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A blog dedicated to coverage of rock news, reviews of CD's/DVD's, live gigs and interviews with musicians who have made rock music great! Coverage of hard rock, classic rock, AOR and popular melodic rock music across the genre. This blog is the creation of Alun Williams, a Brit now living in Michigan whose previous credits include writing for the following sites: www.classicrock.about.com www.classicrockrevisited.com and www.rocknrolluniverse.com (Now gone) I hope you enjoy your visit here!

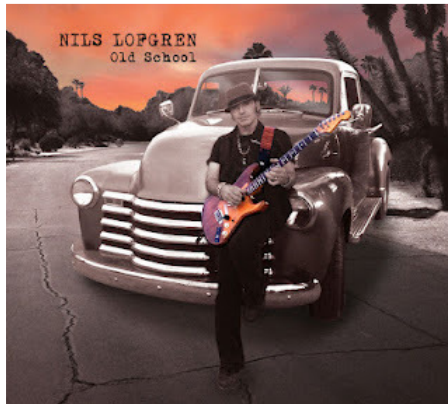
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Saturday, February 4, 2012

Nils Lofgren – Old School album review

[Nils Lofgren – Old School album review](#)

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Nils Lofgren is a player, who has been in the game for many a year now and while he may not be really, a hard rocker, he's certainly produced plenty of material in or around the realms of classic rock. For years - twenty seven of them! - he had played as part of **Bruce Springsteen's** touring band – Which sadly for me does nothing, sorry folks. – but he is most certainly a star player in his own right, with many albums under his belt.

I enjoyed his material at first, back in the 80's ..., but then kind of lost touch, that said this is actually **Nils** first new material in five years.

The album is also dedicated to **Nils** old **E Street band** mate **Clarence 'Big Man' Clemons** RIP.

His actual style of music is really hard to pigeon hole - as if you'd even try! – as he tends to flit kind of this way and that, with some blues, some classic rock, but also kind of skiffle at times as well, but vocally with his phrasing style, it's really not unlike say **Bruce**, **Mark Knopfler** or even **Bob Dylan**.

Opening is the title track '**Old School**' where **Nils** shares the vocal spotlight with former **Foreigner** vocalist **Lou Gramm**.

Sadly these days he does not sound as distinctive as he once was. It's certainly quite an up tempo track, but **Nils** was clearly in a bit of an emotional 'area' when he wrote and recorded this album. Just listen to the lyrics here ... He's out to make his point.

'**60 is the New 18**,' next is quite the sarcastic track, which just has to be heard, certainly amusing at times, but presented in a more pop rock format, with gives it a pretty good groove. Maybe this is a hard call but it's almost **Dire Straits** meets **Styx** somewhere!

In '**Miss You Ray**,' **Nils** remembers the legend **Ray Charles** in melancholy fashion and this number

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is very, very *Springsteen* like indeed.

'*Love Stumbles On*,' is again very *Springsteen* like in a kind rustic laid back style number.

It's skiffle band time next with '*Amy Joan Blues*,' where *Nils* pulls in *Paul Rodgers* for some vocal input, but you almost wouldn't know it was *Rodgers* from the mix, just like the opening track '*Old School*' with *Lou Gramm*.

You kind of wonder when artists pull in guest vocalists, if they don't let them take the lead, why they do it?

Next track is in an almost *Van Morrison* vein, perhaps the song title leads me to think that with '*Irish Angel*.'

It's actually a really beautiful track, one that *Nils* masters perfectly; in ballads he has it down to a tee!

Nils pulls in *Sam Moore* from *Sam and Dave* fame to help on the apt '*Ain't Too Many of Us Left*,' of course focused on the fact that so many 'good old boy' blues legends have passed away in recent years. It's a pretty good blues jam.

'*When You Were Mine*' is a laid back folksy like ballad and I really feel again that *Nils* has played so much with *Bruce Springsteen* that I think his phrasings and songwriting have rubbed off on *Nils* greatly. Sadly for me, that's not to my liking, but that's not to say of course that many of you would feel the same.

If you're a fan of *Bruce*, you'll most likely really enjoy this album.

Tempo gets a lift with '*Just Because You Love Me*,' which is a pretty catchy upbeat number to be honest. Enjoyable stuff!

'*Dream Big*,' is a strange, almost multi-musical track, think of some of those old *Kate Bush* – busy – tracks, with loads going on throughout. Odd backing ..., sounds ... Tap dancing?

I really love the acoustic intro to '*Let Her Get Away*,' sadly then *Nils* vocal to this ballad is almost depressing, bringing to mind the likes of *Leonard Cohen* ..., with perhaps a little more tunefulness.

Closing track, '*Why Me*' has a nice lead intro, played across a very laid back skiffle'ish style number, slow to mid-pace song that's almost *Bruce* like again, some nice lead guitar work though throughout.

So overall, really, not my bag I have to say. Perhaps just too rootsy which might well work for a lot of people, just not me ...

I was very curious to hear this album, guess I should have left it alone.

Rating: 2.75 out of 5 – Just didn't work for me. Bruce fans, buy, buy, buy!

Official website:
<http://www.nilslofgren.com>

Posted by cozyal at 11:53 PM 

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