

# Mp3 Donna Hopkins Band Live - Blues: Rockin' Blues

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Hard hittin' rootsy southern rock/funk/blues three piece out of Atlanta Georgia. 11 MP3 Songs BLUES: Rockin' Blues, ROCK: Roots Rock Details: Donna Hopkins is a force of nature. Long a part of the Atlanta music scene, the Donna Hopkins Band is poised to break out with their second album, Donna Hopkins Band - Live. Donna's music comes straight from her heart - southern roots music from a woman's point of view. Selected as Atlanta's Best Blues Artist in 2002 by Atlanta Magazine, Donna has assembled a trio of kindred spirits for this amazing band. With Donna on guitar, Richie Jones on drums, and Brian Ashley Jones (no relation) on bass, the Donna Hopkins Band has truly solidified. Released to critical raves in February 2003, Donna's first album, Free To Go, attracted a legion of fans to the Donna Hopkins Band. Alert listeners will discover a live, hidden bonus track on Free To Go at the very end of the CD, a soulful version of the old blues standard, "Time To Travel." Noting the joy of her live performance, Hittin' the Note reviewer Rob Johnson remarked, "Donna sings with unrestrained roadhouse soul and lays down a great slide solo as beer glasses clink in the background." The excitement of this live performance carries over to the new live record. The power of a three-piece band is nowhere more evident than in a live setting, so it was only natural for Donna to choose this element for her follow-up record. A sold-out crowd at Smith's Olde Bar greeted the Donna Hopkins Band last March in Atlanta, and warm energy filled the air. The first cut is "In Spite of Yourself," written by Donna after the Iraq invasion. It's a funky, hard-rocking message song and the three musicians quickly make a statement - they have come to play hard! Donna's gutsy vocals and crisp guitar are real attention grabbers. Mixed perfectly with Richie's punchy percussion and Brian's in-your-face bass at butt-kicking volume, Donna's tone is Mulish, raw and raunchy - sort of a "Gov't Hopkins." Richie Jones had played in a band with the guys from Tishamingo and it was the live cut on Free To Go that brought him to Donna's attention. When choosing the selection for the bonus track, she'd forgotten that Richie had sat in that night - her first reaction when hearing it again was to give him a call! Richie says the Band means the world to him - it is so rewarding to release emotions with an artist like Donna. The three can communicate without words, like they are a single entity. The powerful and driving "Dirty Alabama Road" tells a story from Donna's childhood when she stumbled across a

bootlegger's stash. Donna's remarkable tone in this song and on the whole album is from a 1989 tobacco sunburst Les Paul Custom Lite running through a 1968 Ampeg VT-40. Next up is an emotional "Don't Ask Why." The lead cut from Free To Go, here an extended jam at the end features Donna's rich slide work. Bass player Brian Ashley Jones from Nashville brings another skill to the band with his songwriting. He says it's very exciting to have Donna as his muse - her voice is so magical that he can hear it in his head and catch the vibe of what she's creating. The two first collaborate on "Let Love Go," an expressive song with an infectious hook. Brian also plays mandolin, adding a new dimension to Donna's most requested tune, "Everything Money Can't Buy." The backup vocals blend so well here that the listener is carried away. "Free To Go" follows with an overpowering, raw emotional intensity. The three artists are hittin' the note together, captured in crystal-clear perfection by Dynasonic recording engineer and producer Andy Reilly. "U-Haul You Back" is an up-tempo, countrified rocker with an infectious beat. Also from the first album is "Thunderin' in the Thickets." The longest song on the CD, it is a guitar-jammin', power trio tour de force. "Meet Me in the River," another Donna and Brian composition, tells a story about Donna's grandmother, Beulah May. "Anything" sounds like it could have been an old blues standard and Donna's voice brings poignant meaning to the wistful lyrics. The final cut, "Hit Me," was co-written by all three band members and shows the wonderful promise of the music yet to come. Donna Hopkins is a diminutive woman with a big voice - and an even bigger heart. The Donna Hopkins Band is a tight, cohesive trio whose music transcends boundaries. Donna Hopkins Band - Live is a CD that will reward the listener each time it is played and belongs in every music lover's collection.

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