

3/4AD

DAVY GRAHAM AND ALEXIS KORNER

- 1 ANGI
- 2 DAVY'S TRAIN BLUES
DAVY GRAHAM - GUITAR
- 3 3/4 A.D.
DAVY GRAHAM & ALEXIS KORNER - GUITARS

RECORDED BY BILL LEADER

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Experiment, *per se*, has only a limited value. What is of importance is the confirmation of an emotionally valid step forward in music. Musicians or singers have to be fiercely aware of the 'rightness' in their music in order to make it last. They may appear to be reticent or shy but, in their private selves, they must be sure.

Most good performers are, to a large extent, self-centred. They do not have to be rude, arrogant or off-hand – neither do they have to be bland and irritating. They may be incredibly weak in many respects, but they are firm in their music.

These statements apply to both Davy and me.

Davy Graham was just over 21 when he made these recordings. He is a gifted guitarist who will not let himself be fenced into one field of music. Traditional folk and banjo pickers have influenced his playing. Josh White, not in this category, has also exerted considerable influence and so have the great modern jazz players. The fierce belief of good Gospel groups, the great blues singers, all have influenced him as have the Baroque composers.

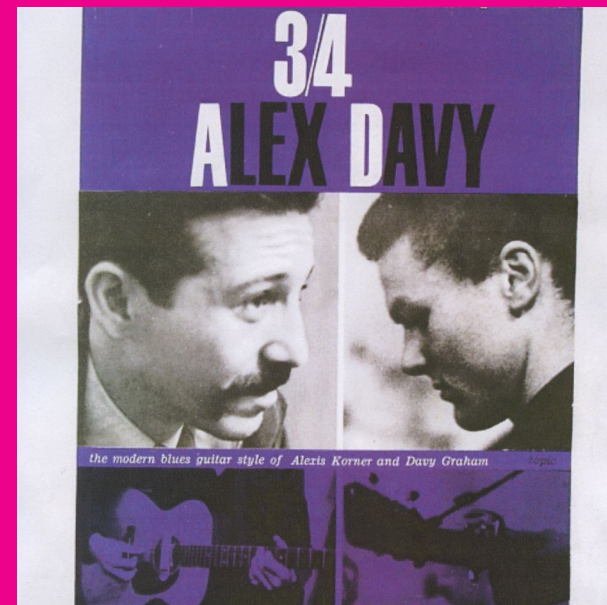
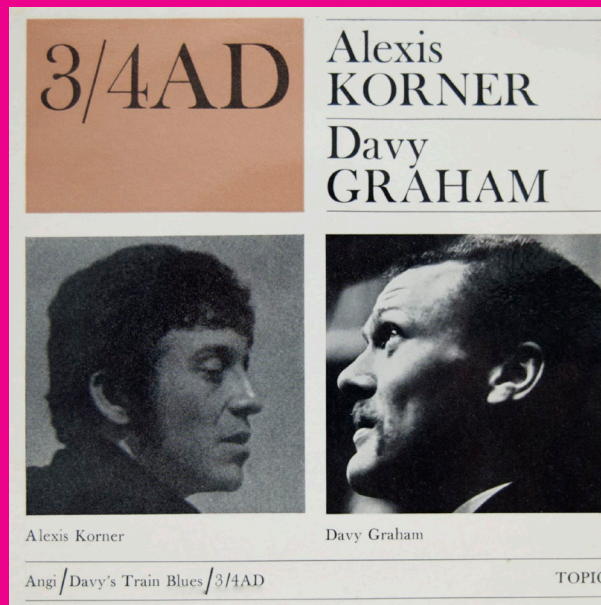
At times he has wanted to take up other instruments for the extra sound but he has always been too lazy to do anything about it, and he has been forced to make these sounds on a guitar. So something new emerges. He gets a chance to work out his ideas at Nick's Diner, in Fulham, where he works several nights a week. He has also played the streets of Paris and had it rough – and, in his way, he has had it good, with a crowd of worshipful fans sitting at his feet. What he has learned is that, to keep his music alive, he needs to play in front of audiences; he needs to communicate.

His approach to a tune is through its harmonic implications, rather than through the tune itself. Both **Angi** which is Baroque or Modern Jazz Quartet influenced, and his **Train Blues** – a piece of pure, rhythmic impressionism, testify to this. The approach is probably why Davy is best as a soloist. Yet, one of Davy's most telling performances is in our duet, **3/4 AD**. (The title is derived from the time signature and our respective initials). Inspired by Miles Davis' Kind of Blue and Charles Mingus' Better Git It In Your Soul, with a bow towards Jimmy Giuffre in the second theme, it is simply the Blues. It is not folk, it is not jazz, it is just music the way we feel it when we are playing together.

There is a lovely swoop at the beginning of Davy's opening solo. It is completely Davy, playing, you will notice, harmonies rather than single-note lines, sinuous but expansive. Then, a complete change in the next chorus. That is me. A hammering, shouting, gospel approach which I could never get rid of, even if I wanted to. In the second theme, the solo work is all Davy.

The solo voice, treble first, then bass, in the last two choruses, is by me. It is just the way it happened to work out. We certainly would not play it exactly the same way again; it was an experiment which we may never repeat. It was, however, an experiment which we 'know' was right.

Alexis Korner



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