,000 songs from all genres.

The common denominator in every performance is LaBeef himself, never subtle but always enthusiastic as he tries to reconcile his lusty taste for the blues and his romantic affection for country in his deep, bellowing baritone and his let-her-rip approach to the guitar. Seldom has he sounded as comfortable and spontaneous in the studio as he does with this small, responsive combo. ---Geoffrey Himes, amazon.com

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