

Mp3 Willie Lomax Blues Revue - Best Blues Money Can Buy



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Memphis Soul Drenched Blues featuring Hammond B-3 master Shawn Brown, Sly the Family Stone's Jerry Martini on sax, Eric Gales, Al Green/Hi-Rhythm's Leroy Hodges And Howard Grimes, and Santana /Winwood alumni Walfredo Reyes Jr. on Drums and percussion. 10 MP3 Songs

BLUES: Electric Blues, BLUES: Rhythm Blues Details: REAL BLUES MAGAZINE Issue #27 Oct/Nov 2003 Willie Lomax Blues Revue:Best Blues Money Can Buy (Big Boss Records)

Consider this disc as the second chapter in the Willie Lomax/Shawn Brown Blues and Soul Crusade. The first chapter starts back in 1999 with "Ribs Are Ready" with the incredible and unprecedented musical marriage of Clarksdale, Mississippi down home Blues and Memphis classic Soul which gave the world The Best Southern Blues Album in many years but also brought to everyone's attention the superb talents and incredible voice of Shawn Brown, the Hammond B-3 -playing gospel/soul vocalist who really stunned the music world. But, Willie Lomax isn't content to put out good or great albums; he creates or should I say, facilitates masterpieces. "Ribs..." really blew a lot of minds and now that the world has had a chance to digest "Ribs..." (sorry, couldn't resist) we get something equally as magnificent offered up by Lomax. In hindsight now, we know the negative state of affairs of 2000/01 would've ensured no matter how great "Best Blues..." is it would've been sucked into the Big Void of Negativity that shrouded the entire world. Now that the Sun is starting to shine again and we leave behind the Evil atmosphere of Big Brother-created mayhem, Willie Lomax's package of magic and joy is the perfect prescription for 2003/2004. Blue skies adorn the album jacket and list of contributors is exciting and illuminating. Whilst "Ribs..." was a tribute to the great Southern Blues kings Frank Frost and Sam Carr with a decidedly Down Home Blues feel to a good portion (Lucky Peterson's dad, James Peterson, a fine Bluesman in his own right, added vocals to 2 of the songs on

"Ribs..."), Best Blues..." is strictly a Memphis affair (musician wise) with the return of Leroy Hodges and Howard Grimes, we also have one of the great Gales Bros; Eric, on guitar, world-renowned Walfredo Reyes Jr on drums, former Sly Stone sax man Jerry Martini, first-class hornman Jim Spake (baritone sax), Scott Thompson (trumpet), Neal Weinstein (bass-2 tracks) and of course the Miami-based Willie Lomax on guitar and surprise vocals (1 track) Lomax is a very interesting fellow who has a very serious purpose in life: make beautiful and compelling music which employs and promotes the talents of artists who have much to offer the world. Shawn Brown once again proves to be a formidable gospel-styled vocalist and a great Hammond organist whose vocal gymnastics make virtually every song he sings a standout. Title track, "Best Blues Money Can Buy" is a great one as is "TKO" and the spiritually-aimed "When The Lights Go Out" which is a plea for understanding and Brotherhood amidst all promoted hatred. Jerry Martini shows his stuff on the bump-and-grind instrumental "Blues For Ronnie" and Willie Lomax has a nice guitar solo as well, proof that he is not merely a songwriter, arranger, producer and catalytic powerhouse. "Lighten' Up" is Willie's very first foray into vocal land in three albums and it's a kind of talkin' blues that works nicely as a down-in-the-alley blues. Once again Willie Lomax drops another classy/classic production on our laps that stands out amidst the competition. Most of all, though it's proof that you can make wonderful things happen if you have beliefs that are strong and you want to contribute something positive to this world. 5 bottles for an example of Modern R&B-drenched Blues that once again proves for one and all; "It ain't dead yet." We need more Willie Lomax's (and Fred James's and Randy Chortkoff's...). Finally, it's more proof as to the incredible talents of Shawn Brown, a young man with a big future. A Grigg ROOTS MUSIC REPORT (October 2003): Wow! Willie Lomax can wale a blues tune. What a song Best Blues Money Can Buy is. Plus the rest of the album is powerful. Now this is fiery blues with a magnificent feel. With artists like Shawn Brown, Leroy Hodges, Jerry Martini, Walfredo Reyes Jr, Howard Grimes and Eric Gales how can this not be a killer CD? The Willie Lomax Blues Revue has just made a significant contribution to blues music with the release of this album. 5 stars BLUES REVUE December / January 2004 WILLIE LOMAX BLUES REVUE Best Blues Money Can Buy Big Boss 03003 Guitarist / songwriter Willie Lomax's new album picks up where his last, Ribs Are Ready, left off. Recorded in Memphis at Willie Mitchell's Royal Recording Studio, the disc re-enlists bassist Leroy Hodges (on eight cuts) and drummer Howard Grimes (two cuts) of the vaunted hi Rhythm Section. Walfredo Reyes Jr., who has recorded with Carlos Santana and Steve Winwood, handles drums on the

other tracks. Tenor saxist Jerry Martini is afforded ample solo space, joined on four tunes by baritone saxist Jim Spake and trumpeter Scott Thompson. Lomax is content to lead the band, write the tunes, take solos, and play rhythm, and that makes Tampa Bay vocalist / organist Shawn Brown the star of the show. Brown gained national recognition on the last album, and he's even better now: His robust B-3 adds muscle and anchors Lomax's solos, and though he's primarily a soul singer at times reminiscent of Stevie Wonder, he's equally adept at blues. Lomax's 10 originals are, for the most part, reverently derivative, but it matters little. A cross section of the best tunes reveals his musical vision. "Ransacked," strident Southern soul with wailing sax, is an infectious amalgam of Wilson Pickett's "In the Midnight Hour," Eddie Floyd's "Raise Your Hand," and Otis Clay's "I'm Qualified." The somber title track, about materialism's eventual void, recalls James Carr's deep ballads on Goldwax. Lomax's shards-of-fire playing is at its best on this Song of the Year candidate. "Lighten Up" is a driving blues shuffle that features guest guitarist Eric Gales as well as Lomax's singing debut, as he admonishes his woman for "buzz bombing" him "all day long." The album ends on a curious note with three varied instrumentals, including the bouncy "Blues for Ronnie," a tribute to Ronnie Earl that opens with Martini's raucous strip-club sax. Lomax states in the liner notes, "If I'm going to record a blues album with soul and feeling, then going to Memphis gives it the home advantage." Best Blues Money Can Buy accomplishes that goal and more. It's the Miami native's best album to date. Thomas J. Cullen III **BLUES RHYTHM**, November 2003 **WILLIE LOMAX BLUES REVUE: Best Blues Money Can Buy** Big Boss BB03003 (50:16) Ransacked/ Best Blues Money Can Buy/ Come Down Mama/ Can't Get Enough/ TKO/ Lighten Up/ When the Lights Go Out/ Blues For Ronnie/ Pompadou/ Freedom Is Not Free Miami, Florida guitarist, bandleader, and songwriter, Willie Lomax is nothing if not consistent; he always takes a decent length of time between releases, spending time refining his material and money could be safely placed that it will result in a classy effort - so too with this CD, the follow-up to 'Ribs Are Ready' which featured Frank Frost, Sam Carr and James Peterson, as well as tracks recorded in Memphis, Tennessee. Lomax returned to Willie Mitchell's Royal Recording Studio for this set, which once again sees him making good use of the considerable vocal and Hammond B-3 talents of the acclaimed Shawn Brown, as well as enlisting the aid of bassist Leroy Hodges and drummer Howard Grimes. Willie is a generous figure and certainly at least the first half of this CD is as much a showcase for Brown (who even has his photo on the front cover with Lomax's) as for the leader - the latter restricts himself to rhythm guitar on the opening number, a soul stormer in classic Otis Redding

fashion. Next up is a slow-burn item, poised perfectly on the cusp between southern soul and the blues, with intense vocal, droning horns and good arrangement with clever use of backing vocals - oh, and some fine guitar! 'Come Down Mama' finds Brown injecting some jazz style into his soul approach, and to my ears this is the least successful song on the set as the florid singing quickly becomes wearing. 'Can't Get Enough' reprises that blues/ southern soul approach of the title track to excellent effect once more, whilst 'TKO' blends a bit of Otis Rush with a cool sixties r&b vocal and a touch of surprisingly tasteful wah-wah guitar. 'Lighten Up' marks Willie's vocal debut, which is more of a novelty than anything else (though not displeasing), but the track is really noteworthy for some fierce instrumental sparring between Lomax and Eric Gales; there is some lovely, tough Freddy King styled playing. 'When The Lights Go Out' is again slow and intense and despite lasting almost ten minutes it is a gripping performance, both vocally and musically, reminiscent of Buddy Guy in his prime, but exhibiting a self-discipline and understated approach that Buddy has rarely achieved. Closing out the album are three instrumentals, which do shift the focus onto Willie's own skills; in order they present fifties big band r&b (nice greasy sax here from ex Sly Stone sideman Jerry Martini, who impresses throughout), Stax funk, and a tightly controlled Hendrix styled workout, written in response to 9/11. In Shawn Brown, the Revue has an excellent vocalist, and in Lomax a modest bandleader, beautifully restrained guitarist, and noteworthy songwriter. A first rate, all-original, southern - particularly Memphis - flavoured blues album with plenty of soul undertones is the very pleasing outcome. Norman Darwen SUNCOAST BLUES SOCIETY Nov/Dec 2003 Willie Lomax Blues Revue Best Blues Money Can Buy BB03003 All I can say is, "What a great title!" This is one helluva recording if you like your good time blues with a healthy dose of Memphis soul. This CD was recorded at Willie Mitchell's Royal Recording Studio in Memphis and the vibe is definitely here. This studio has seen the likes of Otis Clay and Al Green and the production is solid. Willie has recruited bass player Leroy Hodges and drummer Howard Grimes who contributed to past recordings that helped make the studio a favorite in Memphis. The CD also features Shawn Brown on vocals and the B-3, who knocked everyone's socks off at this year's Tampa Bay Blues Festival. He is all over it 'like a dog on a porkchop.' Saxman Jerry Martini kicks off the opener, Ransacked, a rousing number featuring Memphis style horns. The title track is next and it is the one that defines the CD in my mind - a very soulful number. Shawn's vocals and B-3 will have you running for a box of Kleenex and Willie's guitar will have you running for a bottle of bourbon. On the aptly titled TKO, Willie's guitar has you on the ropes and he takes

over the vocals on Lighten Up, growling the lyrics and trading guitar licks with Eric Gales. When The Lights Go Out is a bluesy number with some smoky vocals and solid B-3 from Shawn. Everybody stretches out on the toe-tappin', finger-snappin', instrumental number Blues for Ronnie. Pompadou is a funky instrumental a la the Average White Band. Drop some coin on this one because it's worth every penny. Jim Kirk WEST MICHIGAN BLUES SOCIETY (Volume 14, Issue 12, Dec. 2003) Willie Lomax Blues Revue: Best Blues Money Can Buy (Big Boss Records, 2003) I had the distinct pleasure of seeing Willie Lomax and Shawn Brown at the Tampa Bay Blues Festival this spring and it was one great show. Shawn is back doing keyboard and vocal duties on this cd and all I have to do is close my eyes and I can see them tearing up the stage. Brown's B-3 provides outstanding background as Lomax shows some tasty licks on every track. The only guest on this cd is Eric Gales and they had the foresight to mix him on the left channel and Willie on the right. All the songs on this 10 track disc were written by either Lomax or Lomax and Brown and prove that they are more than just players. Citing the three Kings, Albert Collins, T-Bone Walker and Johnny "Guitar" Watson as influences, Lomax smoothly blends all the styles into one terrific and unique style of his own. Add to this Walfredodo Reyes Jr. on drums (Santana, Steve Winwood), Jerry Martini on sax (Sly the Family Stone) and just to put the icing on the cake, the magic fingers of Phil Brown on the mixing board. Don't wait to buy this disc; it'll be a classic before you know it. Tim Richards LIVING BLUES MAGAZINE (Nov/Dec 2003) Willie Lomax Blues Revue: Best Blues Money Can Buy Big Boss Records BB03003 Floridian Willie Lomax knows how to have a good time - just listen to his first two discs, 1996's Give Me Back My Teeth and '99s Ribs Are Ready, for proof. As can be expected, his latest album is no exception. Recorded at Willie Mitchell's Royal Studio in Memphis, Best Blues Money Can Buy pulls out all the stops, with the tracks running the gamut from the fast-paced weeper Ransacked on through the good timin' Can't Get Enough. The axe grinder assembled one helluva band for this session, calling on soul greats Leroy Hodges and Howard Grimes (the rhythm section behind the almighty Hi Records sound), six-string virtuoso Eric Gales, and a horn section from hell (Memphians Jim Spake and Scott Thompson, who've backed everyone from Ike Turner and Bobby "Blue" Bland to the late great Rufus Thomas, alongside Family Stone alumnus Jerry Martini) to round out his decidedly modern soul-blues sound. Lomax's secret weapon, fellow Floridian Shawn Brown, fits right in with his church-inspired Hammond B-3 chords and his complex piano riffs. Who knew that you could still write great soul songs in 2003? While diehard fans maintain that Otis Redding closed the book on the

subject with his death in '68, on one has - thankfully - told Lomax, who drops the astounding Stax-influenced title track, the Latin-tinged Can't Get Enough, and the searing When the Lights Go Out (inspired, like the album's closer, Freedom Is Not Free, by the events of September 11, 2001) without seeming to break a sweat. His voice, a melodious tenor, might not have the same range as the aforementioned Redding or Al Green, but Lomax more than holds his own on this album, playing his vocals and the studio acoustics against his dynamic guitar stylings for the best effect. The only potential misstep comes when Lomax and company take on ZZ Top with the hammy Lighten' Up. Judging by the song title, however, it's highly unlikely that the guitar slinger meant this to be a serious moment. As the only glib take on an album full of sophisticated soul-blues, Lighten' Up serves the purpose Lomax intended for it, cooling down listeners before bringing them back to a fevered pitch for the second half of Best Blues Money Can Buy. Does the album live up to its title? In a genre that sometimes seems to be filled with poorly produced sessions, second-rate sidemen, guitarists who can't sing, and white men who lack a shred of soul, Lomax's latest shines like a brand-new dime.

Andria Lisle LINER NOTES: Blues guitarist Willie Lomax knows no producer or studio is more associated with Memphis soul than Willie Mitchell. The sound of the city drips off his studio walls. Singers like Al Green, Ann Peebles, Otis Clay, and O.V. Wright created musical masterpieces here. The Hi Records groove was born here. Once again, Lomax returns to Willie Mitchell's Royal Recording Studio and, to deepen the Memphis soul, again enlisted bass player Leroy Hodges and drummer Howard Grimes, who with the Hodges brothers, formed the Famous Hi Rhythm section that came to be known as the Royal Studio sound of Memphis soul. Together with Walfredo Reyes Jr. on drums and percussion, whose soulful playing has graced numerous albums including Carlos Santana and Steve Winwood, Sly The Family Stone's Jerry Martini on saxophone, and Shawn Brown on B-3 and vocals, Lomax added the mixology of engineer Phil Brown, whose list of credits since the 1960's is a Who's Who of rock and soul to seal the deal. "If I'm gonna record a blues album with soul and feeling, then going to Memphis gives it the home field advantage" says Lomax. And when you record at Willie Mitchell's, you never know what can happen or who will walk in. Charles Hodges, the keyboard genius on Memphis soul recordings stopped by during one of the sessions. "Charles came by early on the second day" says Lomax, "and he was telling us stories of how songs like 'Love And Happiness' were recorded. Afterwards, he led us in a prayer. It was a real spiritual experience. We started that day and did 'Blues For Ronnie', 'TKO', 'Lighten' Up', and 'When The Lights

Go Out'. We took a break and went to the Rendezvous for ribs, came back and recorded 'Come Down Mama'. It was originally a slow blues, but after those ribs, it came out like it did. That was a very special day." What Willie Lomax creates best is that deepest of blues. He learned that from the Delta bluesmen he listens to and played with. During his King Biscuit trips, one could find Lomax jamming in Eddie Mae's Caf with Frank Frost, Ronnie Earl, Sam Myers, Big Bad Smitty, Super Chikan, Big Jack Johnson, Fred James, and Sam Carr, the Delta drum machine. "I really picked up a lot hanging out with Frank and Sam. When you hang out there, you can just see and feel the soulfulness of the blues in them. After a while, it just seeps into you and when you hit that certain feel, that energy takes it on its own. That's the spot all musicians go for." Sam Carr and Frank Frost guested on Willie's last cd, "Ribs Are Ready," along with Leroy Hodges, Howard Grimes and James Peterson. On that disc, Lomax introduced fellow Tampa vocalist and B-3 player Shawn Brown to the music world. And the music world immediately took note. Real Blues Magazine called it the Best Southern Blues Album of the Year and recognized Brown as one of the best vocal discoveries in the blues. Numerous songs from Ribs have turned up on MTV shows, The Chris Isaak Show, and the feature film TULLY. Now, the Brown and Lomax partnership has turned into a formidable force. Lomax is the guitarist who is content to remain in the background and caress soulful tones from his guitars. Brown owns the rich and warm voice that tells Lomax's lyrical stories and provides the B-3 foundation necessary for Lomax's solo excursions. "We're like brothers with the same musical vision. Shawn's a monster B-3 player and when he solos, his B-3 adds different tones than the guitar and it grabs different parts inside of you and twists 'em. You feel it good." As a modern blues man, Lomax knows what every blues great knows; the songs you sing must be original and must relate to each listener. Thus, Lomax crafts his songs from everyday experiences. "The idea for 'Ransacked' came from a burglary two years ago. They trashed our bedroom and stole all of my wife's jewelry, but luckily, didn't touch my guitars. The police woman came in, looked around, called into headquarters and said, WE HAVE A RANSACK. That just stuck in my mind." On the title cut, a stylish slow blues powerhouse, Brown purges his heartache and loss while Lomax's guitar answers with similar pain. Years ago, Willie and Ronnie Earl met and became fast musical friends. Instead of mimicking a Ronnie Earl guitar approach on 'Blues For Ronnie', Lomax went back to his roots. "Ronnie and I were jamming with Frank Frost and Sam Carr at Frank's place, and I started off a jam with that little rhythm, always wanting to develop it. It's not an imitating style, just a blues song for Ronnie from the heart." 'Lighten' Up' is another song that evolved in

the studio. Lomax was working on an overdub, He had cut his finger from bending the strings so much and was putting super glue on to hold the cut together. That was when Eric Gales walked in. "He asked to sit in on the track. We improvised the intro. I did the first lick and he answered, going back and forth. Then he soloed the first round and I did the second." This song also features Lomax's singing debut. We look to the artists of our time to make sense of the incomprehensible. Lomax wrote 'When The Lights Go Out' with Sept. 11 th in mind. The same holds true for 'Freedom Is Not Free.' "Two days after 9/11 was the first time I picked up the guitar and that song was what came out, in its entirety." This kid from Miami discovered music and the blues at an early age. His father, a jazz drummer, played for Cannonball Adderly so the records of Cannonball, Miles Davis, Count Basie and Duke Ellington would be on in the house night after night. "I wasn't allowed to listen to anything else until I was about 14 yrs old." At age eight, Lomax started on the drums then picked up the trumpet at age nine in the school band. He didn't pick up the guitar until he was a freshman at Florida State University. "In high school, I got into guitar players like Hendrix, Page and Clapton. Then I started tracing their roots which led me to the blues. Working back, I got deep into everybody from T-Bone Walker and the three Kings to Buddy Guy, Albert Collins and Johnny Guitar Watson. It was all the listening I did at a young age that seeps in and comes out when I play."After decades of listening and playing, traveling and learning, Willie Lomax is ready to give you the best blues money can buy. - Art Tipaldi, Senior writer, Blues Revue Magazine and author of the book, Children of the Blues. BIOGRAPHY: Willie Lomax was born and raised in Miami, Florida. His father was a jazz drummer, playing with Cannonball Adderley, Billy Eckstine, June Christy, Al Haig, George Shaw Blue Mitchell during the 1950's jazz scene in the Miami - Ft. Lauderdale area, and the records of Cannonball, Miles Davis, Count Basie and Duke Ellington would be on in the house night after night. At age 9, Willie started on the trumpet, switching to the guitar at age 18 when he moved to Tallahassee, FL. The first song he performed live was Muddy Waters' hit "Manish Boy" and, after seeing Muddy live in Tallahassee the following year, the blues became an integral part of Willie's life. Willie's main musical influences can be found in Albert King, Buddy Guy, Albert Collins, Johnny Guitar Watson, Frank Frost, Tiny Grimes, Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Miles Davis and Ronnie Earl, although Willie says he can list over a hundred influences when space permits. Making Tampa, Florida home since 1985, Willie has recorded and/or shared the stage with: Frank Frost, Sam Carr, Big Jack Johnson, Carey Bell, Sam Myers, Arthur Williams, Super Chikan, Ronnie Earl, James Peterson, Lucky Peterson, Eric

Gales, Diamond Teeth Mary, the Hi-Rythm section of Leroy Hodges and Howard Grimes, Jerry Martini, Rock Bottom, Troy Turner, Walfredo reyes Jr. and Shawn Brown. Willie has played the Long Beach Blues Festival featuring Robert Cray, the King Biscuit Blues Festival featuring Albert King, the Rock Crusher Canyon Blues Festival featuring Buddy Guy, the Riverwalk Blues Festival featuring Ronnie Earl and the Tampa Bay Blues Festival featuring Delbert McClinton. Willie's CD "GIVE ME BACK MY TEETH" charted at #25 on the Living Blues National Radio Charts and garnered the Real Blues Awards best independent release in 1996. His CD "RIBS ARE READY" charted at # 16 on the Living Blues Radio Charts and garnered three more Real Blues Awards, one for Shawn Brown as vocalist of the year, best independent blues release and one for best production. The disc also featured two Lomax originals which appeared in the feature film "TULLY". Other songs from the disc have appeared on THE CHRIS ISAAK SHOW and on numerous MTV shows. CHECK bigbossbluesfor videos and more from Best Blues Money Can Buy and Big Boss Records.

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