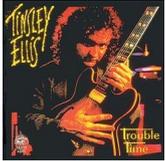


Tinsley Ellis - Trouble Time (1992)

Written by bluesever
Friday, 01 April 2016 16:46 -

Tinsley Ellis - Trouble Time (1992)



1 - Highwayman 2 - Hey Hey Baby 3 - Sign of the Blues 4 - What Have I Done Wrong? 5 - The Big Chicken 6 - The Axe 7 - Come Morning 8 - My Restless Heart 9 - Bad Dream 10 - The Hulk 11 - Now I'm Gone 12 - Red Dress Tinsley Ellis (vocals, guitar); Peter Buck (guitar); Sam Levine (tenor saxophone); Mike Haynes, Michael Holton (trumpet); Chris McDonald (trombone); Mike Boyette (piano, organ); Chuck Leavell (piano); Oliver Wells (organ, keyboards); Ricky Keller, James Ferguson (bass); Scott Meeder, David Sims (drums).

Hard-rocking blues-soaked guitarist/vocalist/song-writer Tinsley Ellis sings and plays with the energy and soul of all the great Southern musicians who have come before him. He attacks his music with rock power and blues feeling, following in the tradition of Deep South musical heroes Duane Allman, Freddie King, Derek Trucks and Warren Haynes. Rolling Stone says "Ellis plays feral blues guitar. Non-stop gigging has sharpened his six-string to a razor's edge. His eloquence dazzles—he achieves pyrotechnics that rival Jeff Beck and Eric Clapton."

His live shows feature extended fretwork filled with melodic and rhythmic experimentation, in the spirit of jam bands like his friends Widespread Panic and The Allman Brothers. Atlanta Magazine declared Ellis "the most significant blues artist to emerge from Atlanta since Blind Willie McTell." Since first hitting the national scene with his Alligator Records debut, Georgia Blue, in 1988, Ellis has toured non-stop and continued to release one critically acclaimed album after another. His stellar guitar work, always a staple of his live shows and CDs, is matched by his strong songwriting and powerful, soulful vocals. Tinsley's hometown paper, The Atlanta Journal Constitution, calls his music, "a potent, amazing trip through electric blues-rock."

Ellis made five critically acclaimed albums for Alligator between 1988 and 1997, before recording for the Capricorn and Telarc labels. Now he's back on Alligator with the incendiary,

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high-energy Live--Highwayman, the long-awaited live album his fans have been demanding for years. The CD is overflowing with over 77 minutes of music, making this the longest single release in Alligator's catalog.

Born in Atlanta in 1957, Ellis grew up in southern Florida and first played guitar at age eight. He found the blues through the backdoor of the British Invasion bands like The Yardbirds, The Animals, Cream, and The Rolling Stones. He especially loved the Kings-Freddie, B.B. and Albert-and spent hours immersing himself in their music. His love for the blues solidified when he was 14. At a B.B. King performance, Tinsley sat mesmerized in the front row. When B.B. broke a string on Lucille, he changed it without missing a beat, and handed the broken string to Ellis. After the show, B.B. came out and talked with fans, further impressing Tinsley with his warmth and down-to-earth attitude. By now Tinsley's fate was sealed; he had to become a blues guitarist. And yes, he still has that string.

Already an accomplished teenaged musician, Ellis left Florida and returned to Atlanta in 1975. He soon joined the Alley Cats, a gritty blues band that included Preston Hubbard (of Fabulous Thunderbirds fame). In 1981, along with veteran blues singer and harpist Chicago Bob Nelson, Tinsley formed The Heartfixers, a group that would become Atlanta's top-drawing blues band. The band built a grassroots following and Tinsley began drawing national attention. The Washington Post declared, "Tinsley Ellis is a legitimate guitar hero."

After cutting two more Heartfixers albums for Landslide, Cool On It (featuring Tinsley's vocal debut) and Tore Up (with vocals by blues shouter Nappy Brown), Ellis was ready to head out on his own. Ellis sent a copy of the master tape for his solo debut to Bruce Iglauer at Alligator Records. "I had heard Cool On It," recalls Iglauer, "and I was amazed. I hadn't heard Tinsley before, but he played like the guys with huge international reputations. It wasn't just his raw power; it was his taste and maturity that got to me. It had the power of rock but felt like the blues." After checking out a fiery live performance in Atlanta, Iglauer signed Ellis to Alligator.

Georgia Blue, Tinsley's Alligator debut, hit an unprepared public by surprise in 1988. Critics and fans quickly agreed that a new and original guitar hero had emerged. "Dazzling musicianship pitched somewhere between the exhilarating volatility of rock and roll and the passion of urban blues," raved the Los Angeles Times. Before long, Alligator arranged to reissue Cool On It and Tore Up, thus exposing Tinsley's blistering earlier music to a growing fan base. "The Chicago Tribune celebrated the release by saying, 'Ellis takes classic, Southern blues-rock workouts and jolts them to new life with a torrid axe barrage.'"

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Tinsley followed Georgia Blue with 1989's Fanning The Flames, 1992's Trouble Time, 1994's Storm Warning and 1997's Fire It Up, showcasing his songwriting skills as well as his incendiary guitar playing. He built a rabid national fan base and won rave reviews. Guitar World shouted, "Ellis stands alongside Stevie Ray Vaughan and Johnny Winter, and that ain't just hype." "Alive, kicking and drenched in sweat," declared The Washington Post.

Features and reviews on Tinsley have run in Rolling Stone, The Chicago Tribune, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, The Boston Globe, The Associated Press wire service and in many other national and regional publications. His largest audience by far came when NBC Sports ran a feature on Atlanta's best blues guitarist during their 1996 Summer Olympic Coverage viewed by millions of people all over the world.

A move to Capricorn Records in 2000 saw Ellis revisiting his Southern roots with Kingpin. Unfortunately, the label folded soon after the CD's release. In 2002, he joined the Telarc label, producing two well-received albums of soul-drenched blues-rock, Hell Or High Water and The Hard Way. But now, with Live--Highwayman, Tinsley is back home with Alligator Records. He's back on the road with renewed energy, delivering, as the Chicago Tribune says, "incendiary live performances, inspired, original and funky."

Tinsley Ellis has played in all 50 states, as well as Canada, Europe, Australia and South America. "A musician never got famous staying home," he's quick to note. Whether he's out with his own band or sharing stages with The Allman Brothers, Robert Cray, Koko Taylor or Widespread Panic, he averages over 150 fast-moving, high-energy, guitar-drenched performances a year, igniting legions of fans all over the world. --- intrepidartists.com

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