



*By Joe Sass - Guitar Jam Daily*

Eric Sardinas is known for explosive performances and a signature brand of fiery slide work on the Dobro that pushes the boundaries of what steel and wood can handle. With a wicked mix of delta blues, 70's rock, and southern roots music, you'll hear the influences of Charlie Patton, Son House, Robert Johnson, Skip James, Bukka White, and Fred McDowell, Elmore James, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Otis Rush, Albert King, Chuck Berry, Johnny Winter, Jimmy Page, and more.

His 1999 debut album "Treat Me Right" and a follow up "Devil's Train" are packed with a train full of rockin' Dobro. However, Sardinas makes it a point of staying true to the tradition of the blues. "These records explored everything I'd learned, but at the same time they used blues as a jumping off point to go deeper," says Sardinas. His third release "Black Pearls" was produced by studio legend Eddie Kramer and was recorded completely live and directly to analog tape with out the use of pro tools giving his album a pure and honest sound.

"Eric Sardinas & Big Motor" is Sardinas' fourth album, and the second effort on Vai's Favored Nations label. The CD was released in February of this year with much acclaim. The album highlights his diverse influences and provides a gutsy guitar driven blues rock performance that should undoubtedly appeal to the masses.

Album Tracks:

1. [All I Need](#) - MySpace
2. Ride
3. Find My Heart
4. Gone To Memphis
5. It's Nothin' New
6. This Time
7. Just Like That
8. Burning Love
9. Wonderin' Blues

10. Door To Diamonds

11. As The Crow Flies

The Big Motor starts up with *All I Need*, a runaway train with chugging bass and drums fueled with the burning slide work and incendiary vocals of Sardinas. Thick and chunky rhythm guitar with a burning layer of slide make this a real foot thumper and jolt to the senses to get your motor running.

The engine stays hot with *Ride*, a straight-ahead blues rock lift. Sardinas adds in some acoustic guitar thrown in for a warmth and tempo-shifting touch in-between the punchy electric guitar work.

To keep things cooking, *Find my Heart* is a ripping roadhouse shuffle that is a tip of the cap to Chuck Berry. It's a straight forward 12-bar shuffle with duck walking solos all over it.

*Gone to Memphis* offers a slight departure from the burning vibe of the first three cuts on the album. With a lighter, more poppy feel, Sardinas shows off his versatility as guitar player and vocalist. You'll hear Glen Fry-like vocal and harmonies on the choruses, which add a sunny quality to the album.



Elmore James and Bo Diddley show up on *It's Nothin' New*. With plenty of stops and rhythm changes, the song has a freshness and originality that breaks up a structure that could easily have stayed hard and true to the tradition of the Delta. Eric Sardinas uses imagination and intellect to stretch the boundaries of what's expected.

On *This Time* Sardinas blends his vocals and guitar riffs for some very tasty harmonies throughout the song. Once again, he stirs up a brew of rock, pop, with a chaser of straight up blues.

*Just like That* is the one live track on the album that throws down some very tight band dynamics. You'll think it was tracked out in the studio as Sardinas and Big Motor show off their musical chops and solidarity as a super tight band. You'll also find more signature, super tasty slide from Sardinas from the opening notes to the final drum hits.

A surprise on the album is a cover of a tune Elvis made famous, *Burning Love* - which strangely enough works really well with the flow and whole vibe of the album. It's hard to live up to the performance by the King, but Sardinas slide work and warm vocals give this tune life. You have to give him credit for a gutsy performance that would even impress the Memphis Mafia.

*Wondering Blues* heads back to the Delta with a dash of Sunset Strip thrown in to give it a snappy rock vibe. Sardinas really knows how to keep the blues rock genre really fresh using the vocals and guitars in harmony, and not getting stuck in a spin cycle of clichés and expected patterns. Again he is very creative and uses new ideas to keep the music interesting and fresh.

The last tune on the album is *As the Crow Flies* which has some middle eastern slide work and haunting tones to take you out softly - just until the tempo picks up - and then backs off again opening up a space for Sardinas to show off his vocal abilities. This tune is yet another pleasant surprise, with changing rhythms, guitar sounds, varied tones, and a mix of styles to keep you interested.

All in all, this is a really fresh and tasty album that will keep your foot stomping, rocking', and gives us all proof that someone can still make an original blues rock album that has a familiar feel but makes you say ahh that's cool.

It's a great pick.