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Various Artists

New Rides of the Furious Swampriders

Review by G. W. Hill

This is a CD with a lot of high points, but some low points, too. It really isn't extremely consistent in terms of quality or musical style. That said, there are some pieces here that certainly make it well worth having. It's likely that most people won't be blown away by every single song. It's also likely, though, that most people will find some cuts they like enough to make this a good purchase.



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Track by Track Review

Wovenhand - The Threshingfloor

This is quite an amazing piece that has a lot of energy. World music sounds are merged with progressive rock and space rock along with some definite alternative rock. I really like this thing a lot. It's like a journey to a mysterious new world.

Deborah Harry - Lucky Jim

The Blondie lead singer turns in a slow, bluesy kind of jam here. Harry's Blondie bandmate Chris Stein provides moog guitar and Nick Cave turns in a piano performance.

The Raymen - When Death's Black Train Is Coming to Town

There's a great Cramps meets rockabilly sound to this killer jam. It's a little on the weird side, but it's also awesome.

M. Walking on The Water - Enjoy the Silence

Jazz and world music merge on this cover of the Depeche Mode tune. I love the original, but I'm not really all that sure about this rendition. It's not bad, but doesn't really grab me.

The Dad Horse Experience - Kingdom It will Come

This is awesome. There's a jazz kind of element here, along with world music. Although, overall it reminds me of what you might get if you combined Talking Heads with Camper Van Beethoven. What a cool and unusual track this is.

Sixteen Horsepower - De-Railed

Here's a cut that has a lot in common with The Violent Femmes. In fact, in a lot of ways this bluesy, moody stomper really feels like that group. Although as the crunchy sounds join later, it is perhaps closer to something from Clutch.

The Perc - Sleeping Dog

There's a steady wash of keyboards. This song feels like one long introduction and is a point that doesn't really work all that well. It's OK, but just seems sort of unfinished.

Lydia Lunch, Dave Alvin & The JLP Session Projects - Walkin' Down the Street (Doin' My Thing)

This noisy rocker is weird, but very tasty. This cut earns a warning label in terms of lyrical content. The vocals have a really strange processed effect. There's some killer guitar work and sounds and parts of this wander towards space rock. While there are a lot of interesting bits here, the closing section seems to last a bit too long and is too repetitive.

Kirschbaum-Weishoff-Trio - Heartbreak Hotel

This incredibly slow version of this tune is perhaps the one real failure on this set. It just doesn't work. It's way too slow and the listener seems to be waiting for it to end. There's a weird, almost jazz meets Rock in Opposition section in the middle of this.

The Walkabouts - Soul Thief



I really like this track a lot. It's got a ton of energy and some great punk meets old school hard rock sound. There's a killer retro organ sound and this thing just oozes cool. It's one of the highlights of the set.

Velvetone w/ The Fat Honks - The River

Here's another highlight. This has a rubbery kind of jazz meets soul arrangement. This is a great rocker that also has a lot of retro sound in it. I really dig this a lot. The horns are great, as is the funky guitar.

Golden Kanine - Law of a Probable Outcome

I hear a bit of the Femmes on this, too. It's another intriguing tune and it has some cool horns in the mix. While it's not at quite the level of the last couple pieces, it's certainly one of the stronger ones on show here.

Johnny Dowd - Constant Waiting

This is another miss. It's just too weird and dissonant to work. There are some cool musical elements, but this seems to go out of its way to be strange and it suffers from that.

Harry Payuta - Take You Home

This rocker works reasonably well. It's not all that special, but compared to the track that came before it, it's a real winner. I'd have to say that there were better choices for closing piece here, but this does a pretty good job in that slot.



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