

Big Mama Thornton With The Muddy Waters Blues Band (1966)

Written by bluesever

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1. *I'm Feeling Alright* 3:01
2. *Sometimes I have a Heartache* 3:49
3. *Black Rat (take 4)* 2:52
4. *Life Goes On* 3:27
5. *Everything Gonna Be Alright* 5:05 [play](#)
6. *Big Mama's Bumble Bee Blues* 4:13
7. *Gimme A Penny (take 6)* 4:38
8. *Looking The World Over* 2:12
9. *I Feel The Way I Feel* 5:04
10. *Guide Me Home* 4:23
11. *Black Rat (take 2)* 2:52
12. *Wrapped Tight* 3:18
13. *Gimme A Penny (take 5)* 3:59
14. *Big Mama's Shuffle* 3:38
15. *Since I fell For You* 4:32 [play](#)
16. *I'm Feeling Alright (fast version)* 2:27
17. *Big Mama's Blues (My Love)* 4:08

Personnel:

Big Mama Thornton (vocals, harmonica, drums);
Big Mama Thornton; James Cotton (harmonica);
Luther "Houserocker" Johnson (bass guitar);
Muddy Waters, Sammy Lawhorn (guitar);
Otis Spann (piano);
Francis Clay (drums).

In the mid- '60s, Big Mama Thornton was a relatively obscure blues singer known mainly for her original recording of "Hound Dog" in 1953, three years before Elvis had a monster hit with it.

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Due to a lack of gigs, Thornton had a tough time keeping a steady band on the road and would scramble to gather consistently decent musicians. Fortunately, Arhoolie Records' founder and president Chris Strachwitz had witnessed an amazing performance of the era which had Thornton backed by a group of Chicago musicians who included Buddy Guy on guitar. With that performance in mind, Strachwitz was determined to capture that excellence in the studio. He offered the gig to Muddy Waters, whom he met in San Francisco a few days prior to this session. Muddy accepted and brought with him James Cotton (harmonica), Otis Spann (piano), Sammy Lawhorn (guitar), Luther "Guitar Junior" Johnson (bass), and Francis Clay (drums). What came out at Coast Recorders on April 25, 1966 is presented on this 17-track disc including seven previously unreleased cuts. From the low-down gutbucket blues of "Black Rat," and "Big Mama's Shuffle" (featuring both Thornton and James Cotton engaging in a battle of the harps), to the hazy, late-night atmosphere of "Life Goes On," "Since I Fell for You," and "I Feel the Way I Feel," all of this material is absolutely timeless. One can only imagine what would have happened if Big Mama's hopes of recording a gospel album with this band had been fulfilled. ---Al Campbell, AllMusic Review

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