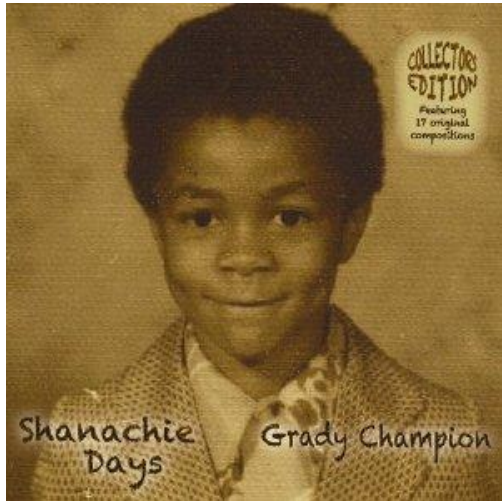


New CD from Grady Champion -- "Shanachie Days"

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WRITTEN BY JIM WHITE



It's time to get back to some new (newish by now) CDs that are worth a mention.

Up today, [Grady Champion](#), a Mississippi singer and harp player who's *only* been recording since the late '90s, is a 2010 IBC band winner, and a 2011 Blues Music Awards nominee. I've seen one of his very exciting shows, at the [Wheeling blues festival](#) a couple years ago, and he's definitely worth a mention.

This CD -- "Shanachie Days" -- is a compilation from two of his earliest albums on the Shanachie label in 1999 and 2001.

A lot of compilation albums just tend to recycle familiar material, but not here. I imagine that not too many blues fans picked up on Champion back in his Shanachie days. And I wouldn't be surprised if he is still under the radar for many fans. If so, that's a shame. Champion is a high-energy singer and player with sharp songwriting skills, and works soulful blues as hard as anyone.

The 17 tracks here run from the political comment of "Policeman Blues", the tough harp shuffles on "I'm Smilin' Again," the whimsical old-timey sound of "Roberta," the very soaring, soulful and horn-laced "Love Is My Middle Name," the tough Chicago sound of "Let Me Be," to the slyly salacious blues of "My Rooster Is King."

You could do a lot worse than introduce yourself to this fine young bluesman with this excellent selection. And check him out when you get a chance.