



BLIND WILLIE *“Blind Willie”*

Format: LP / Digital

Before grunge and alternative rock saturated the imagination of the masses about the music percolating from the Pacific Northwest, bands like Blind Willie held court. Emerging nearly 50 years after the band dissolved, Blind Willie’s impressive swath of hard-rock, country and psych is ready to bask in some of the accolades that nearly made them famous with the release of *Blind Willie*—a collection of live-in-the-studio tracks and 4-track demos from the early 1970s available for the first time from Guerssen Records imprint, Out-Sider Music.

Blind Willie formed in 1972, peppered with players from the breakup of Idaho psych-rock group Sleepy John, as well as the Spokane rock group Struggle, and the Seattle-based horn-centric band Easy Chair.

They carved out a unique niche in the Northern Idaho/Eastern Washington rock scene in the early to mid-’70s, performing original music in a time when doing so wasn’t widespread for regional bands. Within weeks of the group’s formation in Spokane, Washington, they commanded stages with a potent smattering of rock ‘n’ roll, country and psych, their malleability as players later being channeled into work as backing group for touring musicians like Albert Collins, The Coasters, and The Drifters. Blind Willie also gained notoriety in the region as being a go-to opener, and occasional headliner for larger theater shows, sharing the stage with artists as stylistically far-reaching as Billy Joel, Earl Scruggs Revue, Tower of Power, The Doobie Brothers, Jim Croce, Bachman Turner Overdrive and many more.

The band’s history includes a brief courtship with the Doobie Brothers’ Dave Shogren on bass (as well as major label interest from Columbia and Epic Records), and an affiliation with the famed comic book writer and former editor of Seattle’s Rocket alt-weekly Dennis Eichhorn.

Blind Willie’s songwriting tandem of Craig Karp and Charlie Bieker embraced artistic peripheries in a time and place where musicians still tended to keep to their own stylistic silos,

and got closer than many did to reaching a wider audience beyond the confines of their home corner of the U.S.

Blind Willie's original lineup of Karp (guitar, vocals), Frank Trowbridge (guitar, previously on hard-psych legends Sleepy John), Bieker (bass, guitar, vocals) and Jim Griffith (drums) is represented on *Blind Willie* via slices of incendiary rock 'n' roll pomp recorded on a 4-track tape machine in a friend's apartment in 1972.

Blind Willie's live in the studio tracks from 1974 feature later drummer Mike Garland and bassist Joe Johnson for a fiery radio set at the legendary Kaye-Smith Studios in Seattle.

The album's selected tracks navigate Blind Willie's wide-ranging sonic explorations, anchored by formidable guitar-forward rockers that stand the test of time, and hold up to any of the more well-known work of their peers from the '70s. Writhing in the rock 'n' roll milieu, Blind Willie's musical tributaries run deep, steeped in a spectrum of styles that range from blues-rock scorchers like the incendiary "Georgia," to heartfelt ballads ("I'm Wondering If"), country-esque scorchers ("Again") and into the upper echelons of sci-fi psych ("Zolly"), a comet ride through wah-wah geetar spacedust, replete with Rocky Horror cinematic sheen—interesting on its own, but also because this song came out some three years before the infamous rock opera film was released—and even a shoutout to H.G. Wells. It's also easy to imagine songs like the choogle-heavy "Somebody Help Me" illuminating the vibe of parties, bars and theaters all over North America.

Despite the ups and downs of Blind Willie's story, the music remains.

Consider yourself dared not to dig it.

RIYL: LITTLE FEAT, BACHMAN-TURNER OVERDRIVE, EARLY '70S DOOBIE BROTHERS, SLEEPY JOHN, DELANEY & BONNIE, RONNIE WOOD...

Highlights:

- * First-time release of Blind Willie recordings, featuring songs by Craig Karp, who later wrote or co-wrote several top-10 country hits throughout the 1980s
 - * The insert features extensive liner notes outlining the history of Blind Willie by music journalist Ryan J. Prado, featuring interviews with surviving band members
 - * Sourced from the original masters
 - * Download Card with Bonus Tracks
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LP Tracklist:

A1. Georgia – A2. Try – A3. Somebody Help Me – A4. No One Can Change My Mind (I'm Wondering If)
(Live Radio) – A5. Too Much Darkness

B1. Zolly – B2. Mildred (Don't Let Your Friends Get You Down) – B3. California Woman – B4. I Might Be
The One – B5. Rainbow Lorraine

Digital Bonus Tracks:

11. I Want To Know (Live Radio) – 12. Please Don't Walk Away (Studio) – 13. Lost My Reason For Living
(Live Radio) - 14. Again (Live Radio) – 15. Georgia (alternate take) – 16. Somebody Help Me (Live Radio)
– 17. I Might Be The One You Need (Studio) – 18. I'm Wondering If - 19. Zolly (Instrumental) – 20. Living
Without You (Live Radio) – 21. Just Keep Going On (Live Radio)