

Tim Buckley – Blue Afternoon (1969)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Happy Time* – 3:13
02. *Chase The Blues Away* – 5:11
03. *I Must Have Been Blind* – 3:43
04. *The River* – 5:45
05. *So Lonely* – 3:27
06. *Cafe* – 5:25
07. *Blue Melody* – 4:54
08. *The Train* – 7:53

Personnel:

- Tim Buckley – 12-string guitar, vocals
- John Balkin - bass
- Lee Underwood – guitar, piano
- David Friedman – percussion
- John Miller – acoustic & electric bass
- Jimmy Madison – drums
- Carter C.C. Collins - conductor, congas on 07

Blue Afternoon was Tim Buckley's first self-produced record and his debut for Herb Cohen and Frank Zappa's Straight label. Buckley's first two albums were very much of their time and place, with their psychedelically tinged folk-rock compositions; naïve, romantic lyrical content; and moments of earnest protest. The introduction of acoustic bass and vibes into the arrangements on Happy Sad signaled a change in direction, however, and Blue Afternoon displayed similar jazz tendencies, using the same group of musicians plus drummer Jimmy Madison. Several tracks on Blue Afternoon are songs Buckley had intended to record on earlier albums but had not completed. The brooding "Chase the Blues Away" and the lighter, more upbeat "Happy Time," for instance, are numbers he had worked on in the summer of 1968 for possible inclusion on Happy Sad. (Demos can be heard on Rhino's Works in Progress album.) Here, as

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he did on Happy Sad, Buckley takes the folk song as his starting point and expands it, drawing on jazz influences to create new dynamics and to emphasize atmosphere and mood. This approach can be best appreciated on the mournful "The River," as simple acoustic guitar, cymbals, and vibes build a fluid, ebbing, and flowing arrangement around Buckley's beautiful, melancholy vocals. The period between 1968 and 1970 was an intensely creative one for Tim Buckley. Remarkably, during the same four weeks in which he recorded Blue Afternoon, he also recorded its follow-up, Lorca, and material for Starsailor. It's not surprising, then, that Blue Afternoon hints at Buckley's subsequent musical direction. While not in the experimental, avant-garde vein of the more challenging material on those next two albums, "The Train" foregrounds Lee Underwood's quietly intense, jazzy guitar and Buckley's vocal prowess, prefiguring the feeling of tracks like Lorca's "Nobody Walkin'" and Starsailor's "Monterey."
---Wilson Neate, AllMusic Review

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