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Blues CD Reviews: “Saturday Night in Shankletown” and “Mean Streets”

Saturday Night in Shankletown

and

Mean Streets (Catbone Records)

By Brian Arsenault

About the time the sax solo began on James Cotton’s slow song of pain from lost love, “Jelly Jelly,” I decided I really like this CD. I was already pretty much there from the bouncing Billy Boy Arnold “El Dorado,” a roadhouse dance tune that defies you to sit still. Not to mention Muddy’s “40 Days and 40 Nights” where that voice signs on as distinctively as always.

Saturday Night in Shankeltown is like that all the way through with only a couple curious bumps. (George Cummings? Really?) It’s nearly an hour of unreleased or rare blues and rhythm and blues recordings. *Mean Streets* is three minutes longer for a full hour of this good stuff.