

Mp3 Andy Robinson - Exotic America



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On "Exotic America", Andy Robinson juxtaposes mountain dulcimer, kalimba, rock rhythm sections, heathenish percussion, musical toys, mute vocals, synthesizers, laughter and whatsoever else captures his imagination, creating his own unparalleled sound. 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, Shake Acoustic Exotic America Songs Details: Welcome to my CD Baby webpage! I'm happy to announce that my album, Exotic America, was chosen by the San Diego Union Tribune as one of the top ten best debut albums of 2004! Read what music critic, George Varga, and several others, have to say about Exotic America, in the review section below. But first, here's a short bio: BIO Music comes naturally to Andy Robinson. A native San Diegan, he is self-taught on mountain dulcimer, and is known in the acoustic music world for pushing the boundaries of what the rustic American folk instrument can do. He also plays drums, kalimba, harmonica, guitar, a variety of percussion instruments and he sings. Robinson was first inspired to play music by the Beatles, and later, by blues, psychedelic and progressive bands. Originally a drummer, he quickly grew more adventurous, and began writing his own songs and experimenting with unusual sounds. Over the years he has written songs, performed and recorded on dulcimer and kalimba in a long list of critically acclaimed bands, in San Diego and Los Angeles. (Go to [andyrobinsonmusic](#) for an in-depth musical history). "Life is just too short to make ordinary music. I don't really even know how. I have to choose instruments and sounds that intrigue me. I love the Beatles, who are unbeatable for melodies and harmonies and energy, but I've always liked jazz, and Brian Eno, and people like the Penguin Caf Orchestra, who made music that you might call experimental, even though it was still melodic and fun to listen to." "On my new CD, Exotic America, you can hear sounds and influences from all the music I've loved and played over the years. Is it World music? Is it "progressive folk"? All I know is that each song holds a surprise or two for the listener, and that's the way I like it" San Diego Union Tribune, December

23-29, 2004 Andy Robinson, "Exotic America" (Brontosaurus; andyrobinsonmusic.com): The former drummer in San Diego prog-rock band Horsefeathers, Andy Robinson subsequently worked with such L.A. cult groups as Elton Duck and Invisible Zoo before returning home in 2000. His debut solo album finds him performing on everything from dulcimer and synthesizers to kalimba and organ, as he crafts a seamless blend of Western and Eastern folk stylings that are rich in warmth and charm, but happily bereft of affectation. *The Folknik*, November/December, 2004 This is an incredibly fun, upbeat, infectiously optimistic-feeling CD on which Andy has juxtaposed rustic folk instruments and rock rhythm sections, heathenish percussion and musical toys, mute vocals, synthesizers, conversation and laughter on a recording of eclectic original instrumentals. While he acknowledges that people who listen only to purely traditional music may not like this, he invites folks to listen and give it a try (you can download samples from the above website). His acknowledged influences include the Beatles, the Penguin Caf Orchestra, and Brian Eno's *Another Green World*, but the music is pure Andy, ably assisted by fiddlers, guitarists, keyboardists, and players of wind instruments. To me, each piece is a tone poem, evoking images. My personal favorite, *Children's Games*, evoked images of elephants proceeding majestically along. Sometimes the images metamorphosed when I learned the name of the piece; while at other times they didn't. For example, those evoked by *After the Fires* changed from general pastoral images to the entire ecological succession following forest fires, helped along by the evolving rhythms and complexity of the music. When specifically cued up, a piece called *Penguin* called up visions of penguins tending their eggs and young on the Antarctic ice and swimming/flying underwater; did they change when I discovered that it was written in honor of the afore-mentioned Penguin Caf Orchestra,? They did not! Way-cool! The sequencing of the pieces adds another enjoyable dimension, as the series progresses like the movements of a symphony. Here, the number of levels at which each piece and the totality can be appreciated is limited only by the listener's imagination. Highly recommended for anyone willing to explore both music and their own imagination. *San Diego Reader*, January 6, 2005 The album's artwork depicts Robinson posing among the carved stone creatures that live in the rocks behind Desert View Tower near Jacumba, and the idea for the title *Exotic America* originated in a quote from Andy Warhol about how Americans are probably the most exotic people on earth. So it doesn't surprise that Andy Robinson plays acoustic and electric dulcimers, synthesizer, hand drums, cowbell, and finger cymbals. From the lighthearted gleefulness in "*The Bridges Are Burning*" to the more somber experience of "*After the Fires*"

(specifically the wildfires of 2003), the music is fresh, not formulaic. Robinson's melodies are lilting and sad. "Conversations" is a minimalist track with grainy, acoustic underpinnings. "Children's Games" features Robinson on keyboard hammering out a psychedelic melody that fuses with folk instrumentation. In "Nameless Parade," standard bass, drums, and percussion are softened by a flute, while the fluttering sound produced by the kalimba in "Penguin" creates an aural perplexity. The folk-rock songs that follow are versatile, solidifying a soundtrack to accompany moments of listener introspection. The care and attention given to every cut allows each song to stand strong, making the whole an extraordinary collection. Kronosonic.com, October 2004 Few albums are as appropriately titled as this Exotic America. "Americana" seems to be a hot genre these days and Andy's new album is both "Americana" and more. Andy says that "Life is just too short to make ordinary music. I don't really even know how. I have to choose instruments and sounds that intrigue me. I love the Beatles, who are unbeatable for melodies and harmonies and energy, but I've always liked jazz, and Brian Eno, and people like the Penguin Caf Orchestra, who made music that you might call experimental, even though it was still melodic and fun to listen to. On my new CD, Exotic America, you can hear sounds and influences from all the music I've loved and played over the years. Is it World music? Is it 'progressive folk'?" Whatever it is Andy has struck a remarkable balance - fans of pop will love the hooks and compelling melodies and the more adventurous of us will appreciate the multiplicity of colors, timbres, and oddities in the mix - which, by the way, never sound gratuitous or contrived. Andy plays acoustic and electric dulcimers, synthesizer, hand drums, Egyptian tambourine, harmonica, cowbell, ceramic toy flute, acoustic guitar, finger cymbals and other percussion instruments such as bongos, shaker, and bamboo and wood chimes. Additionally he throws in stylophone, chord organ, kalimba, and does vocals. Did I miss anything? Wow! He's joined by Doug Robinson on bass and synth, Dennis Caplinger on fiddle, Pat Kirtley on acoustic guitars, Larry Clark on bass, Paul Bleifuss on drums, and Scott Colby on slide along with a host of other guests too numerous to mention. Exotic America is an eclectic mixture of new music, obviously, but there's something familiar and reassuring about it at the same time. For example, the title track conjures up momentary impressions of Phil Keaggy's work on Sunday's Child and there's a multitude of tiny moments throughout the disk that seem so familiar - strands of Bela Fleck and the Flecktones, Marvin Gaye, and Yes among others; I suspect that each listener will project into the material their own history of listening. However, Exotic America really sounds and feels original and easily avoids derivativeness. Generally, the disk is strong

from top to bottom with nothing that comes off as filler - though, I do think a couple of tracks have some unconvincing synth patches mixed too far out in front. But, that's a matter of individual taste. There are some especially hot tracks such as the title track and "Children's Games" featuring the excellent slide work of Scott Colby (see our profile of Scott) who makes a return after providing all the guitar work on Andy's 1998 release, The Andy Robinson Band. (Slide guitar junkies owe it to themselves to pick up a copy of that disk immediately!) On a technical note it is worth mentioning that the album was recorded on Roland desktop workstations - the reason it's worth mentioning is because this album sounds so "Big Studio" that it's nearly impossible to imagine this kind of recording quality on affordable technology. If Roland was smart they'd distribute Exotic America to demo the capability of their machines. Andy really raises the bar for all of us self-produced, project studio musicians; the production quality is stunning and you can tell that a lot of hard work went into this album. Likewise, Andy's 1998 album was recorded on a Roland VS880 (mastered by Lynn Fuston of 3D Audio) and sounds fantastic. In the end, Andy says that his album "...holds a surprise or two for the listener..." and I agree. If you like Americana but wish something more, well, exotic, then here's your ticket. A solid "A" effort. San Diego Troubadour, November 2004 Andy Robinson couldn't have chosen a more apt name for his new album, Exotic America. It is particularly difficult to blend Eastern and Western musical idioms so naturally, so seamlessly, let alone with a simultaneous, synergistic mixing of traditional acoustic instruments and modern electronic synthesizers ... but Mr. Robinson has succeeded here... It's very easy to forget that this is an instrumental album; the melodies and solos are engaging, performed on instruments that one would hardly think belonged together, but somehow they do.... Exotic America as a whole is a melting pot of cultural diversity stirred in the cauldron of joy.

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