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Saturday August 1 109

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### DEBORAH BONHAM *Duchess* Warner/Rhino (2008)

Deborah Bonham returns with her third album and she is back on a major label. Very much like her 2004 release 'The Old Hyde' it is a mix of blues, soul and folk with a smattering of big name guests plus her backing band features ex-Humble Pie drummer Jerry Shirley.



Highlights include her duet with Paul Rodgers on 'Hold On' (Jason Bonham pops up on drums on this one as well), a nice slow number that allows both vocalists to shine. The Sutherland Brothers cover 'Chains' makes an interesting diversion into folk rock with Fairport Convention's Dave Pegg adding mandolin.

The closing song 'Blue' is a lovely reflective number with BJ Cole on pedal steel. Deborah Bonham really pours her heart and soul into the slower numbers such as this one. Personally I would have liked a real blues rock stomper although 'Grace' comes near and 'Duchess and the Shufflemeister' which features some tidy guitar playing.

Another strong set of tunes and it is always a delight to her Deborah Bonham sing with an added bonus this time of one of my all time favourite vocalist Paul Rodgers guesting on one song. Backed by a top class set of musicians it makes for a rewarding and enjoyable listen especially for lovers of blues in all its styles.

\*\*\*\*

#### Review by Jason Ritchie



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\*\*\*\* Out of this world | \*\*\*\* Pretty damn fine |

\*\*\* OK, approach with caution unless you are a fan |

\*\* Instant bargain bin fodder | \* Ugly. Just ugly

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