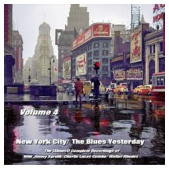
New York City - The Blues Yesterday Vol.4



01. Scratch'n'twist 02. Slow draggin' 03. Kansas City march 04. Hard grind Wild Jimmy Spruill, guitar; band. New York City, 1959
05. Lonely island Chico Cha Cha
Wild Jimmy Spruill, guitar; Dave Cortez, organ, piano; band. New York City, 1960
06. Country boy 07. Scratchin'
Wild Jimmy Spruill, vocals, guitar; Bam Walters, tenor saxophone; Horace Cooper, piano; John Robertson, drums; vocals. New York City, 1964
08. The rooster 09. Cut and dried 10. Lonesome melody 11. Raisin' hell
Wild Jimmy Spruill, guitar; Irving Johnson, vocals; band. New York City, 1964
12. Party Hardy
Wild Jimmy Spruill, guitar; band. New York City, c. 1969
13. I got a brand new mojo
Wild Jimmy Spruill, vocals, guitr; Larry Dale, vocals, guitar; Charles Collins, keybds, bass, drums. New York City, 1987
14. Jump for joy 15. Walkin'
Charlie Luca Combo: Wild Jimmy Spruill, guitar; Horace Cooper, piano; Ben Walters, tenor saxophone; Charlie Jackson, tenor saxophone; Charlie Lucas, bass; John Robertson, drums. New York City, 1963
16. The Biddy Leg 17. My type of girl
Walter Rhodes, vocals, guitar; The Memos, vocal group; band. New York City, 1959
18. Strollie bun 19. I am to blame
Walter Rhodes, vocals, guitar, saxes; Walking Willie, piano; Leonard Edwards, guitar, bass; Leo Price, drums. New York City, may 1960
20. Aw shucks baby 21. I'm mad Pickin' cotton 22. Ain't nothing but gossip
Walter Rhodes (as Little Red Walters), vocals, guitar, harmonica, tenor saxophone; Walking Willie, piano; Leonard Edwards, bass; Freddie Shwakes, drums. New York City, december 1960
23. You can run but you can't hide
Walter Rhodes, vocals, guitar; band. New York City, 1962
24. I worship the ground you walk on 25. Uncle Sam
Walter Rhodes, vocals, guitar; band. New York City, 1963
26. It's not what you do 27. Message to my woman
Walter Rhodes, vocals, guitar, harmonica; band. New York City, 1971

Let's go back to New York City yesterday for a fourth compilation! Wild Jimmy Spruill (1934-1996) is born in Fayetteville (North Carolina) among a sharecropping family, learning the guitar while listening to Country Music radio programmes, a strong and lasting influence. When arriving in New York in 1955, Spruill is already a masterful guitarist and quickly finds the path of the local studios, particularly those of Bobby and Danny Robinson for whom he recorded a lot of sessions. His clean, sharp, precise, virtuoso and expressive guitar is on the forefront of many records and Hits by Dave Cortez, Wilbert Harrison, Bobby Lewis, The Shirelles, Noble Watts & June Bateman ... He also records some 45s under his name that are highly rated by blues fans all over the world. Anyway, Spruill is certainly not confined to the blues genre and those loving his style should certainly lend an ear to those great Country guitarists of the era like Hank Garland, Joe Maphis or Jimmy Bryant who are in similar style than Spruill. We have gathered here almost all of his recorded output (under his name that is) but, despite our and friends' efforts, I'm still missing three titles. Thanks to anyone who would own it and willing to share on this blog. Rediscovered briefly by some British collectors in the 1980's, Spruill died from a heart attack in his Motel room while he was on tour in the Southern States. We have included also here the only single by the Charlie Lucas Combo in which Spruill is heavily featured. In fact, Lucas was the one-time bass player of the regular Jimmy Spruill's band.

Walter Rhodes (1939-1990) came also from North Carolina to New York at the end of the 1950's. He plays guitar and harmonica on several sessions, recording as a member of The Memos, a vocal group and then under different names (The Blonde Bomber, Little Red Walters, Walter Rhodes), alternating blues and more rock or even pop-oriented pieces. We have gathered all his recordings minus one title (Cotton Pickin') that would be nice to feature here if anyone is willing to share. Rhodes has also been rediscovered in the 1980's, touring Europe quite often as a surprising country blues solo acoustic number. He waxed two excellent albums in this style for the Dutch Swingmaster label. ---Gérard Herzhaft, jukegh.blogspot.com

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