

Earl Hooker – Funk Last of The Great Earl (1972)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 28 December 2010 11:22 - Last Updated Tuesday, 04 April 2017 12:43

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A1. *Wa-Wa Blues - part 1*

A2. *Wa-Wa Blues - part 2* [play](#)

A3. *Soul Cookin'*

A4. *Sweet Home Chicago #*

B1. *Hoker Cooker*

B2. *Huckle Bug*

B3. *The Real Blues*

B4. *Ball Game On A Rainy Day ** [play](#)

Rec. Chicago May 5, 1969;

Personnel:

Earl Hooker, g, # voc;

Jeff Karp, hca, * voc; poss.

Boots Hamilton, org;

Paul Asbell, g;

Gino Skaggs, b;

Roosevelt Shaw, dr

Earl Hooker (January 15, 1929 – April 21, 1970) was a Chicago blues guitarist. Hooker rarely sang and in a genre where the stars were vocalists or vocalists/instrumentalists, his commercial success was limited. However, he "was undeniably a virtuoso among guitar players" and has been acknowledged by many of his peers. As B.B. King commented: "to me he is the best of modern guitarists. Period. With the slide he was the best. It was nobody else like him, he was just one of a kind". Unlike his contemporaries Elmore James and Muddy Waters, Earl Hooker used standard tuning on his guitar for slide playing. He also used a short steel slide. This allowed him to switch between slide and fretted playing during a song with greater ease. Part of

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his slide sound has been attributed to his light touch, a technique he learned from Robert Nighthawk. "Instead of using full-chord glissando effects, he preferred the more subtle single-note runs inherited from others who played slide in standard tuning, [such as] Tampa Red, Houston Stackhouse, and his mentor Robert Nighthawk." In addition to his mastery of slide guitar, Hooker was also a highly developed standard-guitar soloist and rhythm player. At a time when many blues guitarists were emulating B.B. King, Hooker maintained his own course. Although he was a bluesman at heart, Hooker was adept at several musical styles, which he incorporated into his playing as it suited him. Depending on his mood and audience reaction, a Hooker performance could include blues, boogie-woogie, R&B/soul, be-bop, pop, and even a country & western favorite.

Earl Hooker was a flamboyant showman in the style of T-Bone Walker and predated Guitar Slim and Johnny "Guitar" Watson. He wore flashy clothes and would pick the guitar with his teeth or his feet or play it behind his neck or between his legs. He also played a double neck guitar, at first a six-string guitar and four-string bass combination and later a twelve- and six-string guitar combination. After his 1967 tuberculosis attack left him in a weakened state, he sometimes played while seated and using a lighter single-neck guitar.

In a genre that typically shunned gadgetry, Earl Hooker was an exception. He experimented with amplification and used echo and tape delay, including "double-tracking his playing during a song, [so] he could pick simultaneously two solos in harmony". In 1968, he began using a wah-wah pedal to add a vocal-like quality to some of his solos.

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