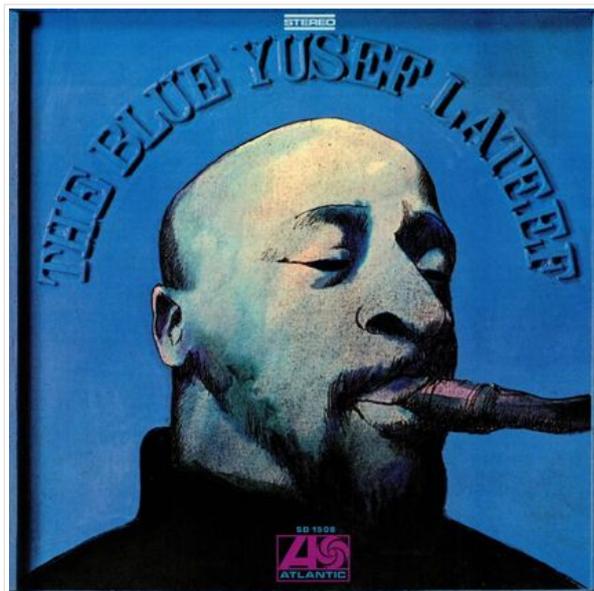




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ALANTIC SD 1508 Made & distributed by
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Yusef Lateef (ts, f, tamboura, various percussion); Blue Michell (t); Sonny Red (as); Buddy Lucas (harm); Kenny Burrell (elg); Hugh Lawson (p); Cecil McBee (b); Bob Cranshaw (elb); Roy Brooks (d)
 Recorded NYC 1968

This is a rather different approach to the blues where Lateef has utilized medieval and early modes to produce some quite striking variations. Featuring the two horn players only for ensembles and blues riffs, the main soloist is Lateef on a variety of rhythm and percussion instruments although his main one is tenor saxophone. Two tracks feature straight ahead twelve bar blues structures, one is a thirty -two bar and the rest are somewhat exotic to say the least. „Juba Juba was inspired by a Mississippi prison song. It has a plaintive flute solo by the leader and some atmospheric rhythm backing. Moon cup is based on plainsong or plainchant, I kid you not and, has a Tagalog chant. The lyrics derive from a dialect of the Philippine Islands. Based on the Phrygian scale it is, at

heart, a variation on the blues complete with a strange chant delivered by Lateef. A haunting bamboo flute solo is also featured.

One piece is a Dorian scale- based piece which Lateef claims was Johann Sebastian Bach's favourite mode. Mostly though, here, it is yet another variation of the blues. Back Home is based on baroque music, again utilizing blues licks. Lateef describes it as a double Basso Ostinato but, as with most of these selections there are some strong jazz and blues solos improvised in the conventional manner. In addition to Lateef there are good solos from pianist Lawson, Kenny Burrell on guitar and Buddy Lucas who plays some wild harmonica.

Although using some modes which are unusual, this programme is, by and large, just an intense jazz and blues programme with attention grabbing solos and churning, driving rhythm. The LP is 180gram vinyl mastered to high standard for excellent sound from Speaker's Corner Records. If you love blues and like something a bit different and challenging, try this release for size.

Reviewed by Derek Ansell

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