

Earl Gilliam □ – Texas Doghouse Blues (2005)

Wpisany przez bluesever

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1 *My Thing* 3:05 2 *Early In The morning* 2:35 3 *Twist 2* 4:05 4 *Pretty Little Doll* 2:26 5 *The Doghouse* 3:06 6 *Gat Away Blues* 3:44 7 *Thrill Groove* 3:47 8 *Petite Baby* 5:33 9 *Going Downtown* 2:35 10 *Screaming Hog* 3:46 11 *Got To Find My Baby* 3:25 12 *First Name Is Earl* 6:21 13 *Stop By Johns* 2:49 14 *Brush Those Tears From Your Eyes* 3:14 15 *Tomball Shuffle* 4:08 Earl Gilliam - Organ, Piano, Vocals I.J. Gosey - Guitar John Scott Richardson – Guitar (4,14) Pops Stewart – Bass Shedrick Cormier - Saxophone Willie Sampson - Drums

Although he has been a fixture on the Texas blues scene for decades, working with Albert Collins and others, and recorded several singles under his own name for independent labels in the 1950s, as well as appearing on three albums with Joe "Guitar" Hughes in the 1980s, *Texas Doghouse Blues* is Earl Gilliam's first album as a bandleader. It has all been worth the wait, as Gilliam, working closely with former Duke-Peacock session guitarist I.J. Gosey, has turned in a charming, loose set of jazzy blues shuffles that sound like they could have been recorded at a Sunday afternoon barbecue. Gilliam's voice isn't a strong one (although his shaky, fragile delivery is oddly affecting), and his lyrics tend to fall to the "party all the time" side of blues cliché, but the point here isn't his singing or his writing, but his playing, and Gilliam is simply one of the best blues organists on the planet, with a strong, driving piano style as well. At his best, Gilliam sounds like an overdriven Jimmy Smith, with Gosey's jazzy guitar lines and Shedrick Cormier's tenor sax pushing tracks like "Twist 2" into soul-jazz territory, and when Gilliam and company layer in some grease and funk, as they do on the set closer, "Tomball Shuffle," the result is irresistible. One of the standout cuts here is "Thrill Groove," which reworks B.B. King's signature "The Thrill Is Gone" into a wonderful slice of jazz-inflected blues. The groove is obviously the thing here, and with a solid rhythm section of Pops Stewart on bass, Willie Sampson on drums, and John Richardson on second guitar, Gilliam and Gosey are able to work the middle ground between hard dance blues and shuffle jazz with ease, and the joy the players take in all this is readily apparent. *Texas Doghouse Blues* is a charming delight, perfect for a long, hot summer afternoon gathered around the grill. ---Steve Leggett, AllMusic Review

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