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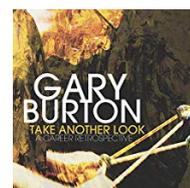
Little Feat – Time Loves A Hero – Speakers Corner

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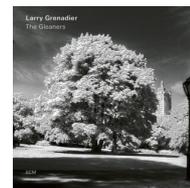
by Audiophile Audition | Mar 7, 2019 | Jazz CD Reviews, SACD & Other Hi-Res Reviews | 0 comments

Little Feat – Time Loves A Hero – Warner Brothers Records (1977)/Speakers Corner (2019) 180-gram audiophile stereo vinyl, 35:23 **:**

Speakers Corner has released a re-



ECM — Larry Grenadier



Steven Isserlis



mastered 180-gram
vinyl of Little feat's sixth
studio album for



Warners. *Time Loves a*

Hero was recorded

during a time of

transition, one of Little

Feat's dysfunctional periods. Their primary songwriter, George contributed (as composer) to just two of the recorded tracks.

But the overall superb musicianship of this *Rock And Roll Hall Of*

Fame worthy band is on full display. Side 1 opens with a high

voltage funk rocker ("Hi Roller") by Paul Barrere. Featuring

George on gritty lead vocal, the pumped up jam features

Barrere's electric guitar, muscle from Tower Of Power horns

and a smoking organ from Billy Payne. This cut burns with

intensity. The title track is a is a textured Latin-infused jazz rock

jam with Payne handling lead vocals. The musical tapestry is

expansive with keyboards, marimba and tight guitar chords.

For those concerned with the smaller footprint of the band's

founder's, "Rocket In My Pocket" should answer the call. Solely

written by George, the coyly sultry lyrics and vocal delivery are

brilliant. Any Little Feat fan can imagine him onstage, hand on

hips moaning, "...the music was hot, my baby was not!". The

inherent funky syncopation (with nimble congas) and

trademark slide guitar is vintage Feat.

At the other end of the spectrum is the jazz fusion-like

instrumental "Day At The Dog Races". The foray into this genre

was a source of contention between George and the group. (In

many instances, he would exit the stage during this number).

But the instrumental largesse of Payne, Barrere, Hayward,

Clayton and Gradney is showcased on this six-and-a-half

minute jam. With a Spanish classical guitar intro, the band

explodes into a furious high energy jam. Distorted guitar and

electric piano riffs add a multi-faceted approach. There are

jazzy chord modulations and fierce rhythm (Hayward, Clayton

and Gradney). Barrere's solos are potent, while Payne offers a

stunningly lyrical acoustic piano before the cascading finish.

Side 2 starts with classic Paul Barrere country funkiness on

"Old Folks Boogie". The southern vibe is palpable, especially on

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Barrere's husky vocal and Payne's New Orleans piano runs. "Red Steamliner" reverts to jazz rock. Payne's reedy soulful vocal lead is framed by fusion progressions, guitars, electric piano and keyboards. All of the elements are rooted in 70's aesthetics with high-end production (including interwoven backup vocals by Doobie Brothers members Patrick Simmons and Michael McDonald). This musical largesse is what has kept this band intact (with some personnel changes) 40 years after the death of Lowell George. The mercurial leader returns to the spotlight on "New Delhi Freight Train". George's impeccable "country boogie" depth is encapsulated in his heartfelt singing. The inherent hypnotic grooves that epitomize this iconic American band are enhanced by string accents. There is significant chemistry as George's indelible vocal phrasing elevates this number. A Barrere/George composition "Keepin' Up With The Joneses" continues the melancholic funk. It is ironic that both of these *Southern Roots* practitioners are Southern California natives. Here, Barrere embraces a "Dixie Drawl" and Tower Of Power (with a saxophone solo by Lenny Pickett) adds to the aural tapestry. The finale, "Missin' You" is pure folk Barrere (with dobro by Jeff "Skunk" Baxter).

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Speakers Corner has done their customary superior vinyl re-mastering to 180-gram vinyl. The stereo separation is flawless. The focus on vocals and finer detail (acoustic guitar, piano, conga) is handled with technical delicacy. As the musical landscape expands (horns, strings, keyboards) the mix is crystalline, never muddled. The iconic impressionistic artwork of Neon Park is vibrant in 12" front and back cover. *Time Loves A Hero* may not among the essential Little Feat albums, but it is great music!

Musicians:

Paul Barrere – guitar, vocals; Lowell George – slide guitar, vocals; Ken Gradney – bass guitar; Ritchie Hayward – drums, percussion, vocals; Bill Payne – keyboards, oberheim, Moog synthesizer, marimba & vocals; Jeff "Skunk" Baxter – dobro guitar; Fred Tackett – madocello, guitar; Patrick Simmons – acoustic guitar, vocals; Michael McDonald – vocals; with special guests Tower Of Power Horn Section; string arrangements –