

Reviews



"Back Porch Blues"

Paul Orta & Little Ray Ybarra
Blues International Records
Produced by Paul Orta

Review by Greg Forest

When it comes to blues that is the “real deal,” Paul Orta walks the walk. This Port Arthur bluesman has been on the Texas blues scene for decades — with over a dozen albums to his credit. This latest release carries a master’s legacy into the 21st Century. Orta is best known for tours with his band The Kingpins, but this new recording is a return to where the blues starts — with

a jug around a kitchen table or a back porch cooking up blues using just the basic ingredients. His new release, “Back Porch Blues” aptly is named. The CD features 12 songs recorded with Little Ray Ybarra in a production with no smoke, no mirrors or net. In these days of over-produced recordings, many forget the sound and origins of true roots blues. This recording is totally raw, down and dirty foot-stompin’ blues.

Orta and Ybarra deliver bare bones blues as performed in small roadhouses, speakeasies, gin mills and street corners where the blues is born, lives and thrives. Every song on the CD, especially the ones penned by Orta, are a tribute to the great blues legends like Willie Dixon, Jimmy Reed, Big Walter, B.B. King and others. Wailing on the blues harp that has gained Orta world renown — combined with Ybarra’s rock-solid guitar work, the duo has painted a sonic canvas that, if you close your eyes, puts you in a smoke-filled bar or roadhouse. These are men that live and love the blues and this CD is a straight shot dead center into the heart of the genre. If authentic blues is what you seek, look no further — pull up a chair and sit yourself down on the back porch.

Paul is on the web at paulortamusic.com, paulortablues.com or friend him on Facebook.

"Continent Lost"

Nautical Nation
Produced by Nautical Nation

Review by Greg Forest

This 4-song EP release from Austin band Nautical Nation (formerly Cougar Bait) that showcases both the performance and writing ability of this young gang of Turks. Each song on the CD displays a different aspect of the band’s direction. “Jenny,” the first cut is mainstream guitar rock reminiscent of some of back beat rock of the ‘80s. The CD has an alternative ring to it and lead singer Jake Asbury delivers a journeyman performance

on all the tunes. “Outlaw” kicks off with a very cool guitar solo from Max Watson, lead guitarist and charges uphill from there. “Dreamboat” kicks off as an acoustic ballad then kicks it up a couple notches into a mainstream rock ballad. “Continent Lost,” the title track, is a strong rock ballad with a sinister butt-kicking bottom delivered by Danny Thomas on bass and Jordan Widener on drums. Nautical Nation created this EP from winning the Austin Battle of the Bands, which considering the amount in talent in Austin is no easy feat. Keep your ears and eyes out for this breakout band.

