

## Taj Mahal - De Ole Folks At Home (1969)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 17 June 2019 15:27 - Last Updated Monday, 17 June 2019 16:48

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*A1 Linin' Track A2 Country Blues #1 A3 Wild Ox Moan A4 Light Rain Blues A5 A Little Soulful Tune A6 Candy Man A7 Cluck Old Hen B1 Colored Aristocracy B2 Blind Boy Rag B3 Stagger Lee B4 Cajun Tune B5 Fishin' Blues B6 Annie's Lover*  
Vocals, Harmonica, Guitar, Banjo, Other [Jive] – Taj Mahal

In less than 24 months, Taj Mahal (guitars/vocals/banjo/harmonica) had issued the equivalent of four respective long-players. The electric *Giant Step* (1968) was released alongside the acoustic and decidedly rural *De Ole Folks at Home* (1968). The nine cuts on *Giant Step* feature support from the instrumental trio of Jesse Ed Davis (guitar/keyboards), Gary Gilmore (bass), and Chuck Blackwell (drums). They back Taj Mahal on a wide selection of covers ranging from Carole King and Gerry Goffin's "Take a Giant Step" to the upbeat and soulful reading of the Huddie Ledbetter blues staple "Keep Your Hands Off Her." The arrangements are unique and offer the artist's distinctive approach. Nowhere is this more evident than the practically jovial midtempo "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" or the freewheeling abandon brought to the 18-wheeler anthem "Six Days on the Road." Similarly, it recalls the version of "Ain't That a Lot of Love" from Taj Mahal's preceding LP *Natch'l Blues* (1968). Additionally, Blind Willie Johnson's "You're Gonna Need Somebody on Your Bond" stands out with a strong and soaring gospel-flavored arrangement. The project concludes with "Bacon Fat," a number attributed here via Garth Hudson and Robbie Robertson of the Band. That said, it may be better-known from the man they called Mr. Rhythm, Andre Williams, whose scattered down-home spoken interludes punctuate his February 1957 Top Ten R&B hit -- which incidentally was created under the working title "Diddle, Diddle Womp, Womp." Parties searching for an apt introduction when discovering Taj Mahal's voluminous catalog are encouraged to consider *Giant Step* as a highly recommended reference point. ---Lindsay Planer, AllMusic Review

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