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REVIEW

Music Review: Deborah Bonham - *Duchess*

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There are some things that just have to be. With a voice like this and a heritage like hers Deborah Bonham most definitely proves the point. That is particularly so with *Duchess*, her first album since 2004's *The Old Hyde* and her U.S. debut. It sees her in simply excellent, if not her best ever, form.

Deborah was barely five years old when big brother John joined Led Zeppelin. His worldwide success led her to an overwhelming desire to produce music of her own. At the age of seventeen, she began practicing with John's son, Jason, who had, of course, followed in his dad's huge footsteps as a drummer. He has gone on to play with UFO, Foreigner, and of course at the recent Led Zeppelin reunion.

Encouraged by Robert Plant, she sent out demo recordings, anonymously. She was quickly signed and the career of the girl with the famous surname started very much in its own right. Whatever the family background, and heritage, one thing is for certain, you simply cannot teach a voice like hers.

Her first album *For You And The Moon* went to number five in the New Musical Express chart amid rave reviews. She first toured the USA in 1997, performing live on the Los Angeles Rockline radio station to over three million listeners. She then appeared with Jason's band Bonham at the famous Whisky A Go Go. Since then she has toured with such names as Van Halen, Humble Pie, Paul Weller, Foreigner, Paul Rodgers, and Donovan, among many others.

With a track record like that it is little wonder that she has some renowned guests on *Duchess*. There's Paul Rodgers (Free, Bad Company, Queen) who duets with her on the superb "Hold On". Sax player Dick Parry (Pink Floyd), nephew Jason, and Humble Pie's Jerry Shirley also appear.

She has been blessed with a superb blues voice that is awash with passion, and glows with soulfulness. As a result she has forged her own path. It is nothing more than she deserves. With albums of this quality, it would not make one ounce of difference if her surname was something different.

There are touches of Janis, and shades of Bonnie Raitt in her sound. (Yes, she is that good). The music contained here is the perfect platform for her to showcase that voice. Opening with "Grace" a driving blues rock foot stomper, she moves with ease through various styles.

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Jeff is a writer who lives in France. He writes CD/DVD box sets, reviews and has had a book published about David Byron of Uriah Heep. He is 'busy' exploring both the music and football of