

Mp3 The Rocky Mountain All Stars - Daddy's Comin' Home



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Dancy Party R&B Soul. 10 MP3 Songs URBAN/R&B: Motown, URBAN/R&B: Disco (R&B) Details: Monogram Sighting: The Gifted and the Stray By Raleigh Collins Reprinted with permission. CityLights, August 2003 Tim Duffy comes to us from a bizarre cocoon of sightings, searches triggered from an early 60's kid sighted under the stage, sneaking in at the early Newport Jazz Festival as early as 1964, hypnotized by Mose Allison, Howlin Wolf, and Coleman Hawkins - and an encounter with Monk in an alley in Boston at age 12. Manchild Duffy went on to be an art student at RISD, sculptor, breaking out on weekends to be the music guy for "happenings" with Alan Kaprow, in the museums, the forerunner to what is now called performance art. Sun Ra's bag man for a season at the Monday night stand in 1966 at Pookies Pub, roadie for Miles Davis for a minute, the same for Muddy Waters. In the east coast coterie of Charles Lloyd and Keith Jarrett, Tim experienced improvisation with a spiritual and cosmic bent that bent the way that only 1966 could bend you. He started writing songs and scatting with blues bands, and fell into a surrealist's manifesto that only an art student raised on jazz could do. He was tipped by Spade Arson, legendary bodyguard for Jimi Hendrix (and later the inventor of JiffyPop), that musicians he needed were in Colorado. Without skipping a beat, he ceremoniously left the east coast directly from the grave of Jack Kerouac in 1969. A surrealist kid from the museum circuit, writing songs, singing, and bandleading wild contingents, he coined "an event orchestra." Sculptor, madman along the fringes, absurdist, and R&B frontman, he hitched to Miami to try to make a band with 14 year-old Jaco Pastorius, and was out of there in ten days. He appeared as "Tato MoonSprings, the Unchained" for a year on a midwest R&B club circuit - wearing 70 pounds of plastic fruit onstage - to the aloof or bewildered responses of those calling out for "Shotgun" and "I Feel Good." For Duffy, writing included an array of elements, including James Brown tributes, "interruptionism," and surprise arrangements" - pointillistic

staccato that the R&B horn section studied like gospel. He received respect, but didn't find the gestalt he sought until he broke into "Shake Your Beanie Bag," an obscure hit he had on the Fire label ("if it's hot, you know it's on Fire!"). He held pride in the hit, although it had been banned by the New England High School Principals Association in 1964 for fomenting teenage rioting at two high school dances. As a scrub rock journalist out of Lawrence, Kansas, I first saw his show-as-spectacle in Kansas City's Blue Flames dive in 1969. With lightning speed conducting, what the newspaper ads listed as an event orchestra (dubbed "The Terchumsheds"), he conducted improvisation. I had never seen someone conduct improvisation. In his words the players were asked to be "mutable." Since it was a confused reefer chitlins Midwest circuit, and preceded Funkadelic by a few years, I guess that's an alright comparison, but put some Moondog and George Crumb in there too. And one could swiftly offer up the Mothers of Invention as peers. This incensed Duffy when I brought it up, meeting Tim for the first time backstage at the Embers in 1970 in Des Moines. He took this ire onto the stage and presented incandescent surrealist R&B for two straight hours with a packed crowd that was rabbled and roused - "euphorically agitated" as my article would spout, enough so that the state police were called in. Holed up on the bus, when I did get to him after the mayhem, Tim exhaled and harumpfed. "Fifth riot in my career. This one's for Man Ray." In the hot summer of 1970, when black and white shared the dance floor, Tim Duffy was in headdress holding up geometric patterns as charts for the horn section. Players were kept on their toes, and the word got out that to play with Tim Duffy was a never-to-forget experience. Shit howdy. Fusion players and roots bluesmen passed thru the ensemble, and the outfits were R&B or jazz, depending on whether the bass was acoustic or electric. I fancied myself his biographer for a bit, and even attended his lecture at the New School for Social Research in NYC where he described in a tie and coat his vocabulary of "resultant and non-resultant gestures that a bandmember would or would not follow." His musicians, who illustrated his method for the capacity lecture, were Sonny Sharrock and Rashid Ali, Coltrane alumni. Duffy played for three years in Colorado before he ever received acclaim. He was drawn to the mountains and a desire for cowboy jazz that never solidified. And whatever would sound right to the club owner, he would offer that to get the gig. Eventually he crafted the rhythm sections where no one could beat his bass and drums, and the hippies wouldn't stop dancing. How few dancers ever got that there were polyrhythms written down, with frustrated surrealist manifesto blood on the manuscript, we'll never know. It's all subjective, but let me say that as a native Colorado kid growing up in the 70's, Tim Duffy exhorting

a rhythm section on a full moon Saturday night in a remote mountaintop was rock 'n roll for my tribe. The floodgates of lyrics and the madman in flannel shirt coalesced, and his music was dubbed "Zen Testimony." Lowell George produced Tim for a weekend and took the tapes. The Village Voice reviewed his music once, when a report from the hinterland included myself. But "shock jazz" never got out of the high desert. The circus was held together by stage humor and "on-your-toes crack musicianship." That's the phrase I came upon from the players. Radical bombast and experimentation, on a bed of fusion and funk. Never trust anyone over 30. He played in and around the Rocky Mountains, and got grounded in an artist's life in the Front Range, augmented with an innate ability as a learned production designer and art director for film and television. Whilst I fell out of writing and chasing bands, I did keep my eye out for occasional bits of his careers. He worked on a wide range of projects, including the movie Dead Presidents, art direction for the handover celebration for Hong Kong, and several PBS movies. And I can attest to his bronze sculptures in private galleries, spotted by acquaintances. But jazz is his serious home, his metaphysical and hard road. Sought out for his vocals, it got him a reputation throughout the western states for rare blue-eyed soul. In the 90's, he hung up his rock 'n roll shoes, and he returned a note to me in 1997 saying "we was Rip Van Winkle for the time being." I won't work hard to explain how I have rediscovered him, a hundred passages later. I haven't been in journalism for two decades now, but have remained an avid listener. I've got a family, a home, and a lawnmower, and 200 head of cattle to pamper. Living on the Western Slope, still in mellow Colorado, it has changed some but is still idyllic. I drove down to Alamosa after seeing an obscure listing for "legendary Zen jazz Tim Duffy." I had my 10 year-old daughter along to visit her grandma. Saturday afternoon, I went in the back of Los Cabrito Play Lounge and Dance Hall. I saw a Latin 10-piece conjuncto setting up, rehearsing a few Duffy one-of-a-kind elaborate phrases, in a Corona and Coors beer patio. Behind the shadow of a grain elevator, I found a surprisingly fit and cheery Tim Duffy, who must be over 50, working out with exercise equipment, with two vivacious and benevolent maidens of Nepalese descent. These distinguished sirens had driven him through southern Colorado to play some exclusive engagements at high falutin' spiritual retreats that wanted that fine wine, golden voiced, blue-eyed soul. Tim Duffy had just started to dip his toes in the waters of getting back on to the bandstand, and this was an under-announced gig. We laughed to remember the madness and good memories. Mostly Boulder based. I sheepishly asked, "What of this edition? What have we here?" After the stroke, he started to explain, then he stopped himself. "We shall

ignite deeper yet." That's all I wanted to hear, all I want to retain. That night they played until 2 and finished with "Shout" and "Cold Sweat." I admit, there are many chapters not explained, but a friend called subsequently and said he saw Duffy with a cane, a 6-piece horn section, a full dance floor in Salt Lake City. The Salt Lake entertainment rag quoted Tim Duffy as saying over the mike, "Savor Trane is complex dude, forceful and gentle, cryptic as become woodshed in Texas and tantamount and holed up in Chuck Rainey's in Dallas, Texas. Now in the company of masters, his harvest of seeds shall include Al Green and the children of Al Green." I figured absurdists dont really get rusty. They're just hard to find. Don't miss the show, don't fail to dance. People who are interested in James Brown Al Green Otis Redding should consider this download.

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