

THE BILLS – 'TIL THE BLUES HAVE GONE

It must be with mixed emotions that New York-born bass player Bill Troiani reads yet another review that mentions his twelve years association with Detroit's Eddie Kirkland, both live and on record. It automatically gives him blues credibility, but he has done so much since, so my apologies for this Bill. The other Bill here is Bill Booth, born in Maine, a nicely relaxed singer and guitarist (and multi-instrumentalist) with more of a leaning to Americana than his colleague. Both men now call Norway home; they play regularly on the blues circuit there and across Scandinavia. Though their paths have crossed before, and they have already worked as a duo previously, this is their first time recording together. A very fine set it is too: **tight, controlled, focussed blues** on a setting that sounds, deceptively perhaps, like a warm, informal, intimate session. To get an idea of the type of sounds here, listen to the latent power of Driving Rain, with its shades of Dire Straits in the vocals and guitar work, though Booth's fiddle playing adds a different sound (as it does elsewhere). It is followed by the straight blues of Still Might Be Around, which also has a hint of Western Swing. Or lend an ear to their cover of Son House's Grinning In Your Face, that will convince just about any reader, and if it doesn't, well, they follow it up with the early John Lee Hooker sound of Didn't Know What I Had, fantastic. This is a very listenable, individual blues album with a distinctive twist. It shows just how well these guys know their stuff and is well worth your time and money.

- NORMAN DARWEN