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The Hangmen - 'East Of Western' (Acetate Records)



CD Reviews
Written by Dom Daley
Tuesday, 05 June 2012 05:00

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I've been waiting for what seems like forever for the new Hangmen CD to drop and, after switching off for a second, hey presto, it's here!

'East Of Western' sees this uber-cool band turn it up a notch or two with the addition of former supersucker Ron Heathman on guitar and the one and only Mike Ness twiddling the knobs in the production room.

'Homesick Blues' comes flying out of the speakers with a big fat meaty sound with a great guitar lick and the toe tapping beat - The Hangmen are back, boys and girls, and by the sounds of it they ain't taking no prisoners and it's gonna be a

shoot out 'til the death.

Ten tracks of rawk 'n' roll with one foot on the monitor in spectacular rock 'n' roll fashion. On offer here is a bunch of tunes that are cocksure and confident and Mr Smalls must know that he's onto something; when he snarls out 'I'm Your Man' you just know it's true. Sounding not too dissimilar to a certain mega-band called the Lords Of The New Church it's just honest good time rock 'n' roll with swagger and attitude. With some great guitar licks and catchy choruses this album is set to impress.

The tempo is taken down to the porch as Smalls sits back on his rocking chair and strums the acoustic as the tumbleweed rolls down the road as he laments about loves lost on 'Had A Girl', inspiring stuff and a great foil to the opening tracks and a song that really suits Brian Small's voice. Don't get too comfortable or lulled into a false sense of security because the stomping chops are back on 'Railroad Man'. If you're familiar with The Hangmen and their mightily fine back catalogue then you're in for a treat and if you're new to the band and want to check them out but aren't sure then if you like some snotty, sleazy rock 'n' roll with a spirit of '77 attitude then look no further because the Hangmen have it in spades.

'Big Red Rooster' has some of that garage magic in the guitar lick as the back beat drives home a stonking tune that is a snotty homage to early '70s Stooges, and some Kinks or Who styling for good measure. The penultimate track on the album is possibly the most Stiv like on offer as it motors along - 'She Cracked' is all blood and thunder and you can imagine this would bring the house down in any live situation: just a great straight forward punk rock tune; well written, well played, well produced and well done! Excellent stuff indeed. To take this sucker home the album is closed with the smokey laid back tones of 'Haunted'.

Was it worth the wait? Too fucking right it was. No nonsense, no gimmicks, no sell out, just great honest rock 'n' roll of the very highest order. Once again the Hangmen deliver the goods with an album crammed full to the brim of top tunes that should come with a Tipper sticker simply declaring "All Killer No Filler!" Buy it. Job done!

<http://www.acetate.com/bands/hangmen/index.html>

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