

The HooDoo Loungers – ‘So Beautiful’ [Album Review]

BY DAVID VAN DER MERWE - 01/19/2022



Anything as unashamedly New Orleans as The HooDoo Loungers deserves to be cherished. From their jazz-street-funk mashup sound to their respectful reworking of Americana roots classics on their latest album, *So Beautiful*, right through to their description of said sound as a “musical gumbo”... the whole ride is a joyful celebration of the Big Easy. Think festivals, raucous street life and a melting pot of cultural inferences, all set to ballsy brass grooves and you’re well on your way to understanding the context behind this album.

The actual experience, however, is another story. Telling someone about the absolute pleasure the HooDoo Loungers express through their music is like trying to describe the subtle flavour profiles of French cuisine to a life-long chain smoker. There’s so much happening, that engagement is essential to grasping the full nuanced palette of *So Beautiful*. Also present is a massive swell of authenticity and love that drives me to include ‘genuine emotion’ as an instrument in its own right in what is already a well-rounded complement of guitar, upright bass, sax, trombone, trumpet, sax, keys and vocals. That emotion carries through into the tipping of the hat to those gone before, in the shape of the nine classic pieces of American music tradition being reworked in a HooDoo Lounger style that make up the bulk of the record . . .

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