

LUKE WINSLOW-KING

Luke Winslow-King's latest album is an example of craftsmanship at the highest level, radiating a warmth and timeless elegance. Adept at mixing country, blues, R&B, rock 'n' roll, and folk influences intuitively and masterfully, **Luke** shapes a mood from many sources and shepherds it to a unifying place of acceptance and hope. *Blue Mesa* is both stately and approachable, manifestly proficient but deeply personal.

What sets this album above the singer and guitarist's previous work is how he's absorbed the offerings of a life in music. Born and raised in the Northern Michigan town of Cadillac, he moved to New Orleans at 19 and spent the next 15 years fully immersing himself in the musical waters that flow through there. Now that he's moved on, it is the larger world, and the people and places in it, that enthralls him. From these travels and friendships comes a deeper and richer perspective on the American musical traditions he fell in love with at an early age.

From the first track, **Luke** effortlessly draws the listener into his genre-expansive, dynamic world. "*You Got Mine*," co-written with friend and legendary local musician "*Washboard*" Lissa Driscoll (who passed away in September 2017), enchants with its laid back grace. Delicate touches of Paul Simon and Robert Cray color this paean to unconditional friendship and camaraderie. With crisp guitar lines evoking Mike Campbell, the gospel-tinged call-to-action "*Break Down the Walls*" and the easy-country amble "*After the Rain*" sit astride the solemn and the uplifting. The subtle Stax-inflected soul of the title track casts a disintegrating relationship against the inspirational scenery of the desert southwest. "*Farewell Blues*," a song written after he found out about his late father's cancer diagnosis, has a resolute drifter's wandering heart to guide it.

But no matter where he goes, the current of the Crescent City still tugs at **Luke's** music. The sweaty riffs of "*Thought I Heard You*" are as hot as the beer is cold and the syncopated horns on "*Chicken Dinner*" are a big, playful flirtation. The psychedelic swamp boogie of "*Leghorn Women*" brims with charm, both suave and sinister, while the Tom-Petty-on-the-levee vibe of "*Born to Roam*" makes it a classic-in-the-making road trip anthem.

Blue Mesa was recorded across the globe in the Tuscan fortress village of Lari, Italy and features long-time collaborator and Italian blues guitar dynamo Roberto Luti, Chris Davis of King James and the Special Men, and Mike Lynch (Bob Seger, Larry McCray) on organ, among others.

Luke Winslow-King has collaborated with New Orleans legends and wunderkinds alike, including Dr. John, John Boutté, Luti, Little Freddy King, Washboard Chaz, and Meschiya Lake. In addition to holding down residencies at numerous venues and releasing four studio records over the course of nine years, he has toured extensively in North America and Europe, appearing on notable stages such as Austin City Limits, New Orleans JazzFest, Azkena Rock Festival (Spain), Paradiso (Netherlands), Maverick Festival (UK), and countless more.



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