

the **DIPLOMATS** of **SOLID SOUND**

Diplomats of Solid Sound **Pork Chop EP** **Estrus**

Iowa's own DOSS are back with a killer EP on the legendary Estrus label. The first thing you notice about this disc (before even listening to it) is the amazing sleeve by Designer Art Chantry. Chantry has long been the mind behind the incredible sleeves on Estrus records. The disc is packaged to look like a grease-stained brown paper sack (like you might get a pork chop in...get it).

Once you get inside the sack, to the music, things get even better. The Diplomats secret weapon has always been keyboardist Nate Basinger, who can massage a Hammond with the best of them. The title cut 'Pork Chop' is a slow, funky treat with some tight drums (by Jim Viner) and a nice 'live' sound. At almost 5 minutes, the band gets to stretch out and groove.

The flip side of the disc features 'Apple Jack Hat' and 'Getting' Down With The Count'. 'Apple Jack Hat' is a fantastic, Meters-inspired groover with some excellent guitar and bass work by Doug Roberson and Dustin Conner respectively. I especially like the way they lay on the reverb at the end of the tune.

'Getting Down With the Count', built around a circular guitar riff, is a slow and sweaty grinder. Hopefully this is only a taste on the way to a full course LP.

Funky16 Corners

Diplomats of Solid Sound **"Willie's Theme"**

Once, there was The Groove, and it belonged to Booker T. And The MG's. It was resonant as a heartbeat and as unselfconsciously sexual as heavy breathing. The Groove had no use for demographics; everyone grooved to it. And, The Groove fell on hard times. Funk made a parody of it, disco reduced it to a beat, the Dead drove it into a rut and punk threw it out the window for lack of competent bass players. But now, from the pop-culture wilderness of Iowa, the Diplomats have delivered into the new millennium living witness to the ensemble playing, commitment to melody and unquestioned primacy of seamless rhythm-section partnership that defined The Groove. And it is good. [Prescription]

-Linda Ray **Magnet Sep/Oct '01**

Diplomats of Solid Sound **"Instrumental Action Soul" CD**

A groovy CD of mod instrumentals – played with a style that mixes up soul jazz grooving with a bit of garage rock sensibilities! The Diplomats hail from Iowa City – but they've got a groove that's pure east coast circa 1965. Hammond, guitar, bass, and drums all cook together nicely – in a groovy 60s mode on tracks that include "High's

Hefner," "El Corazon Negro," "Bullfrog Boogaloo," "Stoned Preacher," "Hot Stick," "Soul Straw," and "Mobley Turnaround."

-Dusty Groove America

Diplomats of Solid Sound **"Instrumental Action Soul" CD**

Forgive my lack of worldly knowledge in this vast wasteland that is so entwined with time, experience, influence, and domination. I've written some reviews and read a great many more that insist on drawing a roadmap of how some spark of genius 80 years ago was responsible for what I'm enjoying today. What a waste.

The Diplomats bring an inner peace that defies such comparisons. They are at once fresh and familiar. This is music for a sophisticated beach movie. Soulful Hammond, clever guitar, root down bass, and sexy drums. How that last part is possible, I'; never know! They join a distinguished short list of unassuming preservationists that know soul, blues, and funk in a way that has meaning and reaches tour mind, leaving you with thoughts and not simulated Alzheimer's. More importantly, it is music that feels really good – liberating (I think you know what I mean!).

There seems to be a revolution on with small bands of rebels performing amazing feats of daring without a safety net. What a great time to be alive!

-Kahlil Breithaupt

Diplomats of Solid Sound **Instrumental Action Soul**

A four piece Hammond based outfit hailing from Iowa City USA, consisting of band members Nate Basinger (Hammond & Wurilitzer Piano) Dustin Conner (Bass) Doug Roberson (Guitars, Vocals & Percussion) & Jim Viner (Drums Percussion)

A tight band that lean to more of a JTQ sound rather than the more R&B heavy Nick Rossi Set / Gene Drayton Unit. There is also a very noticeable Booker T & The MG's influence throughout with Doug Robersons guitar work very reminiscent of the choppy riffs of Steve Cropper, especially on "Stoned Preacher", "Hot Stick", & "Soul Slaw".

Stand out track for me is "Mobley Turnaround" which has the addition of some cool Sax by Bob Thompson.

A Good if not outstanding cd that could benefit with the addition of some Vocals in my opinion, to break things up a bit. That said, well worth a punt of the Hammond Organ sound is your thing.

-Ian Rowland **Modculture.com (May 2002)**

The Diplomats of Solid Sound **Bullfrog Boogaloo/Willie's Theme**

Straight outta Iowa comes a band that is breathing down the neck of Sugarman 3 and The Nick Rossi Set. Richard Karstrom is willing to testify.

The Diplomats of Solid Sound, now there's a band whose funky sounds will make your ears smile and your feet move. I must admit that I earlier didn't think of Iowa City, Iowa as Downtown Soulville – but after spinning this 45 I'm willing to testify that the funk moves in mysterious ways. Bobby Patterson once said that "Broadway Ain't Funky No More", well whatever the case may be regarding Broadway, Iowa City sure seems funky to me.

What is funk anyway? Link most genres of music, there are a few different sub-genres doing the rounds. I'm not gonna make a list of all possible kinds of funk, don't worry. Let's just say that this writer doesn't want you to think Bootsy Collins and 25 minutes of show-off jamming experiments.

If you enjoy the funky soulful tunes played by Mr. Fine Wine on his radio show "Downtown Soulville" (hey, déjà vu!) then you're gonna dig this. Music that does indeed take care of business, without overdoing things. In addition, with a title like "Bullfrog Boogaloo" You're going right up my alley. Both tunes are written by the band as well, in case you were wondering.

The press kit talks about influences being Booker T & the MG's and Meters amongst others. I'm definitively not gonna argue with that, no way Jose.

This is the debut 45 from a band that's been blasting out tunes on the live circuit since the fall of 1999. If this single is anything to go by – and why shouldn't it – then sometime in May heads all over the globe can be seen nodding, and feet will start to shuffle around, when a full length album of soulful and groovy Hammond sounds will be released.

The only thing I wonder right now is if organ player Nate Basinger is related to Kim Basinger or not...

-Richard Karstrom **Uppers.net (April 2001)**

The Diplomats of Solid Sound **Alligator Boogaloo 7" EP** **Butterfly Records 2002**

Thanks to Butterfly Records for releasing this great band. I enjoy their debut single and CD and I'm glad to hear more. This is one of the grooviest bands I ever heard. Their music is so perfect, but warm and it makes me melt when I listen to it. If you like to relax listening to Booker T and The MG's, Meters or if you like to watch Blaxploitation movies – you will like The Diplomats of Solid Sound. Great organ, great songs, great musicians and production brought to perfection. This band leave you speechless.

No Brains Zine