

BLUES BLAST MAGAZINE

REVIEW...BLUES BLAST MAGAZINE

In the latest edition of Blues Revue Bob Margolin writes of the great pleasure he has had from playing with blues musicians from countries where there may be no tradition of blues music but the musicians are skilled and love the blues. Bob could have been writing about Blues Cargo who hail from Greece and have accompanied a long list of visiting US players touring Greece, including Lurrie Bell, Eddie C Campbell, Guitar Shorty and Byther Smith.

Blues Cargo is a four piece band based in Athens. Vocals are handled by bass player Dimitris "Handyman" Ioannou, lead guitar is Stelios Zafeiriou, drums are shared between Stelios Gabrielides and Petros Daktilides and sax is Babis "Saxy Bee" Tsilivigos. Keyboards are added on most tracks by Orestes Vavitsas or George Lagogiannis. The album's title is a reference to the band's first album, released in 1994 and entitled First Delivery.

The CD features 10 originals and four covers. The album opens with Chris Cain's "Drinking Straight Tequila" which was fine with me as I am a big fan of Chris and am surprised that he is not covered more often as his songs often contain interesting lyrics alongside catchy tunes, as is the case here. The other covers are Memphis Slim's "Everyday I Have The Blues" which has the merit of being much more upbeat than is usually the case with this often covered tune and two less well known tunes. The first is an excellent version of a song by little known writer Buzz Clifford entitled "Ain't That I Don't Love You" which has a first class guitar solo and horn arrangement. The second is "I Got The Blues", a tune by Meters guitarist Leo Nocentelli which at 6.17 is the longest cut on the CD and again features some tasty guitar playing and an excellent sax solo.

The self composed material is written by Stelios (4 songs) and Dimitris (6) and covers a good range of blues styles. I liked "95%", a song about dating tall women and "Handy Man", a funkier tune in Albert King mode which extols the DIY skills of the singer (or does he mean something else??). "Emptiness" is more of a ballad with a hint of reggae in the rhythm. "Garbage Bin" is up tempo and moves along well, "Six Hundred Miles" is a rolling blues with nice organ/piano underpinning the rhythm and "I Don't Care" is a funky ending to the CD.

Overall there is a lot to enjoy in this CD. The sound is excellent and the band has clearly paid a lot of attention to the quality of the recording and mastering of the CD. It is varied and the covers are well selected to add balance to the originals. Vocals are good, with just a trace of accent, but that is not intrusive. I do not know how easy it is to purchase the CD but enquiries could be made to the band's website. The CD certainly demonstrates that there is some good blues music being produced in Greece (we should not forget that Joe Bonamassa recorded his last CD there) and these guys

are clearly in the vanguard of that, both on their own and backing visiting acts.

Reviewer John Mitchell is a blues enthusiast based in the UK. He recently attended the Blues Blast Awards in Chicago and had a great time! He was just back in the USA for the January 2011 Blues Cruise!

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Blues Cargo – *Delayed Delivery*

Pan-Vox 2009

14 tracks, 65.51 minutes.

www.bluescargo.gr

www.myspace.com/bluescargo

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