



John Valenteyn – Maple Blues Magazine Feb. 2017 Vol. 33 No. 2



Steve Kozak *It's Time* - Self

The small print on the cover points out that **The Harpoonist & The Axe Murderer** are guests on **Steve Kozak's** new, fourth, one. In even smaller print are the names of **Jerry Cook** and **Dave Vidal**. Cook has a very prominent role on the first two songs with his sax work. The basic quartet is Kozak on guitar & vocals, **Dave Webb** on keys, **Roger Brant** on bass and **Chris Nordquist** on drums. Kozak's "Cane Sugar Sweet" is firmly in the west coast jump blues sound as is the fine version of **Jody Williams'** "You May". Cook sits out on Kozak's rhumba blues "Messed Up" but Webb's keyboards shine. **Magic Sam's** "Every Night And Every Day" benefits mightily from **Shawn Hall's** harp work and a stellar guitar solo from Kozak.

Kozak's "Trouble" is a fine new one, with The Axe Murderer, **Matthew Rogers**, (who also produced) on lead guitar over some excellent drumming from Nordquist. **Anson Funderburgh's** "One Woman I Need" is a well-done reminder of a recent classic, Vidal guests on guitar. "That's Cool With Me" has Cook's saxes on board again on a stop time song reminiscent of **Willie Mabon's** "I Don't Know". "Stranger In My Hometown" is not the **Percy Mayfield** classic but a Kozak original.

Little Willie John recorded "Love, Life and Money" in 1956, another fine choice by Kozak and a very good performance. He closes with a tough Chicago blues, "Goin' Fishin'", with Hall blowing some suitably mean harp. Kozak has a couple guest guitarists on board but he turns in solid slide work here. Some very good originals, some well-chosen covers, a superb band, go to www.stevekozakband.com for your copy and if you're visiting Vancouver, make sure you catch a show.

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