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# Old School

**Nils Lofgren**

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## Review

As its title implies, getting older is on Nils Lofgren's mind for his first album of new material since 2006. Besides the title track, "60 Is the New 18," "Miss You Ray" (dedicated to Ray Charles), and "Ain't Too Many of Us Left" speak to the frustrations facing an aging rocker in a young man's game. To his credit, Lofgren doesn't modernize his style to endear himself for a younger audience, but has written 11 out of these dozen selections in the same melodic rock format that he's adhered to since his days in Grin. He's never been a great singer, but his voice has lost much of its high end, which makes him sound more grizzled than usual. Still, that generally works to his advantage since his veteran status allows him to comment on everything from the maturing of love to teens and their annoying habits. The distinctive electric guitar sound that made Lofgren so invaluable as a backing soloist to Neil Young and Bruce Springsteen is tamped down for the most part, although it weaves throughout songs that rely more on melody, lyrics, and singing than hotshot six-string work. Guest vocals from Paul Rodgers and Lou Gramm minimally enhance a few tracks, but Sam & Dave's Sam Moore shines on his duet for the chorus for "Ain't Too Many of Us Left," a song that also gives Lofgren a chance to unwind on guitar. Heartfelt ballads such as the lovely "When You Were Mine," the haunted memories of the closing "Why Me," the acoustic "Let Her Get Away," "Love Stumbles On"'s wistful recollection, and especially "Irish Angel" (the disc's only cover) work particularly well with Lofgren's grainy, somewhat compromised voice. Perhaps his advancing years have shifted Lofgren's focus from the rockers that used to dominate his albums to the slower, more reflective compositions here. Regardless, he's in good form; spirited on the rockers and appropriately melancholy on the softer material. He knows his shot at solo stardom is behind him but that doesn't stop him from writing solid, at times exemplary, songs and performing them with the verve and panache he has always exhibited in his work. This isn't his best hour but it's far from his worst. It's a workmanlike effort from a veteran rocker who is too driven, vital, and talented to seriously consider retiring. That should sit just fine with fans who have stuck with him this long, and they especially will be rewarded with a solid, credible, and honest project that plays to Lofgren's still considerable strengths.

## Tracks

		Title	Composer	Time
✓	1	Old School	Lofgren	3:12
	2	60 Is the New 18	Lofgren	3:03
	3	Miss You Ray	Lofgren	2:39
	4	Love Stumbles On	Lofgren	3:52
	5	Amy Joan Blues	Lofgren	2:43
✓	6	Irish Angel	McCabe	5:12
✓	7	Ain't Too Many of Us Left	Lofgren	4:42
	8	When You Were Mine	Lofgren	4:33
	9	Just Because You Love Me	Lofgren	2:32
	10	Dream Big	Lofgren	4:30
	11	Let Her Get Away	Lofgren, Root Boy Slim	3:09
	12	Why Me	Lofgren	4:24

✓ Indicates Track Pick  
 •R• Indicates a click-through to a song review



