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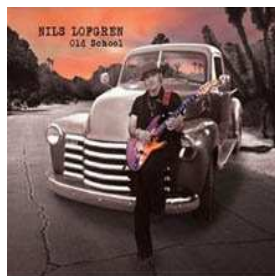


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Rolling Stones - Some Girls

Old School

Nils Lofgren



From his work with Neil Young to his stint as the blistering guitar player in Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band since 1984, Nils Lofgren's talents as songwriter, singer, guitar player and even tap dancer are in full evidence on his absolutely killer latest release, **Old School**.

As the man himself told me: "Those first two songs were premeditated to say, 'Hey I'm crazy, I'm angry, but I got a lot of hope and let's be clear that I'm not fading quietly into the sunset...'" Fortunately, Lofgren isn't fading away on the title track and "60 Is The New 18," which start off this 12-song CD. "Old School" is riffing spike of a tune with slide guitar, horns and a biting lyric with former Foreigner vocalist Lou Gramm singing backing vocals on the chorus. And "60 Is The New 18" really speaks to a generation that all of us are so familiar with.

"Miss You Ray" is more than a little sad given its subject matter but showcases Lofgren's more-than-proficient acoustic guitar playing with a nicely spaced string backing. There's some great scratching percussion on the most commercial tune here, "Love Stumbles On." "Amy Joan Blues" cooks with Paul Rodgers lending his vocals to great effect, while "Irish Angel" (one of the few songs not written by Lofgren) is a beautiful piano/acoustic ballad that really showcases Lofgren's voice.

The lyric is fantastic on "Ain't Too Many of Us Left." And yes, that's Sam Moore on chorus harmony. "Dream Big" sees Lofgren's tap dancing (his friend Greg Varolotta is an expert tap dancer who appears on the record) through a gated reverb, producing a truly amazing percussion sound. The lyrics on "Let Her Get Away" are almost too poignant to listen. Supported by a semi-sweet Springsteen-like arrangement, it makes for a very unusual kind of a love song. Altogether, Nils Lofgren's **Old School** is a great CD, written from a mature perspective with some top-notch playing and more than a bit of pathos and anger.

~ Ralph Greco, Jr.



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