



SW Blues CD Review

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Liz Melendez Band
 Sweet Southern Soul
 (8007401712)

[Sweet Southern Soul](#)
 by Liz Melendez Band

Getting burnt out from listening to the blues is easy. And, after retreating to that cave for so long, a musical detour is needed. Once achieved, the listener's perspective is fresher. Fitting when listening to Sweet Southern Soul from the Liz Melendez Band. This Atlanta native's musical formula is a conjuration of the classic 70's rock era. The roots are from the past only with a different tree. If you came of age during the 70's, then you can grasp this concept.

Liz has the blues chops to work in studio and live settings. Melendez can brew a cauldron of riff rock that salutes its forefathers. Title track "Sweet Southern Soul" is classic FM radio and opens the floodgates for 70's styled rockers and ballads. Tracing her New Mexican heritage gives "Justice County" an autobiographical flavor while planting the seeds of a newer kind of southern rock.

Hard riffage isn't everything. Liz can handle many forks in the road. Her electric trio can embrace ballads like "Drink From My Cup" and kiss gospel comfortably in the guitar/keyboard driven "Third Degree". The tribal rhythmic beat of "Battle Cry" is the closest thing to feeling a Native America at war. The only blues to be found is in "Do My Thing."

Reconnecting with the past can be a good thing. Sweet Southern Soul is the mirror of a looking glass from a bygone era where music triumphed over image and was not eaten by corporate machines. Liz Melendez uses these songs to tell stories and not be showpieces for over-the-top guitar playing. Once you have this sustenance, the circle is complete.

- Gary Weeks -

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