Alberta Hunter - Amtrack Blues (1978)

1. The Darktown Strutters' Ball 5:20
2. Nobody Knows You When You're Down And Out 3:48 *play*
3. I'm Having A Good Time 2:35
4. Always 3:41
5. My Handy Man Ain't Handy No More 3:46
6. Amtrak Blues 3:21 *play*
7. Old Fashioned Love 4:11
8. Sweet Georgia Brown 4:09
9. A Good Man Is Hard To Find 3:56
10. I've Got A Mind To Ramble 4:13
Bass, Contractor – Aaron Bell Drums – Jackie Williams Guitar – Billy Butler Piano, Leader – Gerald Cook Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet – Norris Turney Tenor Saxophone, Flute – Frank Wess Trombone – Vic Dickenson Trumpet – "Doc" Cheatham

Amazing woman,Alberta Hunter recorded this wonderful album at the age of 83 - great survivor of the original blues craze of 1920's,she was a contemporary of Bessie Smith (Bessie's very first hit "Downhearted blues" was actually written by Alberta Hunter!) and all the other blues greats,and somehow she endured all the way up to 1978. when she recorded "Amtrak Blues".Yes,you can tell its an old voice,but she had such a character that made listen pure fun - her version of this old standards are simply undescribable,she sounds like great old lady,sometimes even dirty (You never heard "My Handy Man" if you didnt hear this one - in comparison,Ethel Waters version from 1920's is simply nice little song,Alberta makes a listener blush).Interesting,I found this late Alberta Hunter period much interesting then her younger phase.In the 1920's and 1930's she was never such a character as here - just as late albums by Ida Cox,Sippie Wallace or Victora Spivey shows,these women actually got better with age.This album is really heart-warming,showes that character never dies,age doesnt mean anything and one is young as he feels.

These 'standards' are anything but; Alberta Hunter's versions are unbeatable. She has that kind of voice and rhythm that seem so natural and yet, like Billie Holiday, defy the human range thus placing her in the pantheon of jazz greats. She is earthy yet refined and completely in touch with the band, she moans and cries at places that you'll find yourself wondering how she got there. "Darktown Strutters Ball", "Georgia Brown" and the intensely down and dirty "My Handyman" are sensual, comic and dramatically original-your body will react- guaranteed. Unpredictably fresh, this late great senior citizen packs all she's got and all we need, right in to each piece. I have given this CD as a gift to many people and they have all been smitten and grateful.
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