

Long Island Blues Society (USA) August 2007

Slow Train-Hans Theessink Blue Groove 1620 2007

Hans Theessink is a preacher. He holds forth strong and righteous, relating the word to his flock. His church is the Blues. No matter the issue of birth some 4000 miles from the Delta, Hans is every inch a bluesman. Heat and emotion channel through him like a lightning rod. The blending of European familiarity with world rhythms and African harmonies makes Hans' sound unique in the world of Blues. Crystalline guitar notes, a lush baritone vocal tone and rich harmonies support a CD of gentility, fire and depth. Opening with a gospel inspired "Slow Train", all the previously mentioned components blend into a dynamic filled story of wanting to get back to home. "Katrina" is a Delta gem that blends Hans' soulful description of New Orleans' hurricane caused apocalypse with a contrapuntal refrain of the brass band signature tune "Li'l Liza Jane." "God Created the World" succinctly and powerfully describes the Bush created aftermath to 9/11, while "Thula Mama" is a blues from close to the source that decries the despoliation of Zimbabwe by Mugabe, surrounded by deep, resounding African vocals. The attitude and energy level bounces with boogie in "Cry, Cry, Cry", "Let Go" steps out like Chuck Berry while National shines like a sun's ray in "Love You Baby." The album roams around Africa, gospel, Delta and rocking but all with the craftsmanship, soul and feel of an old, old soul steeped deep in the dark waters. 9 snaves