

Mp3 Hal Cragin - Wet Grassy Ground



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Handstitched audio sweater with aquatic undertones. 14 MP3 Songs ROCK: Acoustic, EASY LISTENING: Background Music Details: Wet Grassy Ground [CatvalleyRecords] is the second solo record from bass player/multi-instrumentalist/composer Hal Cragin. Hal's background as a writer/ bass player has been for such acts as They Might Be Giants, Vic Chestnut, Beth Orton, Frank Black, Sarah McLachlan, to name just a few, as well as long time collaborator Iggy Pop. He made his solo mark in New York City's east village with a residency at the Avenue B Social Club in 1998. Since that time he has split his time on both coasts as well as Europe playing and recording. Wet Grassy Ground is a varied program of vocal and instrumental music, reminiscent of early Air and Cornershop. It is also a highly personal record with Hal playing all the instruments. Engaging and unobtrusive at the same time, Wet Grassy Ground is a hand-stitched audio sweater, comfortable, warm, perhaps a little itchy.

REVEIWS_____ SouthboundBeat Magazine by - Dave Howell Hal Cragin has played with many performers; his web site opens with a picture of him playing bass with Iggy Pop. On this, his second solo CD, he plays all of the instruments except for a guest acoustic guitarist on one cut and a few female vocals. There is even a horn section on one track, "Rouget," although it might be a synthesized recreation. "Cabillaud" is a jazzy, low-key instrumental that leads into "Jacques Cousteau," which features Cragin's breathy vocals. The quiet tone of these cuts continues throughout the album. In the best indie tradition, it is hard to figure out what most of the lyrics are about. Cragin describes one cut, "Blink of A Eye," like this on cdbaby.com: "This examines the marks left by previous people who couldn't imagine the type of person looking at them from the lofty perspective of the future. Concluding with the premise that everyone that has ever lived and anyone about to live is alive right now. That time in terms of human consciousness is not linear, but a moment altogether." Huh?

The strange lyrics enhance the effect of this CD, however. Cragin claims that the CD's title is a mystery. But it sounds like the undersea world depicted on the cover. The songs are languid, moving at a slower pace and in a different world than the surface of the earth where we live. Cragin uses electronic effects to create an air of fantasy behind his understated keyboards and guitar. If you are looking for something to chill out to, this CD does a fine job. southboundbeat.com/issue_9/cd_reviews/HalCragin.php3

Antimusic Vanguard: Hal Cragin- Wet Grassy Ground By Gary Schwind I have to begin by saying that this is not what I expected from the bassist who has played with Iggy Pop and They Might Be Giants. I don't want that to taint my review in any way. I was just surprised to find this sort of album from a guy with that pedigree. Wet Grassy Ground is a very mellow jazzy, groovy sort of album with an undersea theme running throughout it. It reminds me a lot of Air but there's also something in this album that is reminiscent of Morphine. I wouldn't say Cragin sounds like Morphine but he has that same sort of subdued jazzy mood in his music. Except for the acoustic guitar on "Doesn't Matter Much," Cragin plays all the instruments on this album. And he plays all of them ably. I can't really say that any of the instrumentation is lacking. In addition to being a rare artist that can play every instrument on an album, Cragin does something else unusual on this album. There are five songs (six if you count "Jacques Cousteau") that have a French title. This is where the aforementioned undersea theme comes in. Each French title, I'm assured by my wife (who is French) represents some kind of sea creature like a mussel ("Moule") or an eel ("Anguille"). To be honest, the undersea theme really matches the mood of the album. You don't so much listen to this album as float through it. If you like Air, you'll probably enjoy this album. Also, if you're looking for an album for those nights when you just want to sit back and chill, this would be a pretty good choice.

rocknworld.com/features/05/halc.shtml

Whisperin Hollerin UK By Sam Saunders Hal Cragin has played bass with a lot of names. Iggy Pop and They Might Be Giants for two. Hal's an all round musician though, and this second solo CD shows off his comfortable fluency in the full range of band instruments. He sings a bit like Ira of Yo La Tengo. Gentle and breathy. Wet Grassy Ground is a laid back affair, with a light funky feel and (as you'd expect) some exquisite bass playing. The songs are thoughtful and wide ranging. From Jacques Cousteau walking around on the sea bed to a Raybanned monkey using his hands-free mobile in the SUV. Maybe it's a little indulgent, with that "play all

the instruments syndrome" that leads to less interactive tension in the playing than a band would achieve. But it's definitely well-made and very warmly polished. It has a synthy, acoustic guitary, dawn-in-the-rain-forestish feeling. It's very mellow and it nourishes the parts of the soul that really need soothing. In fact, Hal Craigin has made just the thing to soundtrack a retreat from too many years in the back of a van with deranged egomaniacs, crazed musicians and psychotic hangers on. It's available via CdbabyYou could start the big come down this very weekend.

whisperinandhollerin.com/reviews/review.asp?id=1997

theNoise Boston By Tim Emswiler Craigin once played bass for Sarah McLachlan (and They Might Be Giants, Iggy Pop, Momo Puff, Rubber Rodeo... Ed.), so it is safe to assume that he can play bass. He can also play a number of other instruments, like guitar and keyboards, and he plays 'em all on this disc. And sings, too. And he wrote all the songs. Cool enough. Sadly, the music left me feeling oddly detached. As hard as I tried to be an active listener, I felt instead like the music was coming from someone else's house. There are a couple of (relatively) up-tempo numbers here, but the majority of the disc is given over to rather quiet, meditative, almost ethereal songs, the kind of songs you would expect when you see the cover photo of a nude woman floating underwater. That's not a knock---after all, when I try to imagine what the soundtrack to watching a nude woman floating underwater would be (one that is alive, I should add), I imagine some pretty damn pleasant music. Now, perhaps it is simply the album title that has made me decide that there is a definite aqueous feel to the proceedings here, but it seems to me this would be ideal for those who get stoned and stare at their fish tanks. Are you people paying attention? (Tim Emswiler)

thenoise-boston.com/cd_reviews/248.asp

Wet Grassy Ground Track by Track by the author Cabillaud It's a fish in France This moody little number brings one into this CD in a way that was oblique and direct enough to let the listener know what lies ahead. Written around an electric piano figure it gradually shifts its direction until a bridge makes its case for a fresh start only to be dragged back into the quagmire. Also with such a slow opening song the rest of the tracks would seem positively lively. Jacques Cousteau The thrust of the narrative is Monsieur Cousteau continuing his life by ceaselessly walking across the ocean floor, an aquatic Jacob Marley sans the "I told you so" diatribe. This has a beautiful interlude of Lucie Aime calling all "Poisson." The Wet Grassy Ground Why is the record

called "Wet Grassy Ground" and the title track "The Wet Grassy Ground"? A mystery, even to me. It's either; A. I wanted to simulate the typo/miscommunication typical of a larger record label, or B. To lodge a small bit of inconclusively to the subconscious of the reader. This song is really about traveling, and the desire to be still. As you pass rivers by a highway, or fields below you in an airplane, you think what would it feel like to just be laying there... Never too Late A lesson to inaction. One time a friend told me, if you spend as much time thinking about something, as it would take to actually do it, you might just as well try Blink of an Eye This examines the marks left by previous people who couldn't imagine the type of person looking at them from the lofty perspective of the future. Concluding with the premise that everyone that has ever lived and anyone about to live is alive right now. That time in terms of human consciousness is not linear, but a moment altogether. Rouget Another Fish I always liked a bit of funky piano, one of my favorite instruments, because its really a percussion instrument at its heart. But Not Today Procrastination in a word, you collect yourself as a component of society but there's still something to make you drag your feet a bit. Love Letter This is/was a letter to a life I had, not too dramatic, just a fare thee well. Moule A clam from...France A simple piece that features a nod to nineteen sixties soundtracks as the apex. Anguille Another Fish...from France etc. I've always been a fan of mixed program CDs. To give a break from the voice and let the instruments move to the front of the cue. This one is a scaly marriage of acoustic instruments and a robotic beat, opening up to a musical continental shelf in the middle. Avenue A As a fan of walking, I did my fair share in New York City, where I lived for many years .I walked the same streets for so long that buildings and shops would change. However, as I passed these many blocks I still would think of the conversations and events that I had had previously. Doesn't Matter Much An ennui sentiment set to none other than a waltz. Pray all you like, pontificate as you can, what can it do. The conveyer belt is already moving. Hands Free The story of a monkey, who dreams he's human, driving a S.U.V. (large truck). He has a cellphone, coffee, apartment with wall to wall carpet. Thankfully its just a dream, the result of some bad leaves he ate. This track is a direct result of living in Los Angeles. Petoncle A sea creature To round out the CD, this is a musical digestive, slow and deliberate, to comfort the listener back down to earth after the scatterbrained trip I just took them on.

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