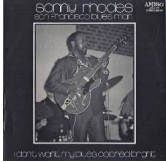


Sonny Rhodes - I Don't Want My Blues Colored Bright (1977)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 26 January 2016 17:05 -

Sonny Rhodes - I Don't Want My Blues Colored Bright (1977)



1 *One More Drink* 2 *Take The Bitter With The Sweet* 3 *Just Got In* 4 *All Night Long*
5 *They Play The Blues* 6 *Killing Floor* 7 *I'm So Lonely* 8 *Country Boy* 9 *How Long* 10 *J.J's Blues In G*
11 *Stranded* 12 *Sitting & Thinking* Sonny Rhodes – vocals, guitar J.J. Malone – piano, vocals
Charles Banks, Steve Gomes – bass Mike Watson – guitar Brad Johnson – alto saxophone
Michael Marcus – baritone saxophone Ken Baker – tenor saxophone Harold Attyberry – trumpet
Gary Smith - harmonica Harold Banks, Richard Milton – drums

Blues guitarist, singer, and songwriter Sonny Rhodes is such a talented songwriter, so full of musical ideas, that he's destined to inherit the seats left open by the untimely passing of blues greats like Albert King and Albert Collins.

Born November 3, 1940 in Smithville, TX, he was the sixth and last child of Le Roy and Julia Smith, who were sharecroppers. Rhodes began playing seriously when he was 12, although he got his first guitar when he was eight as a Christmas present. Rhodes began performing around Smithville and nearby Austin in the late '50s, while still in his teens. Rhodes listened to a lot of T-Bone Walker when he was young, and it shows in his playing today. Other guitarists he credits as being influences include Pee Wee Crayton and B.B. King. Rhodes' first band, Clarence Smith & the Daylighters, played the Austin area blues clubs before Rhodes decided to join the Navy after graduating from high school.

In the Navy, he moved west to California, where he worked for a while as a radio man and closed-circuit Navy ship disc jockey, telling off-color jokes in between the country and blues records he would spin for the entertainment of the sailors.

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Rhodes recorded a single for Domino Records in Austin, "I'll Never Let You Go When Something Is Wrong," in 1958, and also learned to play bass. He played bass behind Freddie King and his friend Albert Collins. After his stint in the Navy, Rhodes returned to California while in his mid-twenties, and lived in Fresno for a few years before hooking up a deal with Galaxy Records in Oakland. In 1966, he recorded a single, "I Don't Love You No More" b/w "All Night Long I Play the Blues." He recorded another single for Galaxy in 1967 and then in 1978, out of total frustration with the San Francisco Bay Area record companies, he recorded "Cigarette Blues" b/w "Bloodstone Beat" on his own label. Rhodes toured Europe in 1976, and that opened a whole new European market to him, and he was recorded by several European labels, but without much success. His European recordings include I Don't Want My Blues Colored Bright and a live album, In Europe. In desperation again, Rhodes went into the studio again to record an album in 1985, Just Blues, on his own Rhodesway label.

Fortunately, things have been on track for Rhodes since the late '80s, when he began recording first for the Ichiban label and later for Kingsnake. His albums for Ichiban include Disciple of the Blues (1991) and Living Too Close to the Edge (1992).

More recently, Rhodes has gotten better distribution of his albums with the Sanford, Florida-based Kingsnake label. Aside from his self-produced 1985 release Just Blues (now available on compact disc through Evidence Music), his best albums include the ones he's recorded for Kingsnake, for these are the records that have gotten Rhodes and his various backup bands out on the road together throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe. They include The Blues Is My Best Friend, and his 1995 release, Out of Control. On these albums we hear Rhodes, the fully developed songwriter, and not surprisingly, both releases drew high marks from blues critics. --- Richard Skelly, Rovi

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