

Mp3 Dawud Wharnsby - Blue Walls And The Big Sky



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First solo effort: A lyrically introspective and musically acoustic recording presented with spiritual simplicity and a slight streak of dark humour. 18 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, POP: Folky Pop

Details: Dawud Wharnsby - a traveler, writer, actor, troubadour and multi-instrumentalist - first emerged onto the North American folk music scene in 1991. His debut solo recording "Blue Walls and The Big Sky" (1995), firmly established his skills not only as a crafty lyricist, but also as a powerful vocalist, capable of drawing listeners into his world like a vibrant stage actor, or an intimate storyteller. A third generation Canadian with Scottish and British roots, Wharnsby's recordings and reputation have established him as an institution in the realm of English language Nasheed (spiritual songs of a world-beat/folk style, drawn from Islamic cultural and musical tradition). In true folk-song tradition, his writings have taken on a life of their own - spreading far beyond official marketing territories by way of a bootleg industry which circulates his recordings unofficially and uncontrollably throughout the world. Though distribution of Wharnsby's material is difficult to gage, his efforts have spawned an artistic movement and musical industry of young artists hailing from Los Angeles, London, Jakarta and all stops in between. Merging the Celtic/folk styles of his upbringing with sounds and embellishments of the Middle and Far East, his 1996 CD "A Whisper Of Peace" was followed by a string of internationally recognized recordings including "Sing, Children of The World" (1998), "Road To Madinah" (1999), "Sunshine, Dust and The Messenger" (2001) and "The Prophet's Hands" (2002 - featuring Zain Bhikha and Yusuf Islam) - all released through the US based label Sound Vision. Developing his sound with the talents of Canadian producer and composer Trevor Yuile, Wharnsby's unique lyrical style, warm voice and knack for penning catchy melodies have yielded a rich reception from his listeners world-wide who, in many cases, do not even speak English as their first language. In 1999, Dawud signed with Jamal Records (backed by UK based artist, producer and peace

activist Yusuf Islam - formerly Cat Stevens) for African and Australasian distribution. A number of Dawud's songs have since been highlighted on Jamal's most recent compilation releases, "Bismillah" (2001), "In Praise of The Last Prophet" (2002), and "I Look, I See" (2004), with overwhelming global success. Several of Wharnsby's latest recordings feature collaborative material with the likes of South African songwriter Zain Bhikha and award winning producer/songwriter Zuriani (KEB'MO', BRENDA RUSSELL, MELISSA MANCHESTER). Wharnsby's forthcoming CD, "Vacuous Waxing" (a joint effort with co-writer Bill Kocher) brings together a unique mix of featured artists, including UK bass legend Danny Thompson (PENTANGLE, NICK DRAKE, EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL, DONOVAN, RICHARD THOMPSON, ERIC CLAPTON, LOREENA McKENNITT), Canadian folk icon Stephen Fearing (BLACKIE THE RODEO KINGS, SARAH McLACHLAN) and world renown sitar master Irshad Khan.

***** The gossip on Dawud Wharnsby... "He grew up with an ear toward the Kingston Trio, Bob Dylan and 10,000 Maniacs...Today (he) has found inner peace and a surer audience....With a sound reminiscent of Peter, Paul and Mary... ..he released... "A Whisper of Peace" for Sound Vision... It's the company's best-selling music CD. ...Wharnsby released three independent recordings in the early 1990's. His songs are often playful, but his goal is to inspire and educate...The songs resonate...." Susan Hogan/Albach, Dallas Morning News, 2000

***** About "Road to Madinah" "His sound is more Peter, Paul and Mary than Dylan, but Canadian singer Dawud Wharnsby Ali sings of how the times are a-changing. ...Wharnsby relies on a cappella harmonies or light percussion accompaniments to convey his message, and almost all the tunes have the catchy, singable overtones of summer camp songs." Minneapolis Star-Tribune, 1998 ***** About "Sunshine Dust and The Messenger" "Wharnsby, a Canadian folk singer... gears this effort primarily to adults.... But the music retains its playful character. ...Wharnsby's message is substantive, and his vocals are compelling - similar in style to Peter Yarrow and Paul Simon. Most of the music is done in English and a capella, with smooth harmonies, some-times reminiscent of Simon and Garfunkel and at other times Gregorian chant. ...But this music isn't meant merely to entertain. ...in one case, a visualization sequence...asks listeners to hear the "rhythm of the clapping of the thunder and rain" as the sound of thunder and rain plays in the background. The project is highly sensory with an emphasis on the sounds and rhythms of creation." Dallas Morning News, 2000 ***** "The more things

change, the more things stay the same. That 's one of the prominent messages of a very cool album we recently discovered by Dawud. Sunshine, Dust And The Messenger... brings a new and welcomed style aimed at adult and youth audiences, and quite a change from what most listeners might be been accustomed to hearing. Dawud imparts beauty and wisdom in his artful and captivating music. Carrying wisdom to thirsty ears, Dawud travels the globe helping young people in their struggles to have hope...raising awareness for a better world. Conceptually, the theme of rhythm is defined utilizing examples from nature (seasons, alternation of night day, heartbeats, waves) and examples from the human experience (birth, death, passage of time). Rhythm also becomes the symbol of order as Wharnsby explores the hope for mankind to bring simplicity, rhythm and harmony back to their lives.... Tracks like "Rhythm Of Surrender" and "Why Are The Drums So Silent?" take an almost satirical look at the adult world, where lack of wisdom and proper prioritization often cause the plans of even the most educated people to fall apart." iMusicWeek, 2001 *****

About Dawud's Contribution to Yusuf Islam's "In Praise of The Last Prophet" "...The man once known as Cat Stevens has produced, with guests and recordings... a collection of songs...and chants four of the 14 songs himself... However, it is a track sung by his friend Dawud Wharnsby Ali...with it's songwriterly opening ("Morning light through the bedroom window ...") that, oddly, could have come straight off Cat's 1971 album, Tea for the Tillerman." Mark Ellingham The Evening Standard, UK April 2002

***** About "The Prophet's Hands" "...After numerous recordings, the talented Canadian just keeps getting better. This latest effort is his best yet. ...He sings with utter clarity...Every song is catchy and singable, which is precisely his aim...The melodies are simple and the message clear - a sign of (Wharnsby's) creativity and musical skill. Count him among the very best artists writing and singing ...And be grateful that he's still young, with many songs ahead of him."

Dallas Morning News, 2003 ***** About "Vacuous Waxing" "...Featuring a diverse mix of star talent, including Irish-Canadian folk icon Stephen Fearing, sitarist Irshad Khan, British bassist Danny Thompson (formerly of Pentangle), and K-W Symphony principal oboist James Mason, the new CD promises to go beyond simply expressing parallel threads of faith and experience, to address the human condition as a deeply-woven fabric, a holistic journey..."

Pauline Finch The Waterloo Chronicle, 2003

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