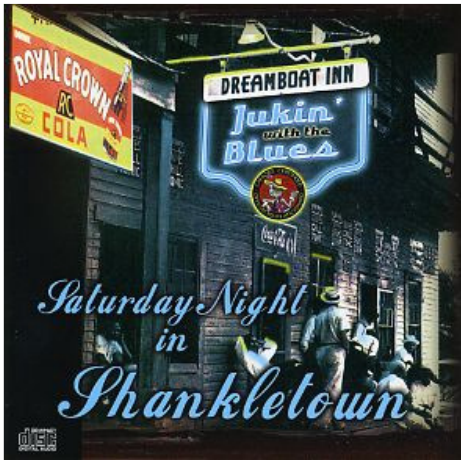


FAME Review: Various Artists - Saturday Night in Shankletown (Jukin' Wit da Blues)

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Saturday Night in Shankletown (Jukin' Wit da Blues)

Various Artists

Catbone Unreleased Music & Film - CB-2001-2

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
(progdawg@hotmail.com).

MVD and the Catbone Unreleased labels have come together to trot out a series of raucous anthologies that are a tad puzzling in their origins and manifestations but unmistakably jumpin' hot in raw rave ups and boogie-down juke joint backalley seminaring. From what can be gathered, the tracks in this and other cavalcades in the series are from diverse sources, including rescues from old Berkeley college radio days in the 60s and 70s, presented now for the first time. Others are picked up from God only knows where. The liner notes are vague, generic, a bit too often not quite relevant to the disc at hand, and oft inadequate, though it must be admitted that this only adds to the sense of the forbidden inherent in the series' ambiance -- some versions of which I know I've heard, others I've not, but all of which come together in a smoky hip-shaking celebration.

In accord with that, blues and rock & roll are the blue plate specials, and no one's in the least interested in observing manners or decorum; thus, such things have a strange way of working out. If you dig your blues with all the stank, grease, dim lights, pomade, and gumbo the form is capable of, this series is a revelation, the kind of sound not heard since the days of Butterfield, Bloomfield, the Electric Flag, the era when Chicago stylings re-met Louisiana / New Orleans soul. This is exactly the labels' intent: to remind the public at large about where it all started. In *Shankletown*, the initial two cuts by Billy Boy Arnold just absolutely reek with across-the-tracks midnight prowls and lower East Side trysts, followed by such luminaries as Muddy Waters, James Cotton, etc. And, God almighty, that harp on Cotton's *You Know It Ain't Right* in a smokestack lightning shuffle!!! If it gets better than that, take me now, Lord!

There's the unmistakable air of antiquity here, a preservationist throwback to grindhouse days of theaters of ill repute and gin joints populated by bopsters, dangerous characters, and young college hipsters looking for an alternative to primly repellent church/synagogue suffocations, a tracing back to lost but far more human roots in the unrestrained eros of the moment. And, hey, if you find yourself recoiling a bit from such earthy intimations, from the scent of the ribald, then, brother and sister, you really DO need this more than you think, especially in a time of increasing technocratic oppression and ruling class madness. After all, as Howlin' Wolf proudly lauds right off the top "Men, you know I've enjoyed things that kings and queens never have, that kings and queens can't never get, and they don't even know about!" Therein lies all the difference.

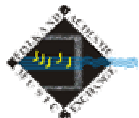
The theme running through the various releases following on the heels of this one is 'Jukin' wit da Blues', itself automatically a lower class affection for the rough and tumble, the pizza joints, the juice houses, the interracial Hells' Kitchens ensconced in more than one borough around the U.S., and if you ain't yet schooled, welcome to the classroom.

Track List:

- **Billy Boy Arnold:** I Wish You Could
- **Billy Boy Arnold:** El Dorado
- **Muddy Waters:** Forty Days & Forty Nights
- **James Cotton:** Jelly Jelly
- **George Cummings:** Gumbo Man
- **James Cotton:** Diggin' Potatoes
- **Muddy Waters:** Going Home
- **Commodores:** I Know I'm Losing You
- **Jack Millman:** Woody 'N You
- **Peter Frampton / Nanette Workman:** Lovin' Cup
- **Muddy Waters:** Rock Me
- **James Cotton:** You Know It Ain't Right
- **Howlin' Wolf:** Going Down Slow
- **George Cummings:** Sand Mountain Boogie
- **James Cotton:** Fore Days
- **Mike Bloomfield:** Cherry Red
- **Ken Hatley:** Saturday Night in Shankletown

Edited by: David N. Pyles
(dnpyles@acousticmusic.com)

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Website design by David N. Pyles
DNPyles@acousticmusic.com
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