

Mp3 The Groove Hogs - Wrong Side Of The Street



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10 piece band mixes Blues with hooky Rock 'n Soul vocals, horns, and big guitars. 11 MP3 Songs

BLUES: Rockin' Blues, BLUES: Electric Blues Details: "Horn bands just aren't the happening thing these days. It'll never last....." Boy, how many times do you think the Groove Hogs have heard that? From promoters and agents to other musicians, that sentiment has been muttered to the band in one form or another countless times in the 8 years they've been together. So where did it all start, and why even try to assemble the "impossible band?" Formed in the winter of 1994 as a four-piece blues outfit, the group was initially meant to be a side project. Guitarist Pat Kiel relates, "A few of us were working together in a full-time band playing clubs, weddings and corporate gigs. That got old real fast, so we decided to form The Groove Hogs as a musical release. The band wrote some originals and covered material by Robin Ford, Delbert McClinton, B.B. King, and Albert Collins, to name a few. As the band's ambition grew, so did their size. In early 1996 they added a four-piece horn section, expanding to eight members. Shortly after, they added a trombonist to the lineup. The large addition gave the Hogs a means to expand upon the blues-based music they had been playing. It was also evident that their new sound was just as appealing to their audience as it was to the band itself. By this time the local buzz was loud; loud enough that all members quickly realized this 'part-time project' deserved their full attention. All other musical projects were disbanded. The band turned its attention to more songwriting. Of course, putting nine musicians with varied backgrounds together under one common roof creates the chance for either mass chaos or great opportunity. Fortunately for the band, opportunity won out. This is evident on their first recording. The exploratory collection of music contains an eclectic mix of blues, pop, funk and Latin influences. Released in 1997, this self titled disc produced two singles: "I Want You," a swinging jump blues track written by trumpet player Pat Phalen, and the pop ballad "Dreaming of You," penned by

saxophonist Adam Plamann. The spring and summer of 1999 saw The Groove Hogs continuing to tear their way through a steady diet of live performances. Sharing stages with acts such as Blues Traveler, George Thoroughgood, Edgar Winter, Papa Chubby and Brian Lee, their shows became the proving ground for much of the material that was written for their sophomore offering entitled "No Small Feat". It was also at this time that the band found blues/soul vocalist Ron "Handbag" Hanson and added him to the mix. Handbag's whiskey smooth vocal approach solidified the growing focus of the band to ground itself in the blues-branded rock 'n soul approach they had found. Released in July of 2000, "No Small Feat" was very well received. Blues Bytes Magazine called it 'one of the best indie releases of the year'. Along with the new record, the band's constant performing found them honing their sound in front of growing audiences at consistently larger shows across the country. Eventually, "No Small Feat" found its way into the hands of legendary producer Jim Gaines. Impressed with the disc, Gaines readily agreed to produce the Hog's third release, "Wrong Side of the Street". Scheduled for release nationwide in March of 2002, "Wrong Side of the Street" paints a picture of a band that is not just surviving, but thriving. The recent addition of Steve Cooper to the band is testament. Cooper's huge vocal style is second only to his jaw dropping tenor sax work. Along with Hanson, he shares lead vocal responsibilities on the new CD (bringing the actual number of vocalists in the band to eight). So how did this band last out? "Together, we've always just loved the music we're playing. It's that joy that keeps any band together" says keyboardist Brian Gruselle. "Besides, it's the damndest thing, but we actually all get along. It's like a big family. And it's the first thing people notice when they see us live. They can't believe how much fun we have making music together." Ten strong for eight years. Go figure

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