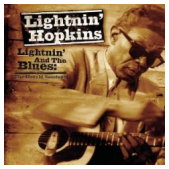
Lightnin’ Hopkins – Lightnin’ And The Blues (2001)



1. Nothin' But The Blues 2:22
2. Don't Think Cause You're Pretty 2:40
3. Lightnin's Boogie 2:34 play
4. Life I Used To Live 2:47
5. Sick Feelin' Blues 2:14
6. Evil Hearted Woman 2:45
7. Blues For My Cookie 2:26
8. Sittin' Here Thinkin 2:44
9. My Baby's Gone 2:46
10. Lonesome In Your Home 2:44
11. Lightnin's Special 2:24 play
12. My Little Kewpie Doll 2:21
13. Shine On Moon 2:41
14. Had A Gal Called Sal 2:17
15. Remember Me 2:40
16. Moving On Out Boogie 2:19

Sam "Lightnin'" Hopkins belongs on the Mount Rushmore of great blues artists. You'll get a strong sense of why upon listening to the 16 tracks (including four unearthed specially for the CD) that the fortyish Texan made for Herald Records in 1954, about the time his African American fans deserted his country blues for a more modern sound. Hopkins sings "Sick Feelin' Blues" and the rest (except for a couple of boogie instrumentals) in a carefully regulated yet declarative manner, expounding on rotten luck with women and life through an outstanding blend of warmth and self-awareness. Though usually thought of as an acoustic guitar picker, he plugs in here and lets amplification give an edge of unresolved tension to his jagged rhythms and idiosyncratic musical ideas. And while Hopkins is better known as a solo performer, he gets chased by a frisky rhythm section throughout. --Frank-John Hadley

The legendary Herald sessions are (partially) presented here, remastered and sounding great. These 1954 recordings have Lightnin' on electric guitar with bass and drums, something that wouldn't happen again for a while. The album that this CD reproduces, "Lightnin' and the Blues," didn't sell, incredible as that may seem now. The market for Lightnin's style of blues was disappearing among black audiences, and record companies were too dumb and/or shortsighted to really try to market the blues more widely than among that audience. Fortunately for him, Lightnin' was "discovered" a few years later during the "folk blues" boom of the 1960s, where sanctimonious folkies looking for the "pure blues" recorded any bluesman they could find - as long as he was playing acoustic guitar. Lightnin', never one to pass up an opportunity to make a few bucks, pulled out the acoustic and obliged, to the tune of about half a million albums' worth of material. Unfortunately, the vast amount of acoustic material Lightnin' cut tends to overshadow his electric guitar work, which is at the center of this CD. His electric guitar playing is raffish, offhanded, sly, sinister, and altogether engaging, exactly like his songs.

Lightnin' recorded with bass and drums subsequent to this, particularly for his Prestige/Bluesville sides, but the drummer and bassist on those recordings were altogether too polite and stolid. Here, his accompanists push him, and Lightnin' pushes back, distorted amp and all. This rocks, seriously, and bear in mind this was in 1954, when rock and roll music was largely pudgy white fellas with well-pomaded quiffs playing accelerated versions of swing music. Lightnin's hairy, rough, driven take on the blues here is years ahead of its time, probably one reason why "Lightnin' and the Blues," didn't sell like it should have in its day. In later years, listeners realized how great this album was, and collectors swooped in, soaking up the short supply of original albums, and keeping most people - even Hopkins fans - from hearing this important work. Here, however, we have the entire album plus extra cuts, in terrifically remastered digital form. Even if you have every other Lightnin' CD out there, you need this one, and if you have never encountered Lightnin' before, this is a great place to start.

download (mp3 @192 kbs):

yandex mediafire ulozto solidfiles global.files

back