

Mp3 John Platania - Lucky Dog

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Roots rock from a veteran musician / guitarist to Van Morrison, Randy Newman, etc. 13 MP3 Songs

ROCK: Roots Rock, POP: Quirky Details: JOHN PLATANIA After spending years as a guitarist for Van Morrison, Bonnie Raitt, Randy Newman, Judy Collins, Don McLean, Natalie Merchant and Chip Taylor, the gifted John Platania steps to the front of the stage as vocalist on his first solo outing, LUCKY DOG.

John has been a player throughout Van Morrison's musical history from the classic Moondance album to the more recent Philosopher's Stone on which he co-wrote two songs. His friendship with Van continues to this day. In 1997, John reunited with Chip Taylor, composer of many hits including two of the biggest in pop music history: Angel Of The Morning and Wild Thing. He and Chip are currently working together on a John Platania instrumental album for Chip's Train Wreck Records label. As a producer, John has

helped other artists realize their musical vision. He collaborated with bluesman Guy Davis on his last two CD's for Red House Records. All songs on LUCKY DOG were interpreted, arranged and produced by John and written by Elwood H. Smith, executive producer on the project. For more information about

John, the Lucky Dog CD and his other projects, visit John's website at: [johnplatania](#) Lucky Dog Reviews: I should have written a review long ago but Lucky Dog stayed on 'repeat' whilst I attempted to do justice to a diverse and compelling collection of songs and guitar styles from musician's musician John Platania on this, his debut album. I got caught up with his voice - husky, cracked and confidential - and his guitar

(electric and acoustic) - fingerpicking, an aching twang and sumptuous slide - as they journeyed through Rock, R&Bo Diddley, Country and Blues territory. The songs are all interpreted, arranged and produced by master-axeman Platania and written by Elwood H. Smith (who plays mandolin on Fire ...). There are

twelve memorable songs and one instrumental, revealing a breadth of emotion, conflict and quirkiness which I found hypnotic . Whispers of death (I Do Believe); bruised life (I Can Stand Alone, It Ain't Gonna Cost You), powerful tales of tragedy (Fire In Arkansas, Little Nazi Boy), and a kind of happy affirmation

(Lucky Dog, Numero Uno). The Dog motif keeps re-occurring: the penultimate track Black Dog Bad Luck; the album title; artwork and label name! Platania's spent years as guitarist with Van Morrison (from Moondance to Philosophers Stone), Bonnie Raitt, Randy Newman, Judy Collins, Don McLean, Natalie

Merchant and is now touring with old friend Chip (Wild Thing/Angel of the Morning) Taylor. If you've not heard of John Platania before, now is the time to discover him for yourself - either on tour with Chip or on CD. --Sue Cavendish, netrhythms.co

It's About Dog-gone Time: The Rhythm and News Interview With John Platania By George A. Fletcher

Guitarist John Platania is used to being approached by famous people asking him to play guitar or produce their records. There are lots of them out there, such as Van Morrison, Don McLean, Bonnie Raitt, and Chip Taylor. So when artist Elwood Smith asked John to help him get his songs recorded, it seemed "like another production job," he said. But that's not quite the way it turned out for the guitarist, who after 30 some-odd years is just getting around to his debut CD, "Lucky Dog.?" It also didn't turn out to be another production job for the cartoon artist. Smith, widely known for his offbeat visual humor that's been featured in just about every major magazine and newspaper in the world, is also a guitarist and songwriter who served as the CD's executive producer. "At first I thought that I would help him get a few songs recorded. Then he asked me to do a whole album. I said, 'Yeah, but with the caveat that I do what I want (with the material),' he said. Platania explained he "kind of rewrote things" as he went. "I destroyed his music!" he laughed. "Elwood writes these really dark songs. I wasn't frightened but the lyrics are scary. His lyrics are what really sold me. The way he writes made me think differently--outside of the box." Perfect Match

Smith said that his interest in singer/songwriter-oriented music is connected to his love of "Leonard Cohen, Bob Dylan, Tom Waits and Randy Newman, but I'm having a ball checking out others like John Hiatt, Julie Miller--anyone who writes unusual, unpredictable, interesting songs." Platania said he prefers to work alone but there were exceptions with Smith's project. "People hire me and leave me alone. That's best for me. But Elwood had a lot of input like in the articulation of lyrics. He also has great ears and was really great with mixing." Platania said the CD, which is getting a lot of European airplay and Internet sales, contains some pretty desperate stories, about desperate people. But these stories ring true to life, such as the reggae-tinged "Black Dog Bad Luck," the story of a homeless man who succumbs to a life of booze, pills, bad food and the elements, behind the dumpster at the A&P, and "Little Nazi Boy," about the cycle of hatred begetting hatred. Saddest and most thought provoking of this collection is "I Do Believe," written in the wake of a loved one's passing. Smith's lyric recalls that person's last words, "I do believe I hear voices on the other side / I can see loved ones gathered in the light / I do believe I hear voices on the other side." The song is also performed instrumentally as the CD's closer. "Lucky Dog" is both the CD's title and a curious love song. "I've been in

love / I've been in hate / I've been the quarry and I've been the bait / I've been a hero, and I've been a fool / Since you met me and I met you." Platania and company do a solid turns with the bluesy "Don't Nobody Know," rock ("Numero Uno," "I Am Time") and he delivers equally well in an acoustic settings, on such tunes as "Love Stay Away" and "I Can Stand Alone." Though known for his guitar playing, Platania can also sing. He delivers each track's vocal with a natural sincerity that moves between a whisper and growl, just perfect on tracks such as "It Ain't Gonna Cost You" and "Fire In Arkansas." After years sweetening other people's music, John Platania is still sweetening other people's music. That's what he does best. But this time, with "Lucky Dog," he gets to call it his own because he made it his own. "Lucky Dog" is a wonderful collaboration between two immensely talented individuals, but Platania's world-class guitaring and production makes it stand out as a natural selection of AAA radio programmers and fans of music with brains and heart. --George Fletcher May 31 2002 "A listen to 'I Can Stand Alone' and 'I Do Believe' might beg comparisons with oft-unplugged pickers like Richard Thompson or Nick Drake; it's a reference that has to be rethought, though, as the R&B bravado of 'Don't Nobody Know' kicks in. 'Fire In Arkansas' might recall the stark, spare sound of Bruce Springsteen's 'Nebraska', but think again as (John) conjures up a Bo Diddley beat for 'Little Nazi Boy.' " --Southern Dutchess News (from John Darcy's review of "Lucky Dog") My favorite CD of 2001!, August 3, 2002 Reviewer: Off the Wall Records, Abilene, Texas If the name JOHN PLATANIA doesn't immediately ring a bell, don't feel bad; however, if (like me) you're a serious VAN MORRISON fan, you're already familiar with his guitar work. A longtime Morrison collaborator and charter member of Morrison's Caldonia Soul Orchestra, the talents of this veteran journeyman guitarist have also graced the careers of such upper echelon music performers as RANDY NEWMAN, BONNIE RAITT, DON McLEAN and NATALIE MERCHANT. For any who prefer a point of reference as to Platania's personal guitar and vocal style, I would suggest RICHARD THOMPSON, of whom I am also a big fan. Ironically, though his professional career now spans five decades, "Lucky Dog" is Platania's first solo recording; thus, it well represents the maturity, the discipline, the mastery of time and space one would expect from a musician of Platania's caliber. Though Platania produced and arranged every track, each song is unique in sound, mood and technique. And what *great* and unforgettable songs they are! Noted illustrator Elwood H. Smith, the project's executive producer, wrote every song and plays mandolin. Though fond of every track, my favorite songs are Fire In Arkansas (an instant classic), I Do Believe, I Can Stand Alone, I Am Time (reminiscent of U2), The Hurricane and Black

Dog Bad Luck. Platania expertly exploits the considerable talents of bassist Steve Bartles, accordionist Zoe B. Zack, drummers Brian Doherty and T Xiques, flutist Paul Marianthal, and keyboardist Jon Rosen. If your interest and tastes in music run deeper than most, and if you like lyrics that have real substance, I highly recommend that you check out "Lucky Dog." --Roger Kirkpatrick, Off the Wall Records "Guitarist Platania seems to have absorbed a subtlety of playing that comes from his years with Van Morrison, Randy Newman, Bonnie Raitt and others." -Southern Dutchess News "Platania is a master of a number of guitar styles, from a bluesy Delta twang to whining rock licks on the Stratocaster..." --Syracuse Herald American

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