



WILEY AND THE CHECKMATES

WE CALL IT SOUL

"*We Call it Soul* is not a re-creation. *We Call it Soul* is not an appraisal of music that came out some 40 years ago. This is Southern soul, straight and true, from the church, from the heart and straight out of the South."

-From *We Call it Soul* liner notes by Ace Atkins

Hailing from Oxford, Mississippi, the cultural center of the South, **Wiley and the Checkmates** have a lot to live up to. The hill country blues of Fred McDowell, Junior Kimbrough, and R.L. Burnside... The literary landmarks of William Faulkner, Larry Brown, and John Grisham...

Herbert Wiley formed the Checkmates in 1960 and the group began performing on the chitlin' circuit as a marquee act and playing behind soul legends like Otis Clay, Percy Sledge, and Syl Johnson. After a dozen years with the Checkmates, Wiley quit music to run the family business and raise a family. In 2002, Wiley was inspired to reform the Checkmates after watching an Oxford punk band rehearse in a local storefront. Wiley brought together local gospel, jazz, and rock musicians and fashioned a modern take on the sound of the original Checkmates.

Wiley and the Checkmates released their debut CD ***Introducing...*** in 2004. Wiley began crisscrossing the Southeast with Checkmate regulars like **J.D. Mark (Precious Bryant, LCD Soundsystem touring guitarist)** and **Matt Patton (Paul 'Wine' Jones, the Dexateens)**, playing venues ranging from Alabama frat bars to the annual Ponderosa Stomp festival, where the Checkmates backed unheralded soul pioneers like **Bobby Patterson, Harvey Scales, Ralph "Soul" Jackson, Roscoe Robinson and Hermon Hitson.**

For ***We Call It Soul***, the Checkmates searched the far corners of the Southeast to bring together an unlikely cast of aural eccentrics not unlike the inclusion of Duane Allman or Bobby Womack on classic albums cut in Muscle Shoals and Memphis. First the Checkmates met **Jim Lancaster**, a seasoned engineer that cut his teeth in Memphis and Jackson, Mississippi, who in 2005 bought **Playground Studios** - an abandoned studio in Valparaiso, Florida - and cleaned up the mess that Hurricane Ivan had left him. In the 1960s and 1970s Shelby Singleton and Finley Duncan recorded classics with the likes of Johnny Adams and Big John Hamilton at Playground. In 2007, the Checkmates hired original Playground session keyboardist **David Adkins** and were one of the first projects recorded in the re-opened studio.

The Checkmates welcomed a diverse list of guest musicians: *Dusty In Memphis*/Elvis Presley/Leonard Cohen harmonica player **Ed Kollis**, former Bob Dylan backing singer **Regina McCrary**, and Silver Jews keyboardist **Tony Crow**. Add mixing by Nashville's **Mark Nevers (Lambchop, Bonnie Prince Billy, Candi Staton)** and liner notes by Oxford novelist Ace Atkins and what do you call it? ***We Call It Soul.***

"Southern Soul at its finest...who says 'they-don't-sing-like-they-used-to-anymore'?" **-Real Blues**

www.myspace.com/wileyandthecheckmates

Band: Wiley And The Checkmates

Album: We Call It Soul

Catalog #: RF0006

Format/List Price: CD \$14.99

File Under: Soul/Funk 'W'

RIYL: Muscle Shoals, Numero Group, Now & Again, Stax



Track Listing:

1. I Want Your Love In My Life
2. Up In Heah
3. I Did My Part
4. Guess You Wouldn't Know Nothin' Bout That
5. All-The-Way Wrong
6. Tryin' To Get Next To You
7. I Don't Want No Funky Chicken
8. Ode To Billie Joe/Hip Hug-Her
9. Have You Been Crying?
10. Set Your Mind Free

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