

BLUES REVUE

THE WORLD'S BLUES MAGAZINE

America's Music Legacy Blues -DVD

MVD Visual

BluesWax Rating: 7

Blues Meets Jazz

This DVD was shot in 1982 on a small stage in a nightclub setting and is hosted by **Brock Peters**. It meanders from live footage to some excellent flashback film segments from the past.

B.B. King is in fine fettle on "Everyday I Have the Blues," but "How Blue Can You Get" sounds flat, and his "All Over Again" is an odd inclusion. **Leatta Galloway's** covers of "Fine and Mellow" and "Stormy Monday" are lame and reminiscent of a Vegas lounge act. There's a nice but too short **Jimmy Rushing** film clip, and **Ernie Andrews** just wails on "Ernie's Blues" showcasing his outstanding vocal prowess.

Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson's powerful alto introduces "Cleanhead Blues" and slips into some tantalizing vocals. B.B. and **Linda Hopkins** really tear up "Everyday I Have the Blues" and Hopkins continues the roll with **Vi Reed's** sax on "St. Louis Blues." **Pee Wee Crayton** absolutely sizzles on the all too short "After Hours" and fortunately stays on with the All Star Band with vocalists **Linda Hopkins** and **Ernie Andrews** on "Jammin' the Blues."

The great **Joe Williams** is razor sharp on his classic "Come Back" and returns later in this fine show. The wild, slinky, and somewhat erotic dancing of **Paula Kelly** comes off as more Vegas lounge material on her curious cover of "Ain't Nobody's Business." "**Little**" **Esther Phillips** barrels through a nice rendition of "Early In the Morning" and does a fine take "Cherry Red" made famous by Eddie Vinson, who unfortunately does not appear on this version.

There's also some mention as to how the great **Johnny Otis** founded and put Esther on the map. A smiling **Brownie McGee** tantalizes on guitar with the full band backing him on a lengthy "Life is a Gamble." **Buddy Guy** is all blues and no baloney with **Junior Wells** when they rip through "Who's Lovin' You Tonight." The absolute highlight of the evening is pianist **Dorothy**

Donigan who sails on the eighty-eights on "After Hours" with a nice segue into "Bye, Bye Blackbird." This is a fabulous and dynamic performance by a lady deserving of far more recognition. Wrapping things up is Joe Williams with Esther Phillips on a glorious "No One Knows You When You Down and Out," followed by an interview segment with Williams acknowledging the great **Big Joe Turner**.

All the performers are accompanied by the versatile five-piece Jazz combo under the tutelage of band master and pianist **Gerald Wiggins**. **Andy Simpkins** is on bass and **Teddy Edwards** on sax. **Paul Humphrey** is (as always) proficient on drums, and the legendary **Harry "Sweets" Edison** is sharp on his trumpet.

One odd omission: there is a performance by a blues singer-guitarist named **Addie**. However, she is not mentioned on the track listings on the back of DVD packaging nor in the biographies or on the DVD. Sad, but true, no loss either way...

The video quality is lackluster, but, hey, this is 1982. The sound quality is more than acceptable, especially considering its age. The DVD length is two hours, and there's more than enough ear and eye-catching performances to perk your interests. Plus many of these performers are no longer with us, so procuring a copy of this DVD is an important addition to your audio/video collection. Unfortunately, there's minimal liner notes included, but the biographies of the performers, except for Addie, are nicely exemplified on the DVD, as are most of the individual track listings.

Pour yourself a cocktail, sit back, and enjoy this, baby. Why? Because they don't make them like this anymore. This video is a great example of where the blues meets jazz in its almost pure concoction. In today's world these performances are a long-lost art form. Call me generational, but this fact is poignant, and resoundingly true. Enjoy!

Bob Putignano a senior contributing editor at BluesWax. He is also the heart of Sounds of Blues at www.SoundsofBlue.com. Bob would like to hear your comments regarding this review. You may comment below.