

contains less razzmatazz than Maxwell's, and throughout, Bob Corritore's hip phrasing on harp contains a vintage sound.

James and Rynn have a knack for writing and performing songs as if they were living in the glory years of '50s Chicago blues. The unoriginal style of the music and the abundance of covers—there are seven—may limit the appeal to many blues listeners. Still, the disc proves that sidemen can successfully step to the front.

—TIM HOLEK

VARIOUS ARTISTS

A Tribute To James "Yank" Rachell

Yankville Records - YR012708

A *Tribute To James "Yank" Rachell* is a 21-track album paying homage to the late blues mandolin legend. It features inspired performances by Mike Seeger, Grammy Award-winning banjo picker Tim O'Brien, Lovin' Spoonful founder and prewar music devotee John Sebastian, and a member of Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women, Andra Faye. While not everything on this album is essential,



standout performances are Orville Johnson's treatment of *Let Me Tangle In Your Potato Vines*, Tim O'Brien's version of *Texas Tony*, and John Sebastian's and David Grisman's take on *Tappin' That Thing*. An exceptional inclusion is the album's final track, *Freedom*, Yank's favorite gospel song recorded by daughters May Nell & Willia B. and granddaughter Sheena. According to the album's liner notes, "Net proceeds from the sale of this album benefit the Yank Rachell family."

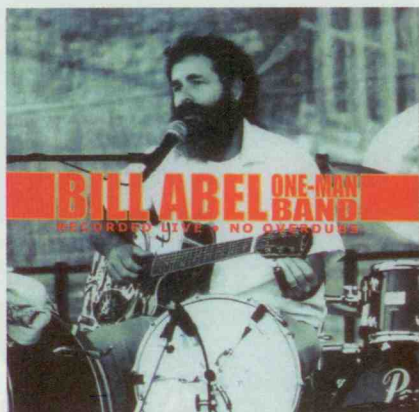
—MARK COLTRAIN

BILL ABEL

One-Man Band

Blue Skunk Music - (No #)

Belzoni, Mississippi-born Bill Abel has been rambling around playing with legends like Honeyboy Edwards, Sam Carr, Paul "Wine" Jones, and T-Model Ford for the better part of three decades. *One-Man Band* is Abel's debut solo album "recorded live with no overdubs." It is a gritty, rocking album that owes more to Abel's north Mississippi hill country connections than the Delta. Clocking



in at just under an hour, *One-Man Band* is made up mostly of original material, except Paul "Wine" Jones' *Rob And Steal* and the traditional *When I Lay My Burden Down* and *John Henry*. If a no frills, primitive driving beat and raggedy, gutbucket guitar are what you like, then you cannot go wrong here. *One-Man Band* is about as downhome Mississippi as you can get without having to leave your house.

—MARK COLTRAIN

BUNNY SIGLER

The Lord's Prayer

BUN-Z Music & Records - (No #)

Walter "Bunny" Sigler was once one of the busiest music men in Philadelphia, writing hits for the O'Jays, Jackie Moore, and others, producing hits for Instant Funk, and making a series of brilliant recordings of his own in the '60s and '70s, of which only 1978's *Let Me Play With You (Party, Party, Party)* was a substantial hit. His live shows were among

the most imaginative in the annals of R&B, especially his entrances, which included riding a motorcycle through the audience and onto the stage or doing a breast stroke through a sea of fake fog. Recent years, however, have found him on the oldies circuit singing *Disco Inferno* with the Trammps, a group in which he was not an original member.

Singing in sweetly soaring tenor tones, his pliant phrasing rife with Sam Cooke-like curlicues, Sigler is now applying his penchant for surprise to gospel music. "No more pain, no more sorrow, won't have to worry about payin' my bills tomorrow, 'cause I got somebody lookin' out for me," he wails on *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*. That and such other church standards such as *Near The Cross* and *The Lord's Prayer* are given refreshing twists, and Sigler's originals are filled with melodic, lyrical, and rhythmic invention. Drum machines anchor grooves on the dozen selections, yet the instrumentation is remarkably varied from track to track. A horn section is present at times, and a full choir helps rock the deliciously syncopated *What Did Moses Do? Lordie, Lordie*, on which Sigler scats, features noted jazz pianist Uri Cane, who co-wrote the song with the singer. *Honky Tonk Music* features the pumping old-school acoustic piano of co-writer Bill Jolly and a rhythm section that includes a washboard and what sounds like a tuba. Sigler, who was billed as "Mister Emotion" early in his career, is in remarkable voice throughout and, whether singing R&B or gospel, remains one of the most soulful singers on the planet.

—LEE HILDEBRAND

RODGER COLLINS

Through My Eyes

Garden Tree Media - GT0108

After cutting a series of singles for the Galaxy and Fantasy labels between 1960 and 1973—including the 1967 San Francisco Bay Area R&B and pop hit *She's Looking Good* (successfully covered the following year by Wilson Pickett) and the cult classics *Foxy Girls In Oakland* (featuring the Hoodoo Rhythm Devils' John Rewind on slide guitar) and *Get Away From Me* (with Ike Turner and his band)—Texas-born, San Francisco-bred singer-songwriter Rodger Collins retired from