



Review by Steve Leggett August 16, 2005

Thirty years after their last full-length studio effort, and nearly 40 years since they released their debut album in 1966, the Siegel-Schwall Band is back with *Flash Forward*, a delightful little folk-blues outing that is refreshing both for its sense of humor and its breezy, lighter-than-air ensemble playing. Not that they're doing anything new here, but the contemporary blues scene is so full of hot-shot players, each one trying to be heavier than the next, that Siegel-Schwall's brand of easygoing, good-natured blues sounds downright radical by comparison. Sporting a longtime lineup of Corky Siegel on harmonica and Jim Schwall on guitar and mandolin, with a crackerjack rhythm section of Rollo Radford on bass and the legendary Sam Lay on drums, the band sounds like it had a blast recording these songs, and although it seems odd to call a blues album joyful, that's exactly what *Flash Forward* is. Highlights include Siegel's "Afraid of Love" (with the wonderful chorus "I'm afraid of love, but only a little afraid of you"), Lay's laconic "Going Back to Alabama," and Radford's absolutely loopy "Krazy." Who would have thought, out of all the blues bands that formed in Chicago in the 1960s, that it would be the Siegel-Schwall Band left still standing and making lively music 40-some years later? And judging from this album, they're still having a hoot doing it.