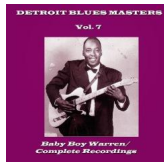


Detroit Blues Masters Vol. 7 – Baby Boy Warren

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 29 December 2015 16:40 -

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01. *My special friend blues* 02. *Nervy woman blues* 03. *Lonesome cabin blues* 04. *Don't want no skinny woman* 05. *Forgive me darling* 06. *Please don't think I'm nosey* Robert Henry Warren (Baby Boy) – vocals, guitar Charley Mills – piano Milt Larkin – bass Detroit, Mi. 1949 07. *I got lucky* 08. *Let's renew our love* 09. *Taxi driver* 10. *Bad lover blues* Robert Henry Warren – vocals, guitar Boogie Woogie Red – piano Calvin Frazier – guitar Curtis Foster – drums Detroit, Mi. 1950 11. *Sanafee* 12. *Not welcome anymore* 13. *Hello stranger* 14. *Bring me my machine gun* 15. *Chicken* 16. *Chuck a luck* 17. *Baby boy blues* Robert Henry Warren – vocals, guitar Sonny Boy Williamson (Rice Miller) – harmonica Washboard Willie - washboard Detroit, Mi. 10 January 1954 18. *Mattie Mae* 19. *Santa Fe* Robert Henry Warren – vocals, guitar Boogie Woogie Red – piano Calvin Frazier – guitar Detroit, Mi. March 1954 20. *Somebody put bad luck on me* 21. *Stop breaking down* Robert Henry Warren – vocals, guitar Johnny Hooks – tenor saxophone Boogie Woogie Red – piano Little George Jackson – guitar Jimmy Tarrant – drums Detroit, Mi. July 1954 22. *Too many drivers* 23. *She's fine* Robert Henry Warren – vocals, guitar Boogie Woogie Red – piano + band Ann Arbor, Mi. 1973

Baby Boy Warren is another major name of the post-war Detroit blues scene and his recording output (between 1949 and 1954) has gained some kind of a "classical" status.

Born on August, 13th, 1919 at Lake Providence (La), Robert Henry Warren has in fact been raised in Memphis, learning the guitar with his elder brother with whom he formed a duo, Big Boy Warren and Baby Boy Warren, a nickname that would stick to him forever. During the late 1930's he plays regularly with local bluesmen Little Buddy Doyle and Willie Borum while being

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strongly influenced by the recordings of John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson. He is rumoured to have recorded two titles at that time but no evidence of this has never surfaced. In 1941, he is for a few months a featured member (alongside the other Sonny Boy (Rice Miller) and Robert Lockwood) of the popular radio programme King Biscuit Time broadcasted from Helena (Arkansas).

1942 finds him in Detroit trying to make a better living at General Motors and playing the blues in the clubs. He finally makes his first known recordings in 1949, visiting sporadically the Detroit studios for the next six years, issuing records on small local labels, some of it stirring enough interest to be also issued by labels with national distribution like Federal or Excello. Baby Boy is backed by the best Detroit bluesmen (Calvin Frazier, Boogie Woogie Red) but this is his January, 1954 session that generally is better known because he is in the company of his old mate Rice Miller who, coming from the South to Chicago, made a stopover in Detroit, living for some months at Baby Boy's place and playing with him at some Hastings Street's clubs. In fact, Chicken/ Chuck a luck is mostly a Rice Miller instrumental. The other titles are of the same high standard, particularly Sanafee and Hello Stranger/ Mattie Mae, a reworking of a John Lee Williamson's hit.

But, despite an essay to modernize his sound with the add of Johnny Hooks' saxophone on a last 1954 session, the very downhome blues of Baby Boy with a strong late 1940's flavor seems already out-fashioned and Warren won't record anymore, playing less and less outside private parties.

He was making a modest comeback in the 1970's with appearances at the 1971 Detroit blues festival, the 1973 Ann Arbor festival (where he recorded two "live" titles) and a European tour alongside Boogie Woogie Red (he may have recorded an album during this tour but nothing has been issued insofar) when he died of a massive heart attack on July, 1st 1977. --- Gérard Herzhaft, jukegh.blogspot.com

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