

In The Basement

(From the UK)

Summer 2006

Where Have You Been

Where You At; I Want A Love I Can See; Where Have You Been?; Why Me?; It's Better To Have And Don't Need; Your Promise To Be Mine; Break Out The Tears; Back In Love Again; I Wanna Be (Your Everything); Oh Rockin' Daddy

"Angel is Angel Rissoff, whose biography states he started singing rhythm and blues on street corners when he was twelve, subsequently having worked with such artists John Lee Hooker, Chuck Jackson, Darlene Love, Harvey Fuqua and Bobby Byrd. For this album, already nominated for 'Best Solo Album' in the Carolina Beach Music Awards, he is joined by an array of real musicians as he offers up a mixture of his own songs and covers of such as Smokey Robinson's 'I Want A Love I Can See' – very nice to – and rockers like Huey 'Piano' Smith's 'Where You At' and Harvey Fuqua's 'Oh Rockin' Daddy,' Not sure of the original of 'Your Promise To Be Mine' but the nature of the song and the sax support from John Hagen, suggest a doo-wop group, 'I Wanna Be (Your Everything)' hails from the Manhattans' repertoire and 'It's Better To Have And Don't Need' stays faithful to Don Covay.

Of his own material, the brass-supported 'Where Have You Been?' title track manages to be both moody and slow-funky and 'Break Out The Tears' is a mid-paced toe-tapper. Despite a minute touch of rock-slanted guitar, 'Back In Love Again' is a smoldering femme-supported, soul-dripping ballad and is only just eased off the 'toe-of-the-heap' stakes by 'Why Me?' constructed like a perfect slice of late-sixties West Coast harmony soul-group balladry. Forget any reverse prejudices and Angel's skin color, this guy has S-O-U-L!

Downbeat Magazine

3 and a half stars

Acclaimed by DJs across the country as a "stone soul monster" and heralded by Downbeat Magazine as a "soul story teller" who recirculates the spirit of R&B from the 50's, 60's and 70's, Angel Rissoff's 2005 debut CD "Angel Where Have You Been" is being called one of the best R&B albums of the year by renowned DJ Bob Porter (WBGO/Beal Street Caravan.) Rissoff continues to capture fans with a collage of provocative songs bred from the Rock & Rhythm of Huey "Piano" Smith and Don Covay.

Angel Rissoff's on stage performances of "I Want A Love I Can See" and his own "Break Out The Tears" have electrified the Carolina Beach music scene, creating a the momentum that has earned him the Carolina Beach Music Award 2005 nomination for "Solo Album of the Year," as well as the 16th highest ranked artist by the National Association of R&B DJs. Angel's versatile style on "I Want A Love I Can See" (ranked 13 out of 954 songs) resonates the Temptations while "Break Out The Tears" shows his writing and singing abilities.

Angel Rissoff recirculates the spirit of R&B from the 1950's, 60s and 70s, following a strong current that runs back from the soul story teller Don Covay ("Better To Have And Not Need") all the way to Huey "Piano" Smith ("Where You At") and the Moonglows ("Oh Rockin Daddy"). Though a sentimentalist at heart, the Bronx-based singer makes his strong and attractive voice swoop, dip and vault every which way without an inordinate amount of bittersweet longing for a time past. Producer Johnny Gale shows he has a good ear for sonic seasoning, using blues guitar, saxophones, and vocal harmonies.

Frank-John Hadley

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN has been selected as one of Soul-Patrol.com's "Best of 2006."

Carolina Beach Music Awards 2005 and 2006 Nomination for Solo Album, featuring The #1 song on the Beach Music Charts "I Want A Love I Can See," also receiving the Carolina Beach Music Awards 2006 Nomination for National Dance/Shag Song.

CD REVIEW: Angel - Where Have You Been?

(Great Black Music From The Ancient To The Future)

Back in 1968 I was 11 years old, I walked into the neighborhood record shop in NY and for the first time in my life, I purchased a piece of recorded music with my own money. I had been inside of that record store many times, but never before had I been so bold as to actually take some of my own money, hard earned by scavenging the neighborhood for empty soda bottles to ca\$h in and actually make a purchase. Well on this particular day I brought two 45 rpm records, paid 49 cents for each one and since that day I haven't looked back. It was the start of a lifelong addiction.

The two records that I brought that day were:

- Sly & the Family Stone: "Everyday People/Sing a Simple Song"
- Rascals: "People Got To Be Free"

Looking back I always thought that it was significant that one was a "funk" record and the other was a "soul" record. In some ways my tastes haven't really changed that much since I was 11 years old. On the other hand it's also somewhat significant that one of the first two records that I ever brought was by a white artist.

Of course the Rascals (also from NYC) aren't just "white artists" they were actually revolutionaries who did one hell of a job of teaching youngbloods like me that the face of SOUL MUSIC doesn't always have to look like the face in the mirror. Hence one of the very first pages to go up on the Classic Soul website, was a page dedicated to and the Rascals and their magical lead singer Felix Cavaliere. Back in those days we all listened to low powered WWRL-1600 AM (all the way over on the right hand side of the dial). And when legendary NYC disc jockey Enoch Hawthorne Gregory would yell "GET UP", then start playing the song "IT'S A BEAUTIFUL MORNING" and you

could hear the majestic beauty of Felix's voice coming out of the tiny am radio, you knew that it was time to get up from school.

However I digress...

Angel reminds me a lot of what I perceived way back then that Felix was like. No his voice doesn't sound exactly like Felix, Angel has got his own style. But ya know, even that statement doesn't really say enough. Folks I have been living with this album for the past few months, savoring it in many different places and situations. If I were a "mainstream music critic" I might say something like "Retro Motownish/Staxish Roots Driven Up Tempo R&B". However I would never say such blow hard drivell....

What I will say is that Angel's music blew me away the very first time I heard it and it has blown away EVERYONE that I have played it for.

Here's an example: I was in the car listening to the CD "Where Have You Been?" and I got a call on my cell phone from our good friend "Enorman" of WVKO in Columbus, Ohio and I turn down the volume, so we can have our conversation. At some point during the conversation "Enorman" says to me, what the hell is that you are listening to?" I said, "oh it's a new CD that was recently submitted to me, let me turn up the volume so you can hear it better". So I turned up the volume, took off my headset and put it close to the car speaker. The song "I Want a Love I Can See" (yes a cover version of the Temptations classic) was playing. I left the headset near the speaker for about a minute and then put it back on. Enorman" said: "Who tha f*uck was that"? Never mind, I don't care who it is I NEED to have that CD so that I can put it into the rotation at the station. Since I first started listening to Angel's music late last year, reactions like that one have occurred time and time again.

On the CD Where Have You Been? Angel doesn't offer up any social commentary in particular. He doesn't have to. His existence and the existence of the CD is social commentary enough. What you are getting with this album is quite simply the best album that I have heard so far this year. It's all about the music, pure and simple.

Could I write more about Angela and his music?

Of course I could, and there is quite a bit to tell and I'll save that for another time. My feeling right now is that you should take a few moments and actually go and listen to some of this music over on his web site at:

<http://www.angelmusicinc.com>

I have always believed that there is a kind of "circular symmetry", about life and that "what goes around truly does come around". So therefore it makes me smile more than just a little bit to know that Angel's album "Where Have You Been?" is now playing in the regular rotation" at a small Black station, playing Soul music "located on the far right hand side of the dial" today in Columbus, Ohio. That way small Black boys in Columbus, Ohio might just have the chance to buy Angel's music with their own money, just as I did back in 1968, after hearing the Rascals being played on a similar station in New York City. Because if they do, they will be better people for having had the chance to do so when they do.

--Bob Davis, Soul Patrol