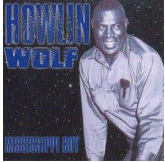


Howlin' Wolf - Mississippi Boy (2002)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 16 October 2014 15:56 - Last Updated Wednesday, 10 February 2021 10:56

Howlin' Wolf - Mississippi Boy (2002)



1. Baby Ride With Me 2. How Many More Years 3. California Boogie 4. Looka Here Baby 5. Smile At Me 6. My Baby Walked Off 7. My Troubles And Me 8. Mr. Highway Man 9. Chocolate Drop 10. Everybody's In The Mood 11. Color And Kind 12. Bluebird 13. My Last Affair 14. Dorothy Mae 15. Oh Red 16. California Blues

Looking over the long history of blues, there have been many performers who took a somewhat lopsided approach to making their mark. Think for a moment of Screamin' Jay Hawkins, who entered the stage encased in a coffin, or Eddie "Guitar Slim" Jones, known for painting his guitar and his coiffed hairdo, to match a new suit of clothes. Of everyone though, the one who managed chaos and pure mayhem most often, was Howlin' Wolf. Born with a voice that was as rough as 30 grit sandpaper, he took a deafening approach to blues, and his recordings from his primal Memphis days, to the greased Chess sessions of the fifties and sixties, show a man who had little use for boundaries. Simply put, the Wolf was perhaps the scariest creature ever to cradle a guitar, or blow harmonica. Built of a massive frame of over six feet, and well over the 240 pound mark, Chester Arthur Burnett, from Aberdeen, MS, could shake you to your soul with one phrase, one sentence, one word.

With the number of labels issuing blues today, it's sometimes difficult to know what to buy, but this budget-priced, 16 track, 45 minute disc, from yet another little known imprint, is a great beginning. Wolf first recorded in Memphis for Sam Phillips, who owned and ran Sun Studios, and it was Phillips who leased masters to both the Chess brothers in Chicago, and the West Coast Bihari boys, simultaneously. While Wolf's 78's showed up for a time on both the Chess and RPM logos, the money behind Chess ultimately won out, and Wolf moved north to the Windy City. Before he left the south though, he managed some of the tightest, inspired sides ever to burst out of Memphis. Backed by Willie Steel's riveting and insistent drums, solid piano from Albert Williams, L.C. Hubert, or others, and the distorted abnormalities of Willie Johnson's guitar, Howlin' Wolf tore through his early recordings like a rabid animal through flesh. While his harmonica style bore similarities to Sonny Boy Williamson, though rougher in texture and

Howlin' Wolf - Mississippi Boy (2002)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 16 October 2014 15:56 - Last Updated Wednesday, 10 February 2021 10:56

phrasing, Wolf's true instrument was a voice unlike any other of his time.

From the first track, "Baby Ride With Me," to the closing of "California Blues," these 16 sides show complete disdain for any sort of manners. Wolf was at home with a hard-charging band behind him, taking his harmonicas out for brief spitfire phrases, and with the crew encouraging him, as in "How Many More Years," he poured on the steam. "Look A Here Baby" starts with a Duke Ellington flavor, and within seconds, Willie Johnson transforms the song from a sweet cocktail-blues to rude and twisted Memphis jump tune. Wolf steps in and talks his way through the proceedings picking up his harp for some added interest, but it's the hard-driving Johnson who takes control here. The amount of horsepower generated by Howlin' Wolf and his cronies back in 1952 and '53, when these tracks were cut, is at times hard to fathom. From the unbelievably raw wickedness of "Mr. Highway Man," to the back-and-forth rhythm of "Color And Kind," this is Memphis Blues at its best.

Sam Phillips was just as happy to record rockabilly, swing, blues, or gospel, and his decision to roll tape for Howlin' Wolf, at Ike Turner's request, was a move later realized as genius. Phillips' was too small an outfit to fully exploit Wolf and others he recorded, but by leasing masters to various labels in bigger cities, he brought himself income, and a better future for many of his artists. Thankfully, Chester Burnett lived long enough to reap the rewards and adulation of the young rockers, Clapton, Page, Jagger, Richards, et al, and the throngs who flocked to see him in his later years. His plaster-shattering, teeth-rattling early work, perhaps his best for its reckless abandon, is the place to start. --- Craig Ruskey, mnblues.com

download (mp3 @320 kbs):

[yandex](#) [mediafire](#) [mega](#) [ulozto](#) [gett](#) [solidfiles](#)

[back](#)