

BLAKE ZIDELL & ASSOCIATES



March 26, 2008



Funk Fantasy Fulfilled

A Greyboy Allstars concert review - Friday March 21st Crystal Bay Club

By Seth Lightcap

Back in 1996 I was a fiendish jam band bootleg collector living in Madison, Wis.

In those days, a Greyboy Allstars live recording was a scorching hot commodity. The Allstars' debut album, *West Coast Boogaloo*, was a house party staple, but those mere eight tracks were a tease for insatiable music collectors like myself. The album featured James Brown horn arranger and funk god Fred Wesley, for gosh sakes. The Allstars were a new-school JB Horns! Can you say... Gimme Some Mo!

I scoured trading circles, sending out stacks of dank Phish and MMW tapes, just to get my grubby hands on a couple grainy Greyboy Allstars recordings. All from shows in sunny Cali mind you.

Several of those Allstars tapes are now barely playable. They lived in my car's tape deck for months.

BLAKE ZIDELL & ASSOCIATES



March 26, 2008

But — sad but true — despite hours of my life spent boogieing to the Allstars on the way to work, I never saw a Greyboy Allstars show... until Friday!

And what a freakin' funk fest it was.

The Greyboy Allstars came out to the Crystal Bay Club and threw down. The break beats. The boogaloo guitar. The bumpin' horn riffs. All there. Exactly what I waited over 10 years to see. Tight funk that keeps you pimpin' and struttin' all night long.

And I was not alone in my funky feelings. The Allstars got the dance floor buzzing with the first crack of the snare drum and never let up. Twitching their feet and shaking their shoulders, no one escaped the infectious pulse of the groove that night.

Having seen Karl Denson and Robert Walter in other recent band arrangements, it was also a pleasure hearing the two strong soloists joined by another gifted lead player, guitarist Elgin Park. With three players splitting jam duties and a pulsing rhythm section pounding out the breaks, I never grew restless with any individual tone. Something I can't say of Denson's Tiny Universe project.

Denson's stripped down, less notes, more feeling approach sounded better than ever before actually. He is truly a multi-talented groove energizer bunny. There was barely a second that he wasn't contributing to the sound. Whether it was a sax, flute, shaker, tambourine, or microphone he always had an instrument in hand. His flute solos and soulful vocal growl were especially impressive.

Though my music tastes have changed since '96, my ears and my ass will never let me deny real funk. My first ever Greyboy Allstars live experience was the booty shakin' head bobbin' funky funky get down on the get down I always knew it would be.

If you missed Greyboy Allstars this time around, don't sleep on the next opportunity. Who knows how long this re-assembled super group will keep touring.

And of course. I would love to hear the entire double set jam extravaganza again.

Who's got my misty digital recording of the Friday show? I'll trade you a 10/22/95 Greyboy at Humpty's... if I can get my double cassette deck to record that is.