

and smooth transitions connecting songs, just as you'd expect to hear from an experienced disc jockey. On the lead-off title song, Stallings enthusiastically declares, "there is gonna be a thrill on the hill," and you know this is going to be a serious electric blues bash.

The multipurpose band performs more than electric blues. The infectious *Swing 2010* is an R&B instrumental featuring Clarence Ward III blasting his trumpet into the stratosphere alongside Joe Thomas' killer sax solo. Carlos Johnson's sax is classy and sexy while Jacky Harriston's organ whirls on *The Lucky Number*. These brass-touting artists give the famed New Orleans brass bands a run for the money.

Sexual innuendo arises more than once, as in *Horny Bee* where a gun shoots honey. Here Leroy Flowers Jr.'s sweet lead guitar stings with penetrating notes that permeate the main melody. The lyrics are graphic enough on *Old Dogs* to convey that Grandpa needs Viagra.

Stallings' vocals are the most expressive on the rockin' *She's Gone*. It's good to hear them being stretched and challenged because overall they do not receive the same workout as his guitar receives. Russell Hayward has

better sounding and better played drums, with Bill Pratt's drum cymbal crashes suffering from a tinny sound.

Stallings and his band of revelers know how to play off each other while improvising. They all prove themselves to be professional and experienced musicians. Whether by intent or accident, the variations in the songs seem natural. Yes, the blues songs are basic, and their melodies are repeated too many times, but the CD is what good independent music should be. Stallings will cause you to open your ears, sit up, and take notice. Many bands claim to combine soul, blues, and funk; Stallings prefers to perform them separately. Best of all, he performs all styles equally well.

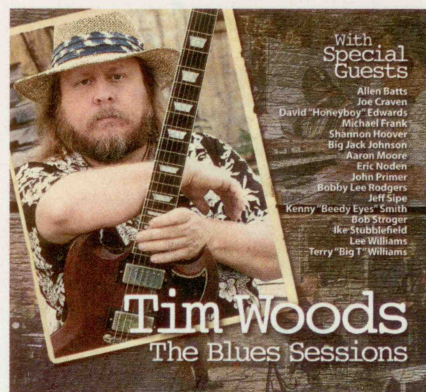
-TIM HOLEK

TIM WOODS

The Blues Sessions

Earwig - CD 4962

Tim Woods is an earnest musician with a genuine affection for the blues. The liner notes



report that the southwestern Pennsylvania native lived for a time in Georgia promoting acts at a nightclub and that while working in a blues-based jam band he developed his skills playing guitar in a unique style with his thumb.

Woods has parlayed that slim resume into a fairly deluxe recording with four different musical line-ups, recorded in four different locations. Surrounded by a passel of accomplished musicians from various disciplines, he has produced a mini blues fest, with himself as the main act. The brief notes give little in the way of cogent explanation for

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