



## The Hoodoo Loungers, So Beautiful (Paradiddle Records)

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With the trad jazz faves “Careless Love” and “My Bucket’s Got a Hole in It,” and Allen Toussaint’s “Yes We Can Can,” it’s evident that this nine-piece Long Island dance band takes its cue from New Orleans. Dawnette Darden’s belting vocals on the title track are a cross between Irma Thomas and Marcia Ball, while “Real, Real Gone” could have been recorded by Fats Domino back in the day. It doesn’t hurt either that the sharp four-piece horn section is always ready to inject another blast of energy into the already high-octane proceedings.

It’s a broad palette of styles the Hoodoos swing, but it’s not just another group of out-of-state knockoff revivalists. Eleven of these 15 tracks were written by three of the Hoodoos and fit loosely within a Crescent City framework, especially the insanely peppy “Rockin’ the Mardi Gras” that’s good enough to join the WWOZ rotation during Carnival season.

Hoodoo’s music is so fun that it’s easy to imagine a group of dolled-up women hitting the dance floor at some dreadful society function with t fodder. The swanky, up-tempo “Circe” could almost be a short video where a lovestruck, hapless soul encounters a bewitching siren. The irresistibly snappy “Hoodoo Time Machine” is an invitation to leave reality behind, with the lovable line, at least to the enlightened, “Back when Obama was the man.” Overall, it’s sure to put a glide in your stride, as the Hoodoos say.

