

Lou Rawls - The Best of, The Capitol Jazz & Blues Sessions (2006)

Written by bluesever

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- 01 *Motherless Child*
- 02 *God Bless The Child*
- 03 *Nobody But Me*
- 04 *Blues For The Weepers*
- 05 *Goin' To Chicago Blues*
- 06 *How Long How Long Blues*
- 07 *Southside Blues/Tobacco Road (Medley)*
- 08 *Something Stirring In My Soul*
- 09 *Georgia On My Mind*
- 10 *So Hard To Laugh So Easy To Cry*
- 11 *Old Folks*
- 12 *Somebody Have Mercy*
- 13 *Why (Do I Love You So)*
- 14 *Street of Dreams*
- 15 *I Wonder*
- 16 *Let's Burn Down The Cornfield*
- 17 *One For My Baby One More For The Road*
- 18 *Mean Old World*
- 19 *Long Gone Blues*
- 20 *Fine And Mellow*

Earl Palmer - drums

Herb Ellis

Lou Rawls - vocals

Jimmy Bond - bass instrument

Richard "Groove" Holmes - organ

Rene Hall - guitar

Pilgrim Travelers - background vocals

Cliff White

Eddie Beal – piano

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Many people may remember Lou Rawls as a fundraiser, a pitchman for Budweiser or a silky-smooth '70s soul crooner, but when he signed to Capitol in the early '60s, Rawls was strictly a jazz and blues singer. Sure he tried for hits, and even struck occasionally, with "Love Is a Hurtin' Thing" and "Your Good Thing (Is About to End)," but he was at his best when tackling the material that is collected on The Best of Lou Rawls: The Capitol Jazz & Blues Sessions. A nice mix of jazz standards, blues, pop-gospel and big band swing, the disc showcases Rawls' flexibility, light touch, and his one-of-a-kind voice as he struts and swaggers through the up-tempo tracks like "Nobody but Me," "Street of Dreams," or "Goin' to Chicago Blues," and as he gets down to something real and gritty on the ballads like "Blues for the Weepers," "How Long, How Long Blues," "So Hard to Laugh, So Easy to Cry," and the centerpiece of the album, his medley of "Southside Blues" and "Tobacco Road," which features one of Rawls' patented monologues. With help from producers like Nick Venet and David Axelrod, as well as arrangers like Benny Carter, Benny Golson, and the great H.B. Barnum, Rawls' records have always sounded near-perfect, hearing them in a setting like this only spotlights what a good working environment Rawls could create. The collection isn't perfect; as one could argue about the omission of his 1962 take on "(They Call It) Stormy Monday," or his mellow "Gee Baby, Ain't I Good to You." However, it is one hell of a fine listen that anyone who loves Rawls should add to their collection, especially if you only know him for his post-1970 work [A boon for collectors are the three bonus tracks from a recently unearthed session Rawls cut with the Curtis Amy Sextet that is as close as he came to being a hard bop singer. It is a fascinating find and as the liner notes state, it is truly a shame that there were no more songs recorded by the group.] ---Tim Sendra, allmusic.com

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