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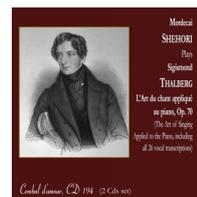


John Lee Hooker – Don't Turn Me From Your Door – Speakers Corner Records

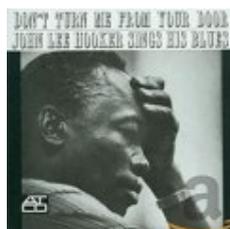
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by Audiophile Audition | May 4, 2021 | Jazz CD Reviews, SACD & Other Hi-Res Reviews | 0 comments

Cembal d'amour



John Lee Hooker – Don't Turn Me From Your Door – ATCO Records SD 33-151 (1963)/Speakers Corner Records 180-gram vinyl, 31:53 ****:



(John Lee Hooker – guitar, vocals; Earl Hooker – guitar; Eddie Kirkland – guitar)

Pure Pleasure / Speakers Corner



Cedille



John Lee Hooker is an American institution. Born in Mississippi (either 1912, 1915, 1917 or 1920), he is credited with popularizing electrified Delta blues. His distinctive “boogie” style and cigar box-shaped guitar are his trademarks. Hooker transcended the blues scene and became an inspiration (like his fellow blues man Muddy Waters) to future rock and roll stars. He recorded an album with Canned Heat and appeared in the blockbuster 1980 movie, *The Blues Brothers*. Other rock collaborations are too numerous to list. Songs like “Boom Boom”, “Boogie Chillen, and “One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer” will live forever. His catalog of material is voluminous on many different labels, with both artistic and commercial (at least by blues record standards) success. John Lee Hooker has been inducted into *The Blues Hall Of Fame*, as well as *The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame*.

Speakers Corner Records has released a 180-gram re-mastered vinyl of *Don't Turn Me From Your Door*. Originally released on ATCO (Atlantic), the album is a compilation of six tracks, originally recorded in 1953 for DeLuxe Records, and six new tunes. It is scaled down with guitars and vocals, but it is quintessential. Side 1 opens with “Stuttering Blues”. It is simply, low-down Delta blues with some talking and sly charm (...can I get your phone number?...”). Hooker had a stutter (as did B.B. King), but it doesn't detract from his confidence, as he seduces with the deep baritone. Picking up the pace, “Wobbling Baby” is straight up tempo with a repeat opening verse line (“...she wobblin' me all the time...”)... So simple, yet so authentic!. A conventional blues theme is getting wronged. “You've Lost A Good Man” delivers the admonishment in a relentless deliberate pace. This romantic dichotomy is epitomized in “Love My Baby” as Hooker moans, “...I love my baby, she been evil all the time...”. Here, there is dynamic interplay between voice and guitar. A first of two instrumentals (“Misbelieving Baby”) adopts a near dirge-like feel, with the conventional John Lee menacing resonance. No matter how many times a blues man gets down, a great one will battle back with emotion. “Drifting Blues” utilizes a compelling echo-infused guitar tonality as the singer laments about being “...like a ship out on the sea...”, but pleads for his woman's return.

As the title cut kicks off Side 2, the trademark boogie shuffle returns with familiar guitar hooks. The eternal connection between hard times and plaintive loneliness is invoked. Hooker reflects on parental desertion and exhorts...“I'm a pilgrim and a stranger...” to the object of his affection. On “My Baby Don't Love Me, his heart-wrenching angst is colored by hostility and resignation. His guitar (and bold riffs) serve as an additional voice. A second instrumental (“I Ain't Got Nobody”) showcases Hooker's patented boogie musical context, surrounded with thumping low-end rhythm guitar and piercing lead accents. It is



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obvious how his innate “mood setting” has been a major influence on a wide array of musicians. Of course, there is a return to the angst of betrayal (“Real Real Gone”). Hooker muses about his lover starting out with “church and Sunday school”, only to end up “runnin’ around”. Ironically, he threatens to return to his wife. A seamless transition (almost like a Part 2) into “Guitar Lovin’ Man” expounds on his ego-driven persona. The finale is a breezier jam with an upbeat story about his “...long tall woman, built like willow tree...”.

Don't Turn Me From Your Door is exquisitely distilled blues by one of the masters.

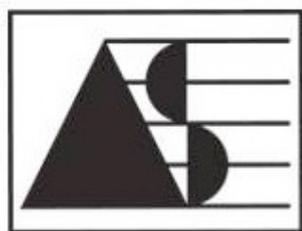
TrackList:

Side 1: Stuttering Blues; Wobbling Baby; You Lost A Good Man; Love My Baby; Misbelieving Baby; Drifting Blues

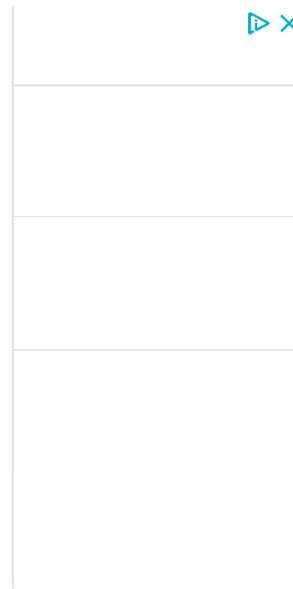
Side 2: Don't Turn Me From Your Door; My Baby Don't Love Me; I Ain't Got Nobody; Real Real Gone; Guitar Lovin' Man; Talk About Your Baby

—Robbie Gerson

For more information on Speakers Corner releases, please visit distributor [Acoustic Sound](#):



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