

- [Home](#)
- [Ratings standards](#)
- [Writer biographies](#)

[The Lonesome Road Review](#)

Bluegrass, Country, Americana, Blues, Rock and anything else that sounds good

Feeds:

[Posts](#)

[Comments](#)

« ["Strange New World" by Blue Moon Rising](#)
["Trains I Missed" by Balsam Range](#) »

"Songs of the Grateful Dead" by Jesse McReynolds & Friends with David Nelson & Stu Allen

December 26, 2010 by [Aaron Keith Harris](#)

Jesse McReynolds & Friends with David Nelson & Stu Allen

[Songs of the Grateful Dead](#)

Woodstock Records

4 stars (out of 5)

By Aaron Keith Harris

When Jesse McReynolds mentioned this project during his set with Bobby Osborne at IBMA Fanfest this fall, I immediately thought it was a bad idea. But I requested the project from the kind folks at Woodstock Records anyway and received one of the pleasant musical surprises of the year.

Subtitled "A Tribute to Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter," the guitarist/vocalist and lyricist for the legendary touring band, respectively, the project actually makes a great deal of sense. After all, McReynolds and his brother Jim famously covered Chuck Berry on one of their bluegrass albums, and a lot of the Dead's music lends itself well to the laid-back country-rock arrangements favored on this project.

The clear, bell-like tones of McReynolds' mandolin kick off the album with "Black Muddy River." Then comes his familiar, incomparable voice that, without its famous foil, sounds both mournful and optimistic. The result signaled that this endeavor was indeed a success.

McReynolds sings with real feeling—passionate on "Franklin's Tower," wistful on "Standing on the Moon," defiant on "Loser"—in unfamiliar territory, and that famous mandolin navigates through several rock-style (as

contrasted with more concise bluegrass breaks) solos with ease amid twisting electric guitars and understated drumming.

A yearning "Fire on the Mountain" (not the bluegrass fiddle tune) and a funky "Deep Elem Blues," which features Buck White on piano, are standouts, as is the rockabilly "Alabama Getaway," which recalls some of Jim & Jesse's forays into that territory.

The album ends with "Day by Day," a song written by McReynolds and Hunter especially for the project, bringing it to a close with the grace of a setting sun.



2 Votes

Share this: 0

Posted in [4 and 4.5 Star Albums](#), [Aaron Keith Harris](#), [Americana](#), [Bluegrass](#), [Pop](#), [Rock](#), [Singer-songwriter](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)

Be the first to like this post.

[Comments RSS](#)

Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Name *

Email *

Website

Comment

You may use these HTML tags and attributes: <abbr title=""> <acronym title=""> <blockquote cite=""> <cite> <code> <pre> <del datetime=""> <i> <q cite=""> <strike>

Notify me of follow-up comments via email.

Subscribe by email to this site

• Categories

• Email Subscription

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

•

• Current Poll

What is your favorite first-generation bluegrass band?

- The Stanley Brothers
- Bill Monroe & His Bluegrass Boys
- Jim & Jesse McReynolds
- Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs & the Foggy Mountain Boys
- Don Reno & Red Smiley

Other:

Vote

[View Results](#)

[Share This](#)

[Poll daddy.com](#)

• Recent Posts

- ["The Young Fisherwoman" by The Country Gentlemen, "Chicken Reel" by Curly Ray Cline and "Bluegrass Memories" by Dave Evans](#)
- ["Country Classics With a Bluegrass Spin" by The Grascals](#)
- ["Del McCoury" by Del McCoury](#)
- ["My Kind of Country" by Nathan Stanley](#)
- ["Memories" by Bobby Osborne & The Rocky Top X-Press](#)

• Blogroll

- [Fervor Coulee – roots music opinion](#)
- [International Bluegrass Music Museum](#)
- [Ted Lehmann's Bluegrass, Books, and Brainstorms](#)
- [The Bluegrass Blog](#)

• Category Cloud

[4 and 4.5 Star Albums](#) [5 Star Albums](#) [Aaron Keith](#)

[Harris Americana](#) [Blogroll](#) [Bluegrass](#) [Blues](#) [Books](#) [Charlie W.](#)

[Hansen](#) [Concerts](#) [Country](#) [Donald Teplyske](#) [Erin Faith](#) [Folk](#) [Gospel](#)
[Instrumental](#) [Katy Leonard](#) [Kevin Kehrberg](#) [Larry Stephens](#) [Maria Morgan Davis](#) [Movies](#)
[Old-time](#) [Pop](#) [Rock](#) [Singer-songwriter](#) [Ted Lehmann](#) [Television](#) [Tim Walsh](#)
[Uncategorized](#) [World](#)

• Archives

- [January 2011](#)
- [December 2010](#)
- [November 2010](#)
- [October 2010](#)
- [September 2010](#)
- [August 2010](#)
- [July 2010](#)
- [June 2010](#)
- [May 2010](#)
- [April 2010](#)
- [March 2010](#)
- [February 2010](#)
- [January 2010](#)
- [December 2009](#)
- [November 2009](#)
- [September 2009](#)
- [August 2009](#)
- [July 2009](#)
- [June 2009](#)
- [May 2009](#)
- [April 2009](#)
- [February 2009](#)
- [January 2009](#)
- [December 2008](#)
- [November 2008](#)
- [September 2008](#)
- [August 2008](#)
- [July 2008](#)
- [June 2008](#)
- [May 2008](#)
- [April 2008](#)

1/20/2011

"Songs of the Grateful Dead" by Jesse ...

- [March 2008](#)
- [February 2008](#)
- [January 2008](#)
- [December 2007](#)
- [November 2007](#)
- [October 2007](#)
- [September 2007](#)
- [August 2007](#)
- [July 2007](#)
- [June 2007](#)
- [May 2007](#)
- [April 2007](#)
- [March 2007](#)
- [February 2007](#)

[Blog at WordPress.com.](#)

Theme: [MistyLook](#) by [Sadish](#).

☺