

# The Impaler Speaks

## V/A - The Perc Presents: New Rides Of The Furious Swampriders



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Here's a compilation that seems to have been made in honor of endeavors like Mass Movement, in that a collective of international – and fully independent – artists, with loosely defined connections that often seem tenuous at best, have gathered together with a cooperative approach to record and release an album's worth of music as a new entity of sorts. The Furious Swampriders began in 1990 under the guidance of Tom 'The Perc' Redecker, who was unsatisfied with the progress of his solo album. He gathered an offbeat and diverse group of independent German musicians to accompany him in the recording sessions, and The Furious Swampriders were born. In 1993 and again in 2000, The Perc revisited the concept and added an international flavor to the basic stew. Always rebellious artists like the late, great Jeffrey Lee Pierce of The Gun Club and outlaw country anti-hero Steve Earle, among others, joined the circus – and Redecker's vision was more fully realized than ever before on the two successive records. When The Perc put out the call for participants on this fourth installment, 'New Rides Of The Furious Swampriders', the responses were fast, furious, and somewhat mind-boggling. Of the returning participants, none is more exciting to me than Jeffrey Lee Pierce. Yes, JLP passed away in 1996. But he was as prolific as he was brilliant.

And this is the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where technology is king. So this collection brings us a few essential gems tied to JLP, including three that originally appeared on the album 'We Are Only Riders: The Jeffrey Lee Pierce Sessions Project', a must-have collaborative project not entirely dissimilar to this one except that it was purely a love for JLP that brought participants together for that one: Johnny Dowd's version of the JLP-penned 'Constant Waiting'; an all-(punk)-star groove session featuring Lydia Lunch, Dave Alvin, Kid Congo Powers, Cypress Grove, Willie Love, and more tearing up an amazing song from JLP's notebook called 'Walkin' Down The Street (Doin' My Thing)'; and a stunning cover of The Gun Club's 'Lucky Jim' by Debbie Harry (whose vocal performance could bring the hardest-hearted sonuvabitch in the room to tears) that features Nick Cave, Chris Stein, Cypress Grove, Willie Love, and a lead guitar performance from JLP himself that was recorded in 1992. Other Furious Swampriders include the Gothic-tinged rockabilly madness of Wovenhand, the surf-abilly stomp of The Haymen, the beautifully dark and moody M Walking On The Water (with a drop-dead cover of Depeche Mode's 'Enjoy The Silence' that strips the original down to a funereal dirge that must be heard to be believed), the



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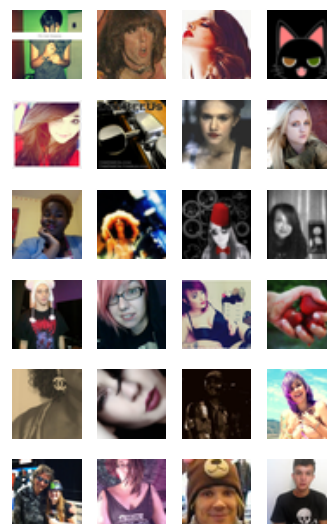
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hillbilly polka of The Dad Horse Experience (which is strongly reminiscent of The Gun Club in many ways), the countrified-Bad-Seeds sound of Sixteen Horsepower, the minimalist anti-rock of Kirschbaum-Weishoff-Trio, the gorgeously offbeat new wave Americana of The Walkabouts, the fat and soulful funk of Velvetone & The Fat Honks, the unconventional indie rock of Golden Kanine, the amped-up worldbeat of Harry Payuta, and the expressive Krautrock of The Perc himself. Ultimately, this feels more like an album by The Furious Swampriders – a band more than a collective – than a compilation of artists from around the globe. Unity of purpose and desire is a palpable thing, and it both clearly exists and shines through brilliantly on every note here, making 'New Rides Of The Furious Swampriders' a wild ride of an album that leaves pure satisfaction in its wake – a tough task that is seldom achieved when the 'artist' label is 'V/A'. **The Impaler @impalerspeaks**

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