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Preview track Grant Hart: Khalid

CWS

Because of the sporadic and sometimes wayward nature of his career after the break-up of Husker Du in '87, it was always going to be hard to predict what this album under their former drummer/singer Hart's own name would come off like.

It isn't easy in the sense that it doesn't give its gifts up readily, and its slightly scattergun nature (it opens with rock blast, next up is a quirky piano Beatlesque ballad) is initially off-putting. The fact that on Schoolbuses Are For Children, Narcissus Narcissus and Sailor Jack he sounds like [early 70s Bowie](#) is also pretty strange (on the former he's just *that* far from singing "Ziggy played guitar").

But after a couple of plays what occurs is that this is An Album in the old sense of the word: 10 tracks which show different aspects of his interests and personality, and each track is quite distinctive -- just as they used to be on [Beatle albums in the mid to late Sixties](#), and on [Nirvana](#) records.

Get that and you are home free.

Schoolbuses, Narcissus and the narrative Sailor Jack are actually very good (despite the Bowie mannerisms), and when the guitars blast on the opener You're a Reflection of the Moon on the Water, the socio-politically loaded Charles Hollis Jones and the angry and slightly ambiguous Khalid ("push the button baby and it's paradise") you just want to rack the volume up and hit repeat-play.

And he delivers a neat line in power pop on California Zephyr with a chorus and backing vocals which wouldn't have sounded out of place on albums by [Dwight Twilley](#), the Raspberries or [Badfinger](#) (albeit with an American-cum-Bowie vocal twist).

Throughout there are gently rocking psychedelic twists, and lyrically Hart bares his soul on My Regrets and the gentle cabaret-styled ballad I Knew About You Since Then at the end.

So first time through there's a lack of grip, but a couple of plays and this one becomes increasingly impressive in a very unassuming way.

It's not Husker Du, but it is very much Grant Hart.

Grant Hart tours New Zealand in early February, and Australia after that. Tour dates and venues are [here](#).

Added: 18 Jan 10

Video

Comments

Andrew Gladstone - Jan 18, 2010

Nice review Graham. I have to admit that I've fallen a little in love with this album but you're right about it taking a few listens. It's worth the effort.

I probably wouldn't have even heard it if I weren't part of the touring party (support band) and I suspect it'll be one of those albums that is missed by most. Shame really.

I was one who thought that Bob Mould was the more important songwriter in Husker du but this album shows Hart as the better pop song writer IMO.

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