

Carlos Del Junco & The Blues Mongrels – Mongrel Mash (2011)

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1. *The Crazy Bastard* - (4:24) 2. *My Favourite Uncle* - (4:12) 3. *Mojo* - (5:33) [play](#) 4. *Heddon Tadpolly Spook* - (6:42) 5. *The Field* - (9:46) 6. *Slick* - (5:49)

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7. *Mariachi* - (5:54) 8. *A Fool-s Alibi* - (6:46) 9. *Lil- Laptop* - (7:01)

Personnel: Carlos Del Junco - Harmonica, Vocals Kevin Breit - Guitar, Sitar, Mandolin, Dobro Denis Keldie - Organ Henry Heilig - Bass Jorn Andersen – Drums

At first, world champion jazz/blues harmonica player Carlos Del Junco thought a live album would be a fitting follow-up to his Juno-nominated 2010 release 'Steady Movin'.'

But, after growing frustrated with sound quality issues, the two-time Juno nominee decided instead to make a “live album in the studio,” capturing all the rawness, energy and diversity of Del Junco’s live show with the crystal clarity of a studio set. The result is 'Mongrel Mash,' a collection of the old, new, borrowed, and blue, showcasing Del Junco’s mad skills on harp and long-time collaborator Kevin Breit’s singularly quirky musical accompaniment – plus the rock-solid backing of the rest of the Blues Mogrels: Henry Heilig on bass, Jorn Andersen on drums and percussion and Denis Keldie on organ.

The album opens with a swampy, rockin’ Breit original called “The Crazy Bastard” and follows it up with Del Junco’s own “My Favourite Uncle,” an airy, summery-sounding blend of New Orleans and Hawaii. From there, it moves through two more covers and three updated renditions of Del Junco audience favourites before closing with “Lil’ Laptop,” a new-millennium remake of “Rockit 88,” in which fast computers replace fast cars as the focus of macho one-upmanship. Two Mark Sepic compositions from Del Junco’s 2001 album *Up and at ‘Em* get new treatments on *Mongrel Mash*. “Mariachi” goes from a middle-of-the-road Mexican piece to an edgy rockin’ Latin romp in which Del Junco truly makes the piece his own. “The Field,” on the

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other hand, slows down to become a moving melody with a long, atmospheric guitar lead-in courtesy of Breit.

Just like any great live set, the album is punctuated with rip-roaring extended solos and plenty of raw, impassioned playing. Del Junco is one of only a handful of musicians in the world adept at using the overblow technique on diatonic harmonica. The extremely difficult technique, taught to him by jazz virtuoso Howard Levy, allows him to play chromatically on an instrument that is normally meant to be played in one key center – and it is in many ways more expressive and communicative than the mechanized tone produced by the chromatic harmonica. Del Junco's sound ranges from sensitive and soulful Stan Getz-like riffs to raw, rockin' and raunchy solos that prompted one reviewer to call him the Jimi Hendrix of the harm. --- nexusboard.net

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