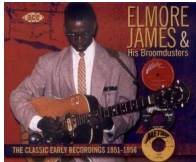


Elmore James - Classic Early Recordings 1951-56 (1993)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 25 January 2012 19:30 - Last Updated Friday, 15 January 2021 17:56

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CD1 1. *Dust My Broom* 2. *Please Find My Baby (Version 1)* 3. *Hawaiian Boogie (Version 1)* 4. *Please Find My Baby (Version 2)* 5. *Hand In Hand* 6. *Long Tall Woman* 7. *Rock My Baby Right* 8. *One More Drink (Take 1)* 9. *My Baby's Gone* [play](#) 10. *One More Drink (Take 2)* 11. *Lost Woman Blues Aka Please Find My Baby (Version 3)* 12. *I Believe* 13. *I Held My Baby Last Night* 14. *Baby What's Wrong* 15. *Sinful Woman* 16. *Round House Boogie aka Sax Symphonic Boogie (Inst) - Bep Brown* 17. *Dumb Woman Blues - Bep Brown Orchestra* 18. *Sax-Ony Boogie (Inst) - Featuring J T Brown (Sax)* 19. *Kicking The Blues Around aka Flaming Blues - Featuring J T Brown (Sax)* 20. *I May Be Wrong - Little Johnny Jones & The Chicago Hound Dogs* 21. *Sweet Little Woman - Little Johnny Jones & The Chicago Hound Dogs*

CD2

1. *Early In The Morning* 2. *Can't Stop Lovin'* 3. *Hawaiian Boogie (Version 2)* 4. *Make A Little Love* 5. *My Best Friend (Take 1)* 6. *Make My Dreams Come True (Take 2)* 7. *Make My Dreams Come True (Take 3)* 8. *Make My Dreams Come True (Take 4)* 9. *Make My Dreams Come True (Take 7)* 10. *Strange Kinda Feeling (Take 1)*

[play](#)

11. *Strange Kinda Feeling (Take 2)* 12. *Strange Kinda Feeling (Take 3)* 13. *Strange Kinda Feeling (Take 4)* 14. *Strange Kinda Feeling (Take 5)* 15. *Strange Kinda Feeling (Take 6)* 16. *Dark And Dreary (Take 1)* 17. *Dark And Dreary (Take 2)* 18. *Dark And Dreary (Take 4)* 19. *Quarter Past Nine* 20. *Where Can My Baby Be (Take 1)* 21. *Where Can My Baby Be (Take 8)* 22. *Where Can My Baby Be (Take 9)* 23. *Please Come Back To Me (Sho' Nuff I Do)* 24. *Session Talk & False Start Sho' Nuff I Do* 25. *Sho' Nuff I Do (Alternate Take)* 26. *Sho' Nuff I Do* 27. *1839 Blues* 28. *I Got A Strange Baby (False Start & Chat)* 29. *Canton Mississippi Breakdown (Instrumental)*

CD3

1. *Standing At The Crossroads* 2. *Late Hours At Midnight* 3. *Happy Home* 4. *Sunny Land* 5. *The Way You Treat Me aka Mean And Evil* 6. *No Love In My Heart*

[play](#)

7. *Dust My Blues* 8. *I Was A Fool* 9. *Blues Before Sunrise* 10. *Goodbye (Baby)* 11. *So Mean To Me (Take 2)* 12. *So Mean To Me (Take 3)* 13. *So Mean To Me (Take 4)* 14. *Chat & False Start To Wild About You Baby* 15. *Wild About You* 16. *Wild About You (Baby)* 17. *Elmo's Shuffle (Take 3) (Instrumental)* 18. *Elmo's Shuffle (Take 4)* 19. *Elmo's Shuffle (Take 5)* 20. *Long Tall Woman (1970)* 21. *Long Tall Woman (1956)*

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Although a few hardcore electric Chicago blues fans might take offense at the remark, Elmore James' work does not comprise the most varied discography among major bluesmen. So a singledisc survey of his material, whether it covers the first five years or so of his career (as this threeCD anthology does) or a longer period, works better as both a general introduction and a more listenable compilation than a box set does. If you're a completist who does want everything known to exist that he laid down in the studio between August 1951 and January 1956, however, this 71track compilation is the most thorough retrospective of that era likely to be produced. In addition to including songs that were not issued in any form until after his death (and sometimes long after his passing), there are multiple takes of specific tunes, alternates, false starts, studio chatter, instrumental version, songs on which he guested for J.T. Brown and Little Johnny Jones, and so forth. Indeed, there are so many... multiple versions on this release that even the liner notes take care to suggest customprogramming the CD sequence if you'd rather not hear them all in a row. For all the ifwecanfinditreleaseit mentality driving this collection, however, it really is pretty listenable, at least if you like James and early to mid'50s Chicago blues a lot. For one thing, it does include a couple of big hits, those being James' original 1952 version of "Dust My Broom" and the 1953 Top Ten RB hit "I Believe." More relevantly, James played and sang consistently well even on the material that languished in the vault. Plus all those multiple versions aren't wholly repetitive; James occasionally makes changes to the lyrics and music, though the similarity of style from song to song is prevalent enough that you have to be paying close attention to catch all of these. Some fans primarily familiar with James through his Deltasoaked electric slide guitar playing (and there's plenty of that here) will also be surprised at the commercial RB edge to many of the sides, though it's commercial in the better sense of that term, often with horns and piano urbanizing James' approach. The 40page booklet has a wealth of information, vintage photos, and a detailed sessionography, increasing its appeal to those who want all things James. [Initially released in 1993 in longbox packaging, The Classic Early Recordings 1951-1956 was reissued by Ace in 2007 as a standardsized threeCD set with a different cover.] --- Richie Unterberger, All Music Guide

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