
Southwest Blues Magazine - CD Review July 2004

Robin Sylar
Tricked Out
(Top Cat
0204)

This is Sylar's 2nd CD following up his award winning debut *Bust Out*, and boy howdy, it's a hoot. Sylar handles guitar, bass, lap steel, organ, piano, harmonica and vocals and is joined in the endeavor by a great big old group of all stars. Fifteen tracks of wildcat hoop hollering craziness. Yeah, we all remember Sylar from the *Skulls* and the *Doyle Bramhall Band*, and of course, *Krackerjack*, which gets a footnote in the blues history books for this among other reasons (seems there was this young cat in the band by the name of Stevie Ray something). Okay, I'm full of bull. I don't really remember him from the *Doyle Bramhall Band*. But it says it right there in the liner notes so what are you going to do? But it's really Sylar's amazing ability to jam the jazz that should be at the forefront of your brain as you listen to this great new CD.

There are some great choices on board this collection. Check out Sylar tricking out "Iko Iko" or his incredibly delicious take on the Willie Dixon tune "Can't Judge A Book". Sylar puts his own distinct mark on each of the songs, making them his own. The original tunes are rocking as well. Check out "Surf Puppy". Sylar turns out a smoking version of the Rolling Stones tune "Heart of Stone" as well as a killer rendition of the Carman surf standard "Pipeline". There is a wonderful cover of "Sugar Bee" as well as the song that I can no longer hear without wanting to belt Quentin Tarantino in his big ugly mutant chin, "Misirlou". Sylar almost makes me want to forget the association!

Truth be known, this disc is a lot of fun. It's powerful and energetic. It's dazzling. Sylar is an outstanding performer and this CD proves it. Long board or short, catch the next big wave out to your local record hut and snatch this puppy up. - Bill Fountain

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