

Fenton Robinson - Complete Early Recordings (2001)

Written by bluesever

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01. Tennessee woman 02. Crying out loud 03. Crazy crazy lovin' 04. Mississippi steamboat
05. The freeze 06. Double freeze (vcl: Peppermint Harris) 07. As the years go passing by 08.
Tennessee woman 09. You've got to pass this way again 09a. Schoolboy 10. You don't move
me anymore 11. My woman done quit me 12. Say you're leaving 13. Directly from my heart
14. You're cracking me up 15. I put my baby in high society 16. I believe 17. Somebody loan
me a dime 18. Farmer's son 19. Let me rock you to sleep 20. Keep on grooving me baby 21.
7/11 blues 22. There goes my baby

Fenton Robinson, vcl/g; Charles Mc Gowan, g; pno;
(1-2) Robert Williams, t-sax; (1-2) Larry Davis, bs; (1-6) J.W. Hughes, dms (1-2) James
Booker, pno; (3-9) Texas Johnny Brown, g; (7-9) David Dean, t-sax; (3-9) Hamp Simmons,
bs; (7-9) Nat Kendricks, dms (3-9) Hop Wilson, st-g; (10-11) Elmore Nixon, pno; (10-11)
Pete Douglas, bs; (10-11) Ivory Lee Semien, dms. (10-11) Detroit Jr, pno; (12-15) Burgess
Gardner, t-sax; (12-15) Eddie Silvers, a-sax; (12-15) Bob Anderson, bs; (12-15) Billy
Davenport, dms. (12-15) Kenneth Sands, tpt; (16-17) Bobby Forte, t-sax; (16-17) Alberto
Gianquinto, pno; (16-17) Leo Lauchie, bs; (16-17) Sonny Freeman, dms. (16-17) Little
Cameron, t-sax; (18-20) Wayne Bennett, g; pno; (18-20) James Green, bs; dms. (18-20)
John Logan, og; (21-22) Mighty Joe Young, g; (21-22) James Green, bs; (21-22) Bill
Warren, dms. (21-22)

His Japanese fans reverently dubbed Fenton Robinson "the mellow blues genius" because of his ultra-smooth vocals and jazz-inflected guitar work. But beneath the obvious subtlety resides a spark of constant regeneration -- Robinson tirelessly strives to invent something fresh and vital whenever he's near a bandstand. The soft-spoken Mississippi native got his career going in Memphis, where he'd moved at age 16. First, Rosco Gordon used him on a 1956 session for Duke that produced "Keep on Doggin'." The next year, Fenton made his own debut as a leader for the Bihari Brothers' Meteor label with his first reading of "Tennessee Woman." His band, the Dukes, included mentor Charles McGowan on guitar. T-Bone Walker and B.B. King were Robinson's idols.

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1957 also saw Fenton team up with bassist Larry Davis at the Flamingo Club in Little Rock. Bobby Bland caught the pair there and recommended them to his boss, Duke Records prexy Don Robey. Both men made waxings for Duke in 1958, Robinson playing on Davis' classic "Texas Flood" and making his own statement with "Mississippi Steamboat." Robinson cut the original version of the often-covered Peppermint Harris-penned slow blues "As the Years Go Passing By" for Duke in 1959 with New Orleans prodigy James Booker on piano. The same date also produced a terrific "Tennessee Woman" and a marvelous blues ballad, "You've Got to Pass This Way Again." Fenton moved to Chicago in 1962, playing Southside clubs with Junior Wells, Sonny Boy Williamson, and Otis Rush and laying down the swinging "Say You're Leavin'" for USA in 1966. But it was his stunning slow blues "Somebody (Loan Me a Dime)" cut in 1967 for Palos, that insured his blues immortality. Boz Scaggs liked it so much that he covered it for his 1969 debut LP. Unfortunately, he initially also claimed he wrote the tune.---Bill Dahl, allmusic.com

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