



## **Blues Legacy: Lost & Found Series, Vol. I, II, III**

Review by Joe Milliken

British jazz giant Chris Barber was largely responsible for bringing many of the legendary American blues artists to European and U.K. concert halls for the first time in the 1950's, including Sonny Boy Williamson, Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters.

Many of these concerts were broadcast over the radio waves and would influence young listeners into becoming future rock and rollers such as the Yardbirds, Kinks and The Rolling Stones.

Barber recently uncovered many of these unreleased gems that were thought to be long since destroyed, and has teamed up with MVD Audio to present The Blues Legacy: Lost & Found Series, a three volume CD series featuring many tracks that are being not only released but heard for the first time.

Volume I features two concerts recorded in 1957 at the Manchester Free Trade Hall in England, featuring Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee with the Chris Barber Band.

Volume II features a previously unreleased Muddy Waters (who just passed away last week) show from 1958, a Sonny Terry/Brownie McGhee show from 1958 and a Louis Jordan show (1962) from the Manchester Free Trade Hall, while Volume III features previously unreleased live performances from Sonny Boy Williamson (1964), Jimmy Witherspoon (1964) and a Howlin' Wolf/Hubert Smith show from Manchester, England.

Although a couple of these artists may not be familiar to the average blues and/or gospel fan, in this case it simply does not matter. If you are a blues fan or even just curious about the genre, these recordings are fascinating to listen to. And for historic reasons just as much as the music!

What perhaps surprised this reviewer the most however is the clarity of sound in these 'lost recordings'. Thinking the music would be 'listenable' at best, the music is quite frankly, pristine considering most of the recordings are over 50 years old and thought to have been long since destroyed. The music is rare, historical and it sounds great!