## Mp3 AI Hughes - Heart And Soul



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Al Hughes, blending traditional Delta and East Coast blues with his own compositions to make classics sound original, and originals sound classic. 11 MP3 Songs BLUES: Acoustic Blues, BLUES: Delta Style Details: CD Review, Al Hughes - Heart and Soul By Gordon Baxter, Blues in Britain Magazine. They say that good things come to those who wait. This is certainly true of the new solo release from AI Hughes (also known as singer and rhythm guitarist with soul/rhythm&blues band Lights Out By Nine). "Heart and Soul" is a step up from Hughes previous album, the acclaimed "Conversation With The Blues". Hughes hits the ground running with "Comes Out Blue", demonstrating his slide and fingerpicking talents. These are matched by some great smoky vocals, with the overall sound calling to mind Rory Gallagher's finest acoustic moments. After the eerie atmosphere of "The Keys To Paradise", things take on a lighter mood with the excellent "Sunshine Two Step" which, along with songs like "Can't Shake Off The Blues" and the title track, sounds like it comes from the repertoire of the great Piedmont guitarists like Mississippi John Hurt and Blind Blake. A quick check, though, reveals that it is a Hughes original like all the other tracks here. John Fahey has been another influence on Hughes--"Steamboat Gwine Round De Bend" appeared on an earlier album--and he pays homage here on "Requiem for John Fahey". This is an appropriately slower number, and features some very fine resonator picking and slide. There is some more exquisite slide guitar on the love song "Anytime". The album's second instrumental, "Potato Head Rag", another jaunty little number, calls to mind the natural, thoughtful picking style of Sonny Black. It gives way to the classic 12 bar stylings of "Sky High Blues", before Hughes ventures towards jazzier ground for "Never Never Land", a near relative of "Where White Men Sing the Blues". He then brings the curtain down with some nicely relaxed chording on "Bluesin'". "Heart and Soul" is a mightily impressive piece of work. Hughes' songwriting and playing--he plays all instruments on the album--just gets better with age like a

fine malt whisky. Each track is carefully crafted to exploit these talents to the full. With "Heart and Soul" Al Hughes has already staked his claim to the title of best solo blues album of the year 2006, and it is going to take some beating. Rating: 9 - Gordon Baxter

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