

The ABCO Chicago Blues Story begins in April 1956 when producer/songwriter/singer Ted Daniels; Eli Toscano and Joe Brown (owner of A.B. Record Dist.) decided to pool their efforts and resources and form a record label, thus ABCO Records. With Eli running a record studio, Joe handling the distribution and sales and Ted handling the promotion, production and talent acquisition they were on their way. Ted who was an aspiring songwriter had contacts in Blues, Jazz and Rhythm & Blues fields as he was always in clubs approaching people to do his songs as well as hanging out at record labels and distributors meeting fellow artists, producers and engineers. ABCO was based at 2854 W. Roosevelt Road (later the home of the legendary Cobra label, Eli formed with another record promotion man - Howard Bedno - just 4 months later). The company only remained in business just four short months and it is unclear what exactly caused the breakup between Ted, Eli and Mr. Brown.

Eli basically pulled away from his partners and started the legendary Cobra and Artistic labels. Eli and new partner Howard Bedno built Cobra and into the fastest rising label producing Blues

and Rhythm & Blues in Chicago in just two years and launched the careers of Magic Sam, Otis Rush, Buddy Guy, Shakey Jake and countless other Blues and R & B acts. They utilized the talents of Willie Dixon as writer/producer/bandleader using not only Willie Dixon's band but up and comers like Turner & His Kings of Rhythm, Harold Burroughs & His Band, Duke Jenkins & His Orchestra, and set the pace for Chicago Blues of the day. The Chess brothers were fastly losing their grip as the leading Chicago Blues producers and noticeably upset. It seemed Cobra Records was on its way to the top when (supposedly over not paying his gambling debts) Eli was found in the Chicago river fitted in cement shoes. Thus the end of the legendary Cobra & Artistic Records.

(It's subsidiary.)

These legendary ABCO recordings gathered here for the first time together on CD give one a chance to hear the entire ABCO released output so superbly put together by Eli, Ted & Mr. Brown, back in 1956. Some feel the Musicians Union forced the shut down of ABCO Records for not using Union musicians on the sessions.

A young "Magic Sam" is heard here (on his first



Morris Pejoc

recording session) as guitarist behind Morris Pejoe on "Screaming And Crying" and "Maybe Blues". Magic Sam would emerge just a few months later on his own on Elis new Cobra label. (He obviously impressed Eli at the Morris Pejoe session.)

Regardless of whether it was the Union or personal differences between the parties included some superb Chicago Blues, Jazz and R&B were produced in those few short months of ABCO's existence from April to July of 1956. (Listen and enjoy.)

Ted Daniels went on to write and produce the biggest hit Cadillac Baby's Be a Baby label had "Money Tree" by Detroit Jr. (with the Daylighters on backup) (see Wolf CD 120.292 - Best of Be a Baby Chicago Blues Vol. 2). Ted also was the first to discover and produce the talents of Betty Everett and the Daylighters as well and produced some fine sides on Carl Jones's C.J. label also on Detroit Jr., Betty Everett and the Daylighters (see Wolf's coming CD series on Chicago Blues from C.J. Records Volumes 1, 2 & 3.)

Highly recommended. Ted also went on to produce Blues, R&B and Soul for Chicago labels Chess, Nike, Onderful, Impact and many others. Ted wrote the huge hit "The Watusi" for the Daylighters (which covered

by the Jayhawks of Flash Records of "Stranded in the Jungle" fame) after they changed their name to the "Vibrations" and signed to Checker Records (a Chess subsidiary). He wrote it for the Daylighters and it was being pressed on Be a Baby when the Chess brothers Phil and Leonard heard about it. They visited Cadillac Baby, bringing the owner of the pressing plant along Mr. Allen. Cadillac Baby was told the pressing plant was so busy they could only press eleven copies of his new record. Realizing he had little chance of fighting the might of the Chess brothers Cadillac Baby reluctantly took a \$ 500.00 check from Chess. The song and its publishing was lost forever, at least to Cadillac Baby and Ted.

The Vibrations covered the song and the rest is history. It was a huge hit in 1961 and started a new dance craze and a new career for the "Jayhawks" now known as the "Vibrations" who helped pave the way for a new form of music to be known as Soul music.

We're also treated to the duel harmonica backing by Big Walter Horton along with either Shakey Jake or Louis Myers on Arbee Stidham's "When I Find My Baby".



Arbee Stidham

Ron Bartolucci



120.298 CD

Produced by Ron Bartolucci  
Licensed from J.R.B. Productions.  
Mastering by Little Walter De Venne.  
Edited by Alex Munkas.  
Liner notes by Ron Bartolucci.  
Recordings produced originally 1956  
by Eli Toscano & Ted Daniels.  
This CD is released thru the help of  
Ted Daniels and Victor Pearlin.  
Photos by Ron Bartolucci  
& Hannes Folterbauer.  
Layout by K. H. Rosenzopf.

**THIS CD IS  
DEDICATED TO THE LATE  
ELI TOSCANO  
& MAGIC SAM**

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Louis Myers

