



NEW RELEASE

BLACK HEN MUSIC

## A Tribute to the Music of The Mississippi Sheiks Things About Comin' My Way

### This is not music for the faint of heart.

The songs on this CD come down to us from a world long gone. Between 1930 and 1935, **Sam, Lonnie and Armenter Chatman**, the three sons of slaves who along with **Walter Vinson** made up the core of the **Mississippi Sheiks**, created some of the most memorable blues rants and square dance hollers ever conjured up.

Whether bent in prayer or bloody eyed in the throes of howling lust, the **Mississippi Sheiks'** songs took a suffering generation on a ride through a universe populated with characters that walked the razor 's edge between sin and redemption, grace and depravity.

Over the course of nearly a hundred singles — seventeen of which are gloriously interpreted here — their scratchy howling at the moon tales of life at the crossroads captured the hearts of a temporarily colour blind America as they toured the country, selling millions of records along the way.

It's a body of music that Vancouver songwriter, musician and producer **Steve Dawson** has been obsessed with for many years, and this CD represents the fruition of a long time dream.

There is no shortage of tribute albums out there, so Dawson's challenge was to create something a little out of the ordinary for this project. "I was never interested in recreating the music. So, when I started thinking about this, I was looking for good interpreters who could capture the essence of the songs rather than just recreate the original song."

Initial recording sessions in Vancouver with **Jim Byrnes** and **Oh Susannah** got things off to a promising start. When native Mississippian **Van Dyke Parks**, best known for his work on **Brian Wilson's** Smile project contributed string arrangements to Oh Susanna's take on **'Bootlegger's Blues'**, things started to get really exciting.

**Dawson** and guitar virtuoso **Bob Brozman** hooked up in Banff to record a stirring rendition of **'Somebody's Gotta Help You'** to keep the ball rolling. **The North Mississippi All Stars** and **Geoff Muldaur** delivered versions of **'It's Backfiring Now'** and **'The World is Going Wrong'** respectively while a foray to Ottawa to record with blues legend, **John Hammond** and the Afro-American string band, **The Carolina Chocolate Drops** really got the momentum going as both artists nailed their songs in an exhilarating all day session. **Bill Frisell** recorded an instrumental take of **'That's It'** in Seattle and it was starting to look like there was no end to what was possible on this project.

After that, a session in Seattle was arranged and a group consisting of jazz legend **Wayne Horvitz** (John Zorn, Zony Mash) playing piano, **Keith Lowe** (Bill Frisell/Fiona Apple) on bass and **Matt Chamberlain** (David Bowie, Peter Gabriel) on drums was put together to create a consistent sound. Dawson explains, "We were trying to create a vibe that hearkened back to the Stax/Volt days where singers and musicians would come together and create something spontaneous and in the moment. A lot of tribute albums have nothing that holds them together. There's no flow and they all end up being disparate performances. For this album, we recorded in three big sessions, and at one session we had a house band to back up several artists, so there's some consistency to the sound and feel of the recordings."

Over the course of two days in November, Dawson captured performances from **Kelly Joe Phelps, Bruce Cockburn, Del Rey, Robin Holcomb, Danny Barnes, The Sojourners**, and **Ndi Di Onukwulu** as well as recording a contribution of his own. **Madeleine Peyroux** delivered a vocal track that the house band laid down the instrumentals for. By the time an exhausted Dawson headed back to Vancouver, he knew he had something very special to share.

There aren't many CDs like this one being recorded today, so close your eyes, sit back and allow the songs to take you away to a world that has long since passed. Whether you're new to the music of the Mississippi Sheiks or have been dreaming of a tribute like this for years, music doesn't get any better than this.

>>> For more information visit: [www.blackhenmusic.com](http://www.blackhenmusic.com) or [www.myspace.com/blackhenmusic](http://www.myspace.com/blackhenmusic) <<<



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