



Various "**Avalon Blues - A Tribute to the Music of Mississippi John Hurt**" Vanguard Records

Canuck folkie, Bruce Cockburn, performs the title cut on this collection. Of the fourteen other songs included here, only Taj Mahal's take on Hurt's "My Creole Babe" is a previously released tune. Apart from Beck, the remaining performers all possess bona fide, folk/blues/country credentials. Here, Bill Morrissey picks on "Pay Day," and went as far as to record his own tribute "**Songs Of Mississippi John Hurt**" for Rounder/Philo, during the closing year of last century. Chris Smither and Peter Case contribute to the sleeve notes, as well as musically. Smither in particular, recalls a visit to New York's Greenwich Village in late 1964, where he saw Hurt perform at The Gaslight. Considering that Hurt's performing career, on a national level, was a mere three years in duration [1963-66], Smither's youthful *run in* with Hurt is all the more poignant. Steve and Justin Earle perform the double entendre that is "Candy Man," while Lucinda mumbles her way through "Angels Laid Him Away." Other contributors, include Geoff Muldaur, Dave Alvin [who duets with Case on "Monday Morning Blues"], Gillian Welch [with David Rawlings] and John Hiatt. As tribute albums go, this one is a keeper.

Folkwax Rating – 6 out of 10

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