SJB SELECTION

REVIEW · BLUES

Big Mama’s Door | Alvin Youngblood Hart

Voice. Guitar. Wood. Strings. Blues. Take away the rest.

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Alvin Youngblood Hart opens *Big Mama’s Door* without needing to restore the past.

He plays it.

The guitar attacks percussively. The strings snap. The wood joins the rhythm. The voice doesn’t look for elegance where none is needed.

The result sounds essential, but essential doesn’t mean simple.

Hart knows the language of pre-war blues deeply. The difference is that he doesn’t recite it.

There is an **ancient modernity** in this music: techniques and forms that come from far away take on an almost physical immediacy.

The sound has the dry colour of earth.

You hear the fingers.

You hear the pressure on the strings.

You even hear the space left between one phrase and the next.

It’s like opening an old door expecting a museum and finding instead someone sitting on the other side who is still playing.

No compulsory nostalgia.

No period-costume reenactment.

Just blues.

> ***“Big Mama’s Door” doesn’t polish the blues. It leaves scratches, dust and fingerprints on it. And that is exactly why it breathes.***

LISTEN

Big Mama's Door — Alvin Youngblood Hart — is in our playlist Acoustic Blues, Roots & Dust.

Alvin Youngblood Hart. Updated every Friday. Selected by ear.

LISTEN FIRST. SELECT SECOND.