Memphis Blues: Important Postwar Blues CD C (2006)

01. Rosco Gordon - T-Model Boogie 02. Rosco Gordon - Saddled The Cow (And Milked The Horse) 03. Willie Nix - Seems Like A Millon Years (Take 1) 04. Willie Nix - Riding In The Moonlight 05. L.B. Lawson - Can't Love Me And My Money Too 06. L.B. Lawson - Flypaper Boogie 07. Little Milton - Somebody Told Me 08. Little Milton - If You Love Me 09. Little Milton - Feelin' Good 10. Little Milton - Fussin' And Fightin' Blues 11. Billy 'Red' Love - Hart's Bread Boogie 12. Billy 'Red' Love - Blues Leave Me Alone 13. Joe Hill Louis - She Comes To See Me Sometime (take 1) 14. Joe Hill Louis - We All Gotta Go Sometime 15. Honeyboy Edwards - Sweet Home Chicago (take 1) 16. Mose Vinson - Mistreating Boogie 17. Mose Vinson - Worry You Off My Mind 18. L.C. Hubert - Lucy Done Moved - 2:30 19. Eddie Snow - Don't Dog Me Around 20. Eddie Snow - Skin And Bone (Take 1) 21. Johnny O'Neal - Dead Letter Blues (take 1) 22. Johnny O'Neal - Ugly Woman (take 3) 23. Houston Stokes - You'll Be Sorry 24. Houston Stokes - Blue And Lonsome 25. Raymond Hill - Long Gone Raymond 26. Raymond Hill - I'm Back Pretty Baby 27. Kenneth Banks - Blue Man (take 1) 28. Kenneth Banks - High (take 1)

As usual, JSP is not shy with the quantity of titles provided in this amazing 4-CD set of Memphis Blues. All of the songs in this collection were recorded by Sam Phillips at his Memphis Recording Services studio between 1951 and 1954, with some of them getting released on his home-grown Sun label. Many of the titles however, were not released until years after they were recorded, due to recording quality issues or due to Phillips' reluctance to market them as hit-parade material.

While some of these songs overlap the ones issued on the Varese 3-CD set "Sun Records: Ultimate Blues Collection", there is plenty of stuff here for collectors and non-collectors alike to go crazy with. The sheer volume of material itself is almost overwhelming but the musical integrity suffers not in spite of.

Sam Phillips had a sensitive nose for talent and this attribute ensured that many who came to his studio looking to make a record were not overlooked. Even Sam Phillip's janitor/plumber got to put down 2 songs (Mose Vinson) and the evidence is that the guy could have made a living as a musician. The long term result of all of this musical activity is that JSP have compiled here, a priceless miniature archive of indigenous Memphis area blues circa post-WW2.

Here also, are some rare and early titles by better-known artists like Earl Hooker, James Cotton, Little Jr. Parker, Little Milton, Howlin' Wolf, Rufus Thomas, Big Walter Horton, Ike Turner, Bobby Bland, and Johnny Ace. All of these artists went on to other labels and more success following the demise of Memphis Recording Services.

The real treasures however, are the numbers waxed by the artists who made a few titles then left the business or vanished. The listener of this set will be treated to much additional pleasure from Doctor Ross, Joe Hill Louis, Jimmy DeBerry, Sammy Lewis, Willie Johnson (who became Howlin Wolf's working guitarist for a while), Willie Nix, and Houston Stokes.

Liner notes by long-term blues booster Neil Slaven are comprehensive and do a good job of drilling directly to the political times, the music business, and to the historical significance of this fine music. Collect this music now while it is still available in an artistically presentable format; it won't stay around like this forever.

Listeners who enjoy the music on this collection are encouraged to seek out the 4 single CD volumes of Memphis and neighbouring area blues, recorded for the Modern Records label (a competitor to Sun Records) around the same time, and re-released recently by Ace Records in England. --- Curtiss Clarke, amazon.com

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