

Hubert Sumlin - Hubert's American Blues! (1969)

Written by bluesever

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1-My Babe 2-Hubert's Blues 3-We Gonna Jump 4-Too Late For Me To Pray 5-I Love 6-It's You My Baby 7-Love You, Woman 8-Every Time I Get To Drinking 9-When I Feel Better 10-Blues Any Time Hubert Sumlin - Guitar, Vocals Clifton James - Drums Sunnyland Slim - Piano, Vocals Willie Dixon – Bass

Quiet and extremely unassuming off the bandstand, Hubert Sumlin played a style of guitar incendiary enough to stand tall beside the immortal Howlin' Wolf. The Wolf was Sumlin's imposing mentor for more than two decades, and it proved a mutually beneficial relationship; Sumlin's twisting, darting, unpredictable lead guitar constantly energized the Wolf's 1960s Chess sides, even when the songs themselves (check out "Do the Do" or "Mama's Baby" for conclusive proof) were less than stellar.

Sumlin started out twanging the proverbial broom wire nailed to the wall before he got his mitts on a real guitar. He grew up near West Memphis, AR, briefly hooking up with another young lion with a rosy future, harpist James Cotton, before receiving a summons from the mighty Wolf to join him in Chicago in 1954.

Sumlin learned his craft nightly on the bandstand behind Wolf, his confidence growing as he graduated from rhythm guitar duties to lead. By the dawn of the '60s, Sumlin's slashing axe was a prominent component on the great majority of Wolf's waxings, including "Wang Dang Doodle," "Shake for Me," "Hidden Charms" (boasting perhaps Sumlin's greatest recorded solo), "Three Hundred Pounds of Joy," and "Killing Floor." Although they had a somewhat tempestuous relationship, Sumlin remained loyal to Wolf until the big man's 1976 death. But there were a handful of solo sessions for Sumlin before that, beginning with a most unusual 1964 date in East Berlin that was produced by Horst Lippmann during a European tour under the auspices of the American Folk Blues Festival (the behind-the-Iron Curtain session also featured pianist

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Sunnyland Slim and bassist Willie Dixon).

Only in the last few years has Sumlin allowed his vocal talents to shine. He's recorded solo sets for Black Top and Blind Pig that show him to be an understated but effective singer -- and his guitar continues to communicate most forcefully.

This is the 1st solo lp from Hubert recorded in 1964 and released on the Scout label in Germany in 1969. Backing him are Willie Dixon, Clifton James and Sunnyland Slim. --- coblues.com

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