

# Rockin' & Jumpin' On the Roadhouse Blues & Boogie Top 40



(l to r) Doug Dennis bass and backup vocals, Steve Blake on Sax and backup vocals, Bryan Smith vocals & guitar, Roy Brown on drums

I'm not going to say that Smitty and the Jumpstarters are one of the best-kept secrets of the world of Jump Blues, R&B, Swing and Soul, but up until two years ago I was unaware of their existence. Then I ran across their 5-song EP entitled Smitty and the Jumpstarters. Their songs "Caldonia," "Oh What A Thrill," and especially "Rock This House" were on the Roadhouse Top 40 nearly all year. The Merle Fest organizers had their eye on them as well, inviting them to perform that year.

Not only were they invited to play Merle Fest again this year, they released Let's Get Jumpstarted, a 12-song CD with SEVEN (!) perfect Roadhouse cuts that are making inroads on the Beach Music Top 40 as well as the Roadhouse Top 40.

The lead song is "Let's Go Jumpin," a Big Joe Maher tune that sets the pace for the rockin' side of the collection.

"Excess in Moderation" is a creative twist on synchronizing satisfaction with constraint to stay within livable limits of consumption.

"Hey Ba Ba Re Bop" surprised me. I've loved this song my whole life, from Wynonie Harris's original vocal with the Lionel Hampton band, to Hampton's own version later that year (1945).

"Rock with Me" a Kim Wilson/Fabulous Thunderbirds original, is everything one would hope and expect to hear from these fellas.

And, as I'm always partial to a good jump instrumental, "Smitty's Shuffle" holds a special place in the Hook Home



Smitty and the Jumpstarters on stage at the 2018 Merle Fest. They were slated to play this year -- but we know what happened to much of the year so far. Look for them in 2021 at Merle Fest. (from jumpstartersband.com)

Top 100 presently, while "Better Eye" and Elmore James' "I Can't Hold Out" are particularly engaging as well.

For traditional Blues fans there's Little Junior Parker's "Mystery Train," "Big Walter Price's "Pack Fair and Square," Albert King's "I Get Evil," and Otis Rush's "Keep On Loving Me Baby." What a Deal!!!!

Enjoy at your leisure. Find their website to hook into downloads from both CDs.

\*\*\*