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THE BILLS

★★★★

Til The Blues Have Gone

(WHEELING) www.thebills.no



In times of trouble and uncertainty, with relationships strained by enforced estrangement or by too-close proximity, there's a need for interactive comfort. Offering a warm blues embrace, Bill Booth, Bill Troiani (Billy T.) and Alexander Pettersen may just have answered that call.

The sleeve picture of both Bills suggests that the contents of *Til The Blues Have Gone* will be comfortable and laid-back, but there's understated power and punch to the material, due in good part to Troiani's warm bass tones, pushed high into the mix, and Booth's well-judged rhythm guitar chops.

There's security, too, in the familiarity of structure and feel. If that's a minor chord in 'Already Gone', it's the exception, and necessary to the structure of a standout track. Vocal harmonies, not always a blues staple, are frequent, enhancing the melodies and as welcome as the higher-frequency fiddle phrases which Booth occasionally adds as delicious blues seasoning.

In this uplifting baker's dozen of songs, only one extends beyond four minutes. Stepping, up, singing out and moving on gives the album a feel of a blues party to which we're all invited at The Bills' home sweet downhome.

David Innes