



**BOB MALONE**

***Born Too Late***

**Delta Moon**

Bob Malone writes interesting songs about the way things are around us today. When he sings his songs, you get the feeling that he's been reading your mail. There's an instant connection. With this latest album, he borrows from ragtime and country music to alter his blues pattern considerably, providing us with a look back at what creates an interesting song. Malone starts with some part of our daily lives, builds upon that, and creates a song out of an idea. He surrounds each selection with boogie-woogie piano, horns, background singers, and a whole lot more. What makes the album special, however, is Malone's storytelling approach. He convinces.

Guests Paul Richell and Annie Raines join Malone for "Nasty Little Town," a creative description of Los Angeles with our fine weather, our beautiful scenery, the people, the opportunities, the charitable folks and some of the less desirable things too. Richell's National slide guitar adds a swamp texture to the picture and Raines' blues harp provides echoes of that

other LA in our world: Louisiana. Malone's expressive way with a tale brings each point home clearly. Each of his twelve selections offers something different. Malone sings about living, about dreams, about being in love. With a decidedly New Orleans slant, he deals in jazz and blues to bring us a special treat that everyone can enjoy.

-- Jim Santella



**MILLER BROTHERS BAND**

***Tales From a Foundry Town***

**Self-produced**

The contemporary blues/rock of the Miller Brothers Band places its emphasis on lead vocalist Al Jacquez. He sings with a fierce attack that lets each message sink in thoroughly. The whole band collaborated on this program of 12 original songs, picking up on topics close to home. Favorite themes for these songs include true love & romance, getting together for a good time, economic woes, loneliness and livin' the good life.

The band includes Dave Miller on harp and guitar, Tommy Miller on bass, Mark

J. Tomorsky on guitar and bass, Frank Charboneaux on drums, Bob Ramsey on keyboards, and backup vocalists Gia Ciambotti & Sharon Celani. Contemporary in their approach, the band slows for ballads and drives hard for up-tempo romps. "Where Do We Go From Here" asks the question about a relationship, while "Stand to Lose" speculates on what will happen if that relationship comes to a grinding halt. "Rose la Rose" puts a smile on your face thinking about Friday night, while "Crazy" delves once again into the emotional pull of romantic love.

The band's slower ballads fare better than their rockers, the pace runs mechanical with less emotion. More passion is what's needed, of course. After all, the blues is made from emotions that cry out for answers.

-- Jim Santella

**JACKIE PAYNE - STEVE EDMONSON BAND**

***Master of the Game***  
**Delta Groove**

Led by singer Jackie Payne and guitarist Steve Edmonson, this band rides the wave of soul blues and funk that we grew up with. Brook Benton's "I'll Take Care of You" sums it up well, as Payne sings "I know you've been hurt by someone else" and promises to



make things better. From the heart, the band's program of soul blues offers a plea for mercy, a promise of fidelity, and a wish for cooperation. The band's featured artist is Payne, as his vocals hit home and take over. There are selected solo interludes by band members such as Carl Green on alto and tenor saxophone, John Thomas on keyboards, and co-leader Edmonson on guitar.

Edmonson opens "Woman in Kansas City" with a fiery guitar intro that opens the door for Payne's vocal message. He returns for more, dishing out a solo stretch that "sings" Payne's message clearly. The band backs up this theme with a powerful horns and rhythm partnership that drives hard. "A Nickel and a Nail" returns to the program's general formula that features Payne's soulful vocals. For a senior citizen, his voice is remarkably well preserved. He jumps up high and rolls downhill with the flexibility of a youngster and the acumen of a veteran. The band is smart to surround Payne's lead vocals with a powerful mass of sound. It works well.

-- Jim Santella

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