



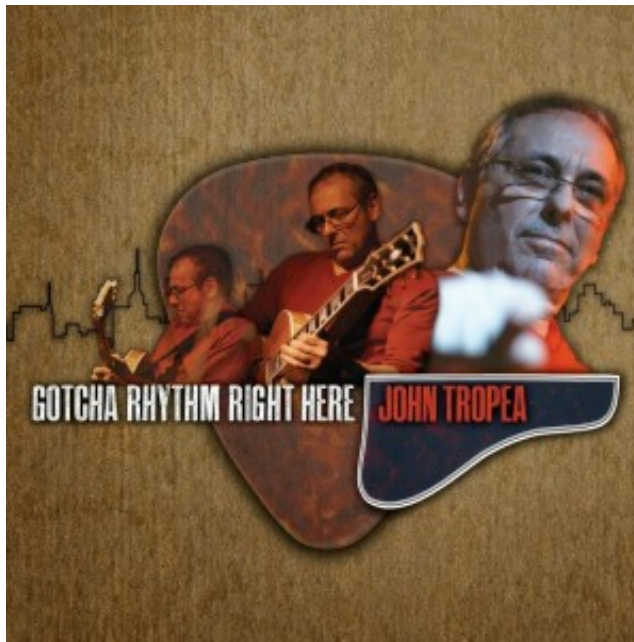
JAZZDOR



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John Tropea – Gotcha Rhythm Right Here

Chances are pretty good that you have a record or two in your collection where **John Tropea** plays guitar. Just to give you a small selection: he has played on the 1972 **Roberta Flack & Donny**



Hathaway album, on albums in the 70s by **Lou Donaldson, Luiz Bonfá, Ashford & Simpson, Deodato, Jon Lucien, Blue Mitchell, Paul Simon, Sister Sledge, Melba Moore, Phoebe Snow, Esther Phillips, Lalo Schifrin, Laura Nyro, Michael Franks, Enchantment, Art Farmer, Randy Crawford, or Ray**

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Barretto. The list goes on for records in the 80s by **Patti Austin**, Maureen McGovern, **John Klemmer**, and **Chaka Khan**. And in between, he still found the time to record some solo albums, the first one in 1976 and now he comes up with his 11th record to date.

And it's as if all his Soul, Funk, and Jazz influences have been distilled for the project which happens to include an amazingly funky brass section courtesy of **Don Harris**, **Lew Soloff**, **Glenn Drews**, **Randy Brecker** (trumpet), **Larry Farrell** (trombone), **Bob Malach**, **Dave Mann** (tenor sax), and **Lou Marini**, **Bill Harris** (alto sax), with **Roger Rosenberg** and **Dave Riekenberg** on bari and **Scott Robinson** on bass sax.

The album opens with a two-minute jam by John and his writing and producing partner **Chris Palmaro** who also plays piano, organ, bass, and drums. It's the title track of the album which gets the full treatment as Part 2 towards the end of the disc complete with a thumping Hammond B3, full brass section, and very hidden vocal as-libs by **James "D-Train" Williams**. There is a true 70s Fusion vibe on "Black Eyed G's", written by the equally legendary pianist **Leon Pendarvis**, or the funky bari-driven "Soul Surfin'" complete with catchy handclaps. Most of the tunes here simply make a lot of fun like the pulsating "7th Avenue South" with a driving percussion by **Roger Squitiero** and another true session musician legend, **Neil Jason** on bass (who is sharing the bass chair with another hero, **Will Lee**).

The sultry "Chili Wa Man" is another delightful mover which instantly grabs you. A welcome change of pace and tempo is "Always In My Heart", a sort of mix between classic CTI sound and **Pat Metheny**, and including some fine flute work by **Lou Marini**. An entrancing piece. Guest guitarist **Hannah Rubinstein** plays some mean licks on the bluesy, surging "Side By Two" and "Bikini Beach" is really a sweltering cut with blistering horns. **Randy Brecker** has an effective solo on the soulful and imaginative "NYC Direct 2014" which is a forceful and bubbly tune. John's playing throughout the record is superb without ever showing off – his solos well-placed and witty.

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Steve Gadd is the funky drummer on the cool “Hip To The Hips” and there is a bonus track that has its charme but mostly left me cold because of its Reggae beat which is really not on my wavelength. Truly an all-star album with a big chunk of fun.

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