

Earl Hooker & Junior Wells - The Blues Collection Vol.33 (1992)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 29 September 2012 16:36 - Last Updated Friday, 01 January 2021 10:01

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1 Love Me 2:07 2 Come On In This House 2:21 3 Two Headed Woman 2:38 4 Lovey Dovey Lovey One 2:11 5 I Could Cry 2:50 6 Cha Cha Cha In Blue 2:21 7 You Don't Care 2:19 8 Prison Bars All Around Me 2:28 9 Calling All Blues 2:32 10 Galloping Horses A Lazy Mule 2:33 11 Blues In D Natural 2:14 12 Messin' With The Kid 2:15 13 You Sure Look Good To Me 2:25 14 Universal Rock 2:31 15 Rockin' With The Kid 2:07 16 Little By Little 2:32 17 These Cotton Pickin' Blues 2:44 18 Blue Guitar 2:44 19 I'm A Stranger 2:40 20 I Need Me A Car 2:23 Musicians: E. Hooker – guitar Junior Wells – harmonica, vocals L.Gibson, S. Johnson – guitar E.Johnson, J.Myers, W.Dixon – bass J. Beasley - alto sax D. Hankins, J. Brenston – baritone sax A. C. Reed, J. Gibson – tenor sax J. Walker, 'Big Moose' Walker – organ "Big Moose" Walker, L. Leake, O. Spann, T. P. Hankins – piano B. Little, C. Jones, E. Lounge, F. Below, H. Tidwell – drums M. London, W. Dixon - vocals

If there was a more immaculate slide guitarist residing in Chicago during the 1950s and '60s than Earl Hooker, his name has yet to surface. Boasting a fretboard touch so smooth and clean that every note rang as clear and precise as a bell, Hooker was an endlessly inventive axeman who would likely have been a star had his modest vocal abilities matched his instrumental prowess and had he not been dogged by tuberculosis (it killed him at age 41). Born in the Mississippi Delta, Hooker arrived in Chicago as a child. There he was influenced by another slide wizard, veteran Robert Nighthawk. But Hooker never remained still for long. He ran away from home at age 13, journeying to Mississippi. After another stint in Chicago, he rambled back to the Delta again, playing with Ike Turner and Sonny Boy Williamson. Hooker made his first recordings in 1952 and 1953 for Rockin', King, and Sun. At the latter, he recorded some terrific sides with pianist Pinetop Perkins (Sam Phillips inexplicably sat on Hooker's blazing rendition of "The Hucklebuck").

Back in Chicago again, Hooker's dazzling dexterity was intermittently showcased on singles for Argo, C.J., and Bea & Baby during the mid- to late '50s before he joined forces with producer

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Mel London (owner of the Chief and Age logos) in 1959. For the next four years, he recorded both as sideman and leader for the producer, backing Junior Wells, Lillian Offitt, Ricky Allen, and A.C. Reed and cutting his own sizzling instrumentals ("Blue Guitar," "Blues in D-Natural"). He also contributed pungent slide work to Muddy Waters' Chess waxing "You Shook Me." Opportunities to record grew sparse after Age folded; Hooker made some tantalizing sides for Sauk City, WI's Cuca Records from 1964 to 1968 (several featuring steel guitar virtuoso Freddie Roulette).

Hooker's amazing prowess (he even managed to make the dreaded wah-wah pedal a viable blues tool) finally drew increased attention during the late '60s. He cut LPs for Arhoolie, ABC-BluesWay, and Blue Thumb that didn't equal what he'd done at Age, but they did serve to introduce Hooker to an audience outside Chicago and wherever his frequent travels deposited him. But tuberculosis halted his wandering ways permanently in 1970. ---Bill Dahl, allmusic.com

Junior Wells (December 9, 1934 - January 15, 1998), born Amos Blakemore, was a blues vocalist and harmonica player based in Chicago who was famous for playing with Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy, Magic Sam, Lonnie Brooks, The Rolling Stones and Van Morrison.

He was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and raised in Arkansas. Wells moved to Chicago in 1948 and first made his mark at age 18 playing in Muddy Waters' band. He later worked with Buddy Guy in the 1960s and recorded for Delmark Records. His most memorable songs are "Messin' With the Kid" and "Little by Little," and his best-known album, 1965's Hoodoo Man Blues, which evokes the smoky atmosphere of the era's Westside Chicago blues bars.

Wells made an appearance in the 1998 movie Blues Brothers 2000, the sequel to The Blues Brothers. The movie was released less than a month after his death. On his passing in 1998, Junior Wells was interred in the Oak Woods Cemetery, Chicago. ---last.fm

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