



"An attitude bad enough to redefine that term and a hustler's life story that Elmore Leonard couldn't invent."

– Jim DeRogatis, *Sound Opinions*

"Music made for the love of it by a been there/done that journeyman arguably just reaching his prime.." – *American Songwriter*

ANDRE WILLIAMS

I WANNA GO BACK TO DETROIT CITY

RELEASE DATE: JUNE 3, 2016

At 79 years old (he'll be 80 in November), Andre "Mr. Rhythm" Williams has been a singer, writer, producer, star-maker, showman, cult-hero and **hustler for six decades**. He's been high, and he's been low. He's toured the world in snazzy suits and lived on the streets, asking for change.

For *I Wanna Go Back To Detroit City*, his fifth album for Chicago's Bloodshot Records, he wanted to return to his adopted hometown – a town that's seen peaks and valleys just like Andre – from hustle and bustle to bust, from drinking out of crystal to drinking out of brown paper.

Back in the '50s, when Andre first arrived in Detroit from his Alabama birthplace, he made his mark with Fortune Records and his doo-wop group the 5 Dollars. Later, on his own, **the Cramps-covered "Bacon Fat"** and underground classic "Jailbait" were hit records. **Berry Gordy, Jr.** hired him at the fledgling **Motown Records**. There he produced Mary Wells, The Contours, Stevie Wonder and others, before being fired, and then hired again, then fired, then hired again, over and over.

After that, Andre was like a musical Zelig – he was everywhere, man. **He wrote "Shake A Tail Feather,"** songs for Ike & Tina Turner, Parliament and Edwin Starr. He crashed, burned, and was re-born when he recorded the garage rock sleaze classic *Silky* with members of the Dirtbombs and Demolition Doll Rods. Since then, he's recorded albums with The Sadies, Jon Langford, Two-Star Tabernacle (featuring Jack White), Jon Spencer, Morning 40 Federation, and the Goldstars.

Now, the rollercoaster journey finally brings him back around to his musical birthplace. While recording the title track, Andre noticed they were practically across the street from the former location of Fortune Records, now an empty field, where many

of his early classics were recorded. The song starts with Andre's knowing, sly chuckle and kicks into a **psychedelic soul mantra**. Taken as a meditation, it stabilizes and focuses. There might be roaches in the kitchen, but there's roaches in the ashtray, too.

Andre also wanted to see his house in the old neighborhood, and, again, found only a field with overgrown grass, no houses, no people, nothing. He couldn't imagine Detroit ending up like this so he went into the studio that day and recorded "Detroit (I'm So Glad I Stayed)." It's an **anthem of resilience**, full of **low-end heavy funk** courtesy of guitarists Matthew Smith (Outrageous Cherry, Rodriguez) and Dan Kroha (Gories, Demolition Doll Rods) that'll trip you back to the Mothership. "Times" is a funky, slinky, **growling rumination** on the rough times the city has seen, built around the rhythm section of David Shettler on drums, and the late Steve King (Eminem) on bass.

Moving beyond the city limits, Andre's still a **sonic chameleon**. Only he can effortlessly and roguishly kick out a couplet like "She was the only woman to get the electric chair/ I really felt bad about that cuz I wasn't there..." on the **talkin' country blues** of "Mississippi Sue" (with Jim White of Dirty Three, Cat Power on drums). "Hall of Fame," a **slice of Gil Scott-Heron-style street poetry and proto-rap** featuring longtime collaborator Dennis Coffey (Funk Brothers), rattles off Andre's resume and tells the doubters where they can stick it, while "Meet Me in the Graveyard" is a Halloween love song with a groove right out of a Superfly caper. **AFTER** the deal's gone down. When Andre tells you to meet him somewhere, you go, dig?

Let the sounds and vibes of *I Wanna Go Back to Detroit City* permeate you. Headphones, friends, headphones. Use them. Take them earbuds to the trash. Let your mind be free to wander, free to groove. Free to overcome what's weighing you down. Go Back. With Andre.

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