

Little Milton - Blues n' Soul (1974)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Woman Across the River* 2. *Behind Closed Doors* 3. *Sweet Woman of Mine* 4. *Worried Dreamer* 5. *How Could You Do It to Me* 6. *You're No Good* 7. *T'Ain't Nobody's Biz-Ness If I Do* 8. *Hard Luck Blues* Little Milton - guitar, vocals Lester Snell - piano Willie Hall - drums Michael Toles - guitars Bobby Manuel William Murphy David Weatherspoon – bass Memphis Horns

Having already recorded for both Sun and Chess Records, two of the most historically significant labels in the history of blues and rock, Little Milton signed to Stax in the early '70s, adding yet another heavyweight to his catalog. On *Blues 'N' Soul*, he is joined by many of the same musicians that backed him on his Stax studio debut, *Waiting for Little Milton*, including drummer Willie Hall, guitarist Bobby Manuel, bassist Willie Murphy, and pianist Lester Snell. An impassioned singer, Milton's early-'70s output indeed began to walk the fine line between the blues and soul of the album title, a fact accentuated by the sparkling touches of the Memphis Horns. Although there are only two originals in the set, the singer's interpretations of songs popularized by Charlie Rich ("*Behind Closed Doors*"), Linda Ronstadt ("*You're No Good*") and Freddie King ("*Woman Across the River*") are just as convincing. Milton's own "*Sweet Woman of Mine*" captures the combo in an up-tempo mode, simultaneously tough and swinging. "*Tain't Nobody's Business If I Do*" is a tour de force of soul-blues that paces itself exquisitely across six and a half minutes, and "*Hard Luck Blues*" concludes the set with a hard funk groove.

Throughout the album, the arranging skills of James Mitchell demonstrate how strings can be incorporated into a hard blues setting. Though they provide ample color to these productions, they do little to dilute the essential nature of the music. Excluding the singles collection *Walking the Back Streets*, *Blues 'N' Soul* may very well be Milton's best set for Stax. ---- Nathan Bush, allmusic.com

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