

## **DOWN HOME BLUES NEW YORK**

### **Wienerworld 4 CD Box**

Actually, the full title of this epic collection also covers Cincinnati and the North Eastern States. These were very influential regions in developing the blues and one of the wonderful things about this fascinating compilation of 110 tracks, a true labour of love by aficionado Peter Moody, is the sheer one-off recording obscurity of some of the 37 artists included. Sure enough, some big names are here; such as Brownie McGhee, Sonny Terry and Champion Jack Dupree, but it's the lesser known performers that provide you with the bigger picture. That picture is of a tough, long-gone world of small smoky urban bars and rural juke joints, the down-home foundries where blues was cast. The scholarly, illustrated 80 page book by Chris Bentley which accompanies this reveals many new angles on branches of the blues which are often overlooked, for example, those artists who didn't migrate from places such as Mississippi to Chicago. Here are forgotten gems from performers from other places, such as Florida, the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama. Fortunately, with modern TV we're in the age of bingeing, so it'll be no problem to work your way over five hours through these four disks. If you're looking for rarities, there are plenty; how about Skoodle-Dum-Doo and Sheffield's Gas Station Blues; classic stuff with harp and acoustic guitar, recorded in 1943 when the US rationed gasoline. There's plenty of fine piano playing in this age before screaming guitars - for example tracks by Alonzo Scales and the atmospheric Doctor Gaddy and his Orchestra. Or how about the stripped back guitar and fine vocals of Doug Quattlebaum's Don't be Funny Baby. You can cut a rug to several lively tracks by Cousin Leroy, and some of the artists' names alone will draw you in - Guitar Nubbit, Guitar Crusher, The Bees or Lick, Slick and Slide (what a great band name...) Reading Chris Bentley's book as you wander through this musical archaeology site will give you hours of blues pleasure, as it must have done for compiler Peter Moody. Here are voices who were briefly heard, singers who may have made just one recording, yet laudably preserved for posterity. This is the blues as raw as it comes, a worthy addition to any blues fan's collection.

ROY BAINTON