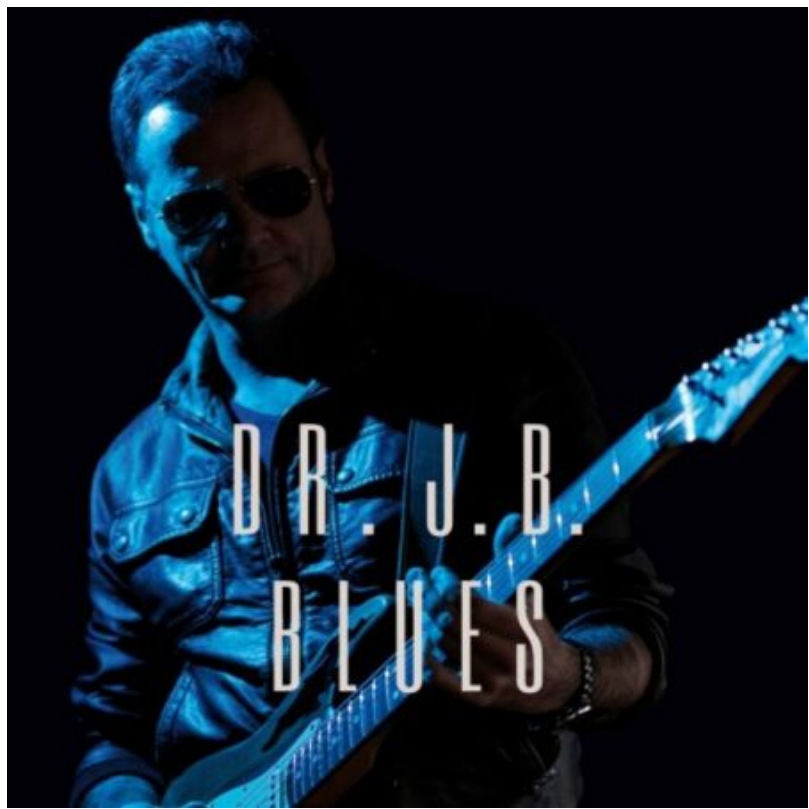




JUNE 26, 2022 BY MARTY GUNTHER

## Dr. J.B. Blues – Bluesy Sky Over Paris | Album Review



**Dr. J.B. Blues – Bluesy Sky Over Paris**

**House Mater Records LC 05699**

[www.dr-jb-blues.com](http://www.dr-jb-blues.com)

**9 songs – 38 minutes**

Based out of Essen, Germany, where he’s a real-life physician who specializes in oncology and hematology, Dr. J.B. Blues – aka Bernd Jung – is a talented guitarist, too, and has made a name for himself producing Blues Rock Against Cancer charity concerts in his homeland. He makes his recording debut with this tasty CD, which pays tribute to two of his heroes, Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

Dr. J.B. picked up the six-string for the first time at age 14, and, from the sound of his fretwork here, it’s obvious that his six-string – a beloved Fender Rory Gallagher-model Stratocaster tuned in E-flat – has been in his hands steadily when not treating patients.

Like Vaughan, his main influence, the shred-free notes he delivers flow smoothly without the necessity of excessive pyrotechnics. He sings in a strong tenor in English with a slight, but noticeable accent, and his on-the-beat lyrics are counterpoint to his behind-the-beat playing.

Delivered in power-blues trio format, Dr. J.B. is backed by bassist Christophe Garreau and percussionist Guillaume Destarac, a veteran rhythm section who’ve recorded several CDs with Paul Personne and Fred Chapellier, two of the most beloved artists in the French blues scene.

They’re joined by keyboard player Tristan Abgrall, who also recorded and mixed this set at L’Auditorium Studios in Paris. It was mastered at Metropolis Studios in London under the supervision of John Davis, who’s best known in the U.S. for remastering early Led Zeppelin releases for modern consumption. This CD captured top honors in three categories at the recent Akademia Music Awards in Los Angeles – best blues album, blues song and alternative rock video.

While all of the tunes here are covers, they’re far more than that. Most carry forward the spirit of the original while not being note-for-note reinterpretations. Like the award-winning opener, Hendrix’s “Little Wing,” shows, the good Doc may be well-versed in the masters but he makes the runs all his own. This one’s delivered at a slower pace, opens quietly with no backing and soars. It flows effortlessly into a faithful take on Stevie Ray’s “Pride and Joy,” which lopes out of the gate, swings throughout and switches up the breaks enough to offer up a little originality, too.

“Tin Pan Alley” helped make Vaughan a superstar when it appeared on his debut LP, but it takes on a completely different feel here. Penned by West Coast bluesman Bob Geddins in the early ‘50s and a Top 10 R&B hit when recorded by Jimmy Wilson, it’s delivered as a molasses-slow ballad that sears for four minutes with barebones backing. “Texas Flood,” which is up next, follows the same format for to open. Penned by St. Louis bluesman Larry Davis before becoming another Vaughan masterpiece, Dr. J.B. turns it into a unique, instrumental burner for the first two minutes, launching into the familiar lyrics and then ending with 90 seconds more of solid fretwork.

Two more Hendrix numbers – “Red House” and “Voodoo Child” – mirror the same formula with the former taking its sweet time before the latter heats things up – before Dr. J.B. ventures into entirely different territory with “Cause We Ended as Lovers.” Stevie Wonder composed it and it debuted on Motown for Syreeta in 1975 before Jeff Beck made it his own. It’s reworked as a soulful, slow-paced instrumental here. An uptempo take on Stevie Ray’s “Scuttle Buttin’” follows before an extended version of “Little Wing” brings the album to a close.

When it comes to CDs chockful of covers, this reviewer finds most tedious at best – but this one’s special. Dr. J.B. Blues delivers a treat for lovers of early blues-rock that walked a tightrope between the two artforms, and he does it in his own way. It’s available online from several vendors.

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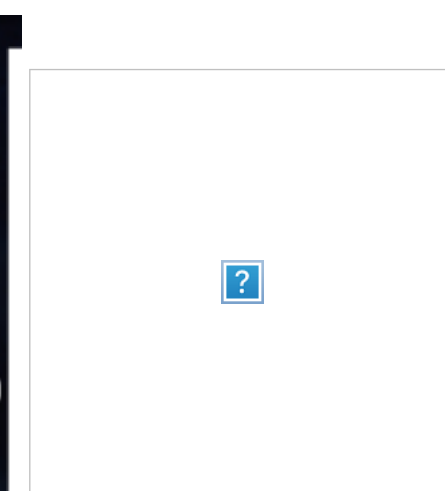
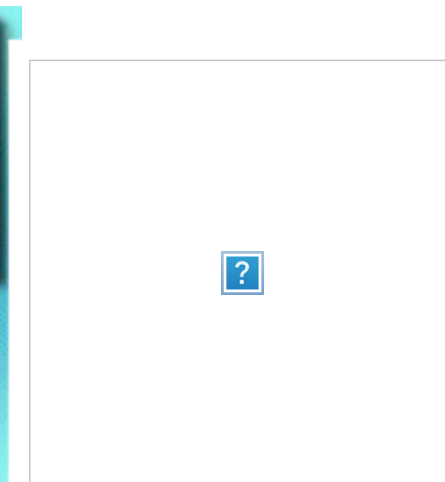
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