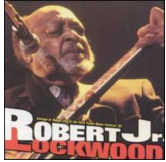


Robert Jr. Lockwood - Swings In Tokyo 1995

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 29 October 2009 22:22 - Last Updated Wednesday, 19 June 2013 15:55

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1. *Something to Do* Lockwood 4:54 2. *Every Day I Have the Blues* Memphis Slim 5:38
3. *Steady Rollin' Man* Johnson 4:13 4. *Hangin' On* Lockwood 4:45 5. *After Hours*
Parish 4:42 6. *Take a Little Walk With Me* Lockwood 5:30 7. *Kind Hearted Woman*
Johnson 2:55 8. *I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town* Weldon 9:54 9. *Going*
Home Lockwood 6:02 10. *See See Rider* Public Domain 7:53 11. *Annie's Boogie*
Lockwood 6:00 Park Tower Hall, Park Tower Blues Festival, Tokyo, Japan Date:
December 9, 1995

Robert Lockwood, Jr., learned his blues firsthand from an unimpeachable source: the immortal Robert Johnson. Lockwood was capable of conjuring up the bone-chilling Johnson sound whenever he desired, but he was never one to linger in the past for long -- which accounts for the jazzy swing he often brought to the licks he played on his 12-string electric guitar. Born in 1915, Lockwood was one of the last living links to the glorious Johnson legacy. When Lockwood's mother became romantically involved with the charismatic rambler in Helena, AR, the quiet teenager suddenly gained a role model and a close friend -- so close that Lockwood considered himself Johnson's stepson. Robert Jr. learned how to play guitar very quickly with Johnson's expert help, assimilating Johnson's technique inside and out.

Following Johnson's tragic murder in 1938, Lockwood embarked on his own intriguing musical journey. He was among the first bluesmen to score an electric guitar in 1938 and eventually made his way to Chicago, where he cut four seminal tracks for Bluebird. Jazz elements steadily crept into Lockwood's dazzling fretwork, although his role as Sonny Boy Williamson's musical partner on the fabled KFFA King Biscuit Time radio broadcasts during the early '40s out of Helena, AR, probably didn't emphasize that side of his dexterity all that much. Settling in Chicago in 1950, Lockwood swiftly gained a reputation as a versatile in-demand studio sideman, recording behind harp genius Little Walter, piano masters Sunnyland Slim and Eddie Boyd, and plenty more. Solo recording opportunities were scarce, though Lockwood did cut fine singles in 1951 for Mercury ("*I'm Gonna Dig Myself a Hole*" and a very early "*Dust My Broom*")

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and in 1955 for JOB ("Sweet Woman from Maine"/"Aw Aw Baby").

Lockwood's best modern work as a leader was done for Pete Lowry's Trix label, including some startling workouts on the 12-string axe (which he daringly added to his arsenal in 1965). He later joined forces with fellow Johnson disciple Johnny Shines for two eclectic early-'80s Rounder albums. He also recorded a Robert Johnson tribute album and founded his own label, Lockwood. In 1998, he signed to Verve for the Grammy-nominated album I Got to Find Me a Woman, which featured sit-in guests including B.B. King and Joe Louis Walker. He was still working a weekly gig in Cleveland until early November 2006, when he suffered a brain aneurysm. He died on November 21. ---Bill Dahl, Rovi

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