

in six years. Track one, "Like Jerry Lee," says it all. His originals are similar in scope to that of a *real* descendant of a legend, Hank III, in that they celebrate the seamy side of being white and poor. Songs like "White Trash Wife," "To Hell With You," "You Look Like I Could Use A Drink" and "If You Ever Saw A Baby With It's Pud" may not be as profane as Hank III, but they use shock value and humor in much the same way.

With Georgia Satellite Dan Baird on hand for some musical muscle, Jason pounds out a solid John Prine cover ("Daddy's Lil' Punkin"), updates "Wine So-Dee-O-Dee," and unflinchingly assumes his Killer role.

MIKE GREENBLATT

JESSE McREYNOLDS & FRIENDS WITH DAVID NELSON & STU ALLEN

Songs of the Grateful Dead - A Tribute to Jerry Garcia & Robert Hunter
(WOODSTOCK)



EVEN THE GRATEFUL DEAD can be new again, as this homage to Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter proves. Jesse McReynolds and his cohorts weave

their musical prowess with nuanced vocal harmonies and a deeply soulful understanding and pristine iteration of Hunter's lyrics.

McReynolds' mandolin rings through best in songs like "Franklin's Tower," "Loser" and "Fire On The Mountain," which are typically played in a high-energy, rock style. The vocal crooning imparts a southern twang to the songs that really brings a new element to the table.

The album concludes with a song co-written by McReynolds and Hunter, "Day by Day," a sweet melody that sticks to the heart and in the head. The nostalgia-laced tune is ornamented by Amanda McReynolds' vocal harmony, which leaves the listener wondering why her voice only graces one song. McReynolds surpassed his goal of playing 12 carefully chosen songs in a way Deadheads can accept. They can more than accept them; they can experience the songs differently, through the traditional

bluegrass that was the foundation of Garcia's genius.

LINDSEY SNYDER

JESSE BREWSTER

Wrecking Ball at the Concert Hall
(CROOKED PRAIRIE)



WRECKING BALL AT THE Concert Hall is the second LP from Berkeley-born country boy Jesse Brewster. Brewster is half rock star and half cowboy, and *Wrecking Ball* is 100% representative of both sides of his personality.

The album opens with the upbeat "All Those Things I Said," with its steel-toe boot tapping drum rhythm and smooth guitar licks. The next two tracks take a step back, with country ballads like "Fuel for the Fire" and "All She Deserves." Things pick back up on "God Fearin' Man," a good ol' fashioned drinking song with a funky Lynyrd Skynyrd riff, Brewster's rugged vocals and a wailing guitar solo for an extra kick. The album isn't just all guitars, bass and drums; In "Dive to Drown In" Brewster incorporates piano and organ for added dimension beneath his vocals.

With equal parts alt-rock attitude and down south country twang, Jesse Brewster plays up both sides to really come into his own as a singer/songwriter. *Wrecking Ball* is Brewster's personal invitation for listeners to crack open a brew and get to know him as a musician.

EMMA HERNANDEZ

JP BLUES

I Will Not Go Quietly
(MIDNIGHT CIRCUS)



IT'S LONG BEEN AXIOMATIC that the young have not suffered enough to sing the blues. Although John Pagano, known on Long Island as JP Blues,

is a very young singer/songwriter/guitarist—just 21—he was mentored by the very best. The late Sam "Bluzman" Taylor took Pagano under his wing and out on the road in the last years of his life and the young man was clearly paying close attention to all the guitar greats who crossed his path. Now fronting his own band, he shows off

jaw-dropping skills on every track. He also proves he can sing in the first ten a cappella notes of the first track, Tony Joe White's "As The Crow Flies." He does a fine job with some songs from the Bluzman's repertoire, particularly "Nothing in the Street." He also convincingly covers some other fast company like Eric Clapton ("Old Love") and Tampa Red ("Love Her With A Feeling"). But he's at his most impressive on his own compositions, particularly the biting "When I'm Bored" and "Poor little rich girl," my personal favorite, which starts off with the perfect image—"Stomping her Prada shoes"—then rhymes "Mercedes-Benz" with "Facebook friends."

KAY CORDTZ

JW-JONES

Midnight Memphis Sun
(RUF)



IF YOU'RE RECORDING A blues record and you're looking for artists to cover, a few obvious names jump to mind: Robert Johnson, Elmore

James, Muddy Waters...Bryan Adams? While Bryan Adams would seem to be the answer to the question "Which of these does not belong?," Canadian JW-Jones does a more than credible job of turning his countryman's "Cuts Like A Knife" into a fine modern blues workout. It's actually one of the highlights of this disc, Jones' sixth release.

The title refers to Sun Studio, where seven of the tunes were recorded. Bringing in a few blues legends to help out, harp master Charlie Musselwhite and guitarist Hubert Sumlin add their talents to three songs each. The strongest cuts on the album are the three that feature Musselwhite. Jimmy Reed's "I Don't Go For That" is the real standout. Along with a blistering solo from Musselwhite, it showcases Jones' best vocal on the album, while supporting his north-of-the-border reputation as a guitar-slinger to watch.

Jones isn't going to make anyone forget Stevie Ray Vaughan, but that's not really the point. This is a great record to turn up loud and drum along with. Most days, that's all you really need.

STEVE FRAZIER