J.B. Hutto And His Hawks - Hawk Squat 1968 (2015)



01. Speak My Mind 02. If You Change Your Mind 03. Too Much Pride 04. What Can You Get Outside That You Can't Get At Home 05. The Same Mistake Twice 06. 20% Alcohol 07. Hip Shakin' 08. The Feeling is Gone 09. Notoriety Woman 10. Too Late 11. Send Her Home To Me 12. Hawk Squat 13. I'll Cry Tomorrow 14. Speak My Mind (Alternate) 15. Too Much Pride (Alternate) 16. Hawk Squat (Alternate) 17. Same Mistake Twice (Alternate) 18. Speak My Mind (Alternate 2) J.B. Hutto – vocals, guitar Sunnyland Slim – piano, organ Kalaparusha Maurice McIntyre - Sax (Tenor) Herman Hassell - Bass Dave Myers - Bass Junior Pettis – Bass Lee Jackson - Guitar Frank Kirkland – drums

The raw-as-an-open-wound Chicago slide guitarist J.B. Hutto outdid himself throughout an outrageously raucous album (most of it waxed in 1966) anchored by an impossible-to-ignore "Hip-Shakin'," the blaring title cut, and savage renditions of "20% Alcohol" and "Notoriety Woman." Sunnyland Slim augments Hutto's Hawks on organ, rather than his customary piano. --- Bill Dahl, allmusic.com

Connotatively speaking, an idealist is someone who has crystal-clear ideas of how life should be. S/he holds lofty yet precise ideals – hence the term – in mind, and hopes for them to become reality. In the music world, idealists are the “purest of the purists”. What is their ideal of pure blues? One prime example is the remastered and re-released album Hawk Squat, by J.B. Hutto (uncle of Lil’ Ed, of Lil’ Ed and the Blues Imperials) and his Hawks. It’s raw electric Chicago blues. It’s not polished. It’s not slick. It’s some people’s idea of what the electric blues ought to be. Just how fantastic is this CD? Not only is it worthy of one’s reference collection, but in 2014, the National Blues Foundation inducted Hawk Squat into its Hall of Fame for “Classic of Blues Recording: Album”. Its vintage is the Age of Aquarius, with all eighteen original tracks (six

previously unissued) from 1966 and 1968. This is more than a J.B. Hutto reboot. It's a total re-mastery of slide guitar blues that conquered the Windy City. According to Dusty Groove.com, "Hutto's a killer right from the start – singing and playing [slide] with a ferocity that easily matches, if not beats, the bigger '60s names on Chess Records…."

Helping Hutto catapult to fame, both then and now, are Lee Jackson on guitar, Sunnyland Slim on piano and organ, Junior Pettis, Dave Myers, and Herman Hassell on bass, Frank Kirkland on drums, and Maurice McIntyre on tenor sax.

The 20-page book hidden within the Deluxe Edition CD cover reveals: "Hawk Squat was born at Turner's Lounge at 39th and Indiana, on Chicago's South Side. Fifty cents would gain you entry and a beer. Not having that dollar charge at the door made Turner's rowdier than other clubs." Hutto's masterpiece contains no elevator muzak. It showcases tunes tailor-made for people like one unfortunate patron of Turner's, who got kicked out of both the men's and the ladies' room. Here are a few of the most powerful tracks:

Track 01: "Speak My Mind" (Original Version), Track 14, and Track 18 (Alternate Version) – OWW! This is the cry of ecstasy that those who crave Chicago blues will give once they hear J.B.'s fiery intro. Everything in the blues trifecta is here: lump-de-lump rhythm, a timeless theme of a girl who "just ain't no good", and robust ensemble sound.

Track 06: "20% Alcohol" – What better place to play a die-hard drinking song than in a bar? Featuring the clearest lyrics on the album, track six is a warning to our narrator's wayward love: "Girl, you ain't no belle. You've been drinking and cheating, girl – 20% alcohol."

Track 12: "Hawk Squat" (Original Version) and Track 16 (Alternate Version) – One of the most honored traditions in blues songs is having members of a band take turns playing the lead part. The explosive Squat features all the Hawks in top form. This is great news for dancers and lovers of instrumental technique. --- Rainey Wetnight, bluesblastmagazine.com

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