

LEE FIELDS; It Rains Love (Big Crown)

Written by Bill Buckley

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Lee Fields, with plenty of justification, sees himself as one of the last great, old school soul men. He's been plying his trade since the 60s and he's enjoyed some highs and sadly plenty of lows. However, with bags of self belief, a passion for what he does and his faith, he's kept going and though he's never made the major league he's still happy to be making the music he knows and loves.

'It Rains Love' – Lee's latest album, produced by Leon Michels – is full of the qualities that we've just listed – self belief, passion, faith, commitment and, yes, bags of old school soul . It's patently obvious right from the start. As your stylus hits the groove (or the laser finds the spot, or whatever!) on the first track (the LP's title cut) you'll know that you're in for an old school soul treat. Rough and tough, the cut is imbued with the spirit of Bobby Womack and in these trying times you can't argue with the message. 'God Is Real' is another of the album's focus cuts. It's a musical embodiment of where Lee Fields is at - both lyrically and sonically - and as many have said, if you want to define soul music don't use complicated words just play some of the music. Play this track and you have your definition.

At the risk of labouring the point, hit any of the ten tracks here and you'll get the same message – that old school, proper soul music is alive and well. Tunes like 'Will I Get Off Easy' and 'Blessed With The Best' could be long lost artefacts from the legendary indie studios of Memphis, Muscle Shoals or Malaco but they're not!

Right across the album, Lee is backed by his faithful and long-serving band, The Expressions and they nail every tune. The brass work in particular is remarkable and the whole ensemble create the exact vibe for Lee's powerful and impassioned vocal attack. You can find out more about this album and Lee's long career via our recent interview. Go to our interview archive.

Lee Fields and the Expressions" 'It Rains Love' is officially available from April 6th.

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