

"Stand Back " - Charley Musselwhite (hca, voc); Harvey Mandel (g); Barry Goldberg (p, org); Bob Anderson (b); Fred Below Jr. (dr) Pure Pleasure VSD79232

Charley Musselwhite's Southside Blues Band: Stand Back

Format: LP / standard sleeve

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Vanguard may have spelled his name wrong (he prefers Charlie or Charles), but the word was out as soon as this solo debut was released: Here was a harpist every bit as authentic, as emotional, in some ways as adventuresome, as Paul Butterfield. Similarly leading a Chicago band with a veteran Black rhythm section (Fred Below on drums, Bob Anderson on bass) and rock-influenced soloists (keyboardist Barry Goldberg, guitarist Harvey Mandel), Musselwhite played with a depth that belied his age - only 22 when this was cut! His gruff vocals were considerably more affected than they would become later (clearer, more relaxed), but his renditions of "Help Me", "Early in the Morning", and his own "Strange Land" stand the test of time. He let his harmonica speak even more authoritatively on instrumentals like "39th and Indiana" (essentially "It Hurts Me Too" sans lyrics) and "Cha Cha the Blues", and his version of jazz arranger Duke Pearson's gospel-tinged "Cristo Redentor" has become his signature song - associated with Musselwhite probably more so than with trumpeter Donald Byrd, who originally recorded the song for Blue Note. Goldberg is in fine form (particularly on organ), but Mandel's snakey, stuttering style really stands out - notably on "Help Me", his quirky original "4 P.M.," and "Chicken Shack," where he truly makes you think your record is skipping

Production: Samuel Charters

STEREO

VED-7922

STAND BACK!

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VANGUARD

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