

Mp3 John Kruth - Splitsville



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An eclectic collection of original tunes inspired by and recorded in Croatia. American and old world roots music, Balkan inspired waltzes and driving rock are served up with poetic lyrics . 16 MP3 Songs in this album (47:22) ! Related styles: FOLK: Folk-Rock, WORLD: Balkan People who are interested in Tom Waits Randy Newman should consider this download. Details: Stylistically Kruth strikes wherever he pleases. There's blues, mountain music, bluegrass and a bit more jazz. Kruth's songs are often hilarious, always pointed, and the picking always crisp. This one is purest delight. Sing Out! "John Kruth is impossible to peg his omnivorous approach yields a wealth of riches, ranging from Mid-Eastern jams to Waits-like blues ballads to squirrely jazz-pop ditties." - Dallas Morning News "The Madman of the Mandolin"--San Francisco Guardian Here's the Back-story of Splitsville: This is my ninth album and the first with a theme. All of the songs on Splitsville were either inspired by or written during my many travels to Croatia since 2003. The basic tracks were cut at Tetrapak studios by Ivica Pipo Covic in Split, Croatia with Vinko Dodovic on akordian and Zlatko Bodaric on guitar in the summer of '06. Then I brought the files home and a cast of illustrious musicians including Jonathan Segel and Victor Krummenacher of Camper Van Beethoven spruced up the tracks, along with maestro Matt Darriau of the Klezmatics. Jonathan also added some luminous violin later on when he got back to San Francisco. A trip to Milwaukee in the winter of 2007 produced a few more gems with Jeff Hamilton, Paul Kneever (who also engineered and co-produced the tracks as well), John Sparrow, Josh Tovar and Lodi Capri all playin' their hearts out in a cold studio for little or no pay. Darkos Waltz was inspired by my sweetheart Marilyn's cousin Darkos' face as he recounted the experience of defending his hometown of Sibinek from the Serbian onslaught in the early nineties. I was so moved by his story I began to write a song about it but no words would come, just this old world melody. Usually somebody says something or I'll read something

somewhere that inspires me and the next thing I know I'm writing another song. With *Beyond the Mountains* it was the first time the process ever happened in reverse. I was in Istria, sitting beside a sparkling turquoise swimming pool on a hot summer day, strumming my mandolin when the opening line of *Beyond the Mountains* popped into my head and I wrote the rest of the song right then and there. About a week later I was down in Split, talking with the director of the mandolin school when I said something to him about the wide diversity of Croatian music. He replied that the mountains often act as cultural dividers. Behind the mountains there are strange people that play strange music and have different customs, he said. I nearly fell off my chair again. *Anchovies* was inspired by the sad-eyed lady of the *ribarnica* (fish market) selling a small plate of anchovies with a far-away look in her eyes. I saw her every morning on my way to the caf for my morning cup. I hope one day Marianne Faithfull with her singular voice will do this one justice. Although Croatia is a country of many operators it's not always easy getting anything done. Hence *Manana Land*. Wherever I went in Hrvatska I noticed the omnipresent image of Saint George, atop his noble steed, striking a bold pose with his lance drawn, about to slay the dragon. But I never actually saw a picture of him where he finished the damn beast off. *The Song of the Old Saints* attempts to answer why we're in this mess today. You can go to Hungary, Italy or Greece but you're never gonna find a love that deep. A bit of rock n roll for my *Brac Girl*. The first time I heard the saying *Bog Je Rekao Laku Noc - God Said Goodnight*, I flipped. Although the lyrics are filled with images of New York decadence, the sentiment is timeless and world wide and never would have come into being without the dry wit of the Croatian people. Was Josip (Marshall Tito) good or bad? It depends upon who you ask. *Leaves* is a country waltz inspired by a classical pianist I know in love with Franz Liszt. *Yellow Ellen* was inspired by Darko's daughter, Jelana, who has caught the eye of many a passer-by in the village of Sibinek. I had recently met Donovan at Heathrow Airport and between the gentle rhythm of the rocking boats, trying to pronounce Jelana's name correctly and having made the acquaintance of the cool cat who once cooed *Mellow Yellow*, *Yellow Ellen* was born. *Tins Tango* is for the *Tin Supreme* Tin Ujevic, poet laureate of Croatia. I wrote it on the plane home from the old country and recorded it in my kitchen one fall afternoon with my friends Jonathan and Victor from *Camper Van Beethoven* and clarinetist Matt Darriau of the *Klezmatiks*. The jovial graphic artist Pavo Majic of *Naranca Gallery* in Split told me about the adventures of the avant garde artist Pavao Dulcic and his defiant act of painting the square in front of the Diocletian Palace red in January, 1968. Protests raged in the streets from Chicago to Paris to Prague

that year. Thus a proletariat rocker was in order. This Ballad was recorded with a funky green Framus guitar and the crunchiest amp Ive ever heard. Every summer Marilyn and I make a pilgrimage to Brac, to visit her fathers ancestral homeland. We have a favorite corner of the isle where we like to relax and swim, where the Adriatic is particularly magical, warm and salty. Marilyn calls it the emerald bathtub. Its a bit of a hot, dusty hike to get there but it makes it all the more worthwhile. Over the last five years none of the cars that go whizzing by (mostly with Czech, Hungarian and Italian license plates) have ever stopped to ask if wed like a lift. One hot July afternoon an old bald guy with a jutting jaw behind the wheel of a Volkswagen Beetle did just that. The Lone Croatian General was soon telling us his story. We went for a delightful swim and then I wrote this song. A couple hours later I grabbed my banjo and went looking for him where he sat outside the hotel to play him his song, but he was gone. Sonya (Sonja) is dedicated to the lovely wife of the great Croatian sculptor Dusan Dzjamona. While at a museum in Zagreb I saw an unusual figurine of the Raven-Headed Hunter, undoubtedly some mascot for a hunting club, but my take on the supernatural crow/man aiming his rifle was that he out for revenge on those who killed his friends and relatives for sport. (Dig that Jews harp solo by Jeff Greene!) In the city square in Zagreb they sell some hellacious homebrew that will make your head spin. The Rakia Song was inspired by such purveyors of moonshine. On New Years Eve they hole up in little wood shacks, determined to party with no regard for the weather. Zivili! John Kruth wears a lot of hats. He is a singer/songwriter and multi-instrumentalist(mandolin/guitar/ banjo/harmonica/ flutes). The Star Ledger (Newark, NJ) has called Kruth a major talent, with an understanding of how to craft a first-class lyric. John has recorded seven albums and performed at Carnegie Hall as a soloist for composer John Corigliano. He has also performed with playwright Sam Shepard, poet Allen Ginsberg, performance artist Laurie Anderson, producer Hal Willner, folksinger John Prine, as well as Violent Femmes, the Meat Puppets, Elliott Sharp and formed the Electric Chairmen with members of Camper Van Beethoven. Kruths curiosity and diversity continually leads him into a variety of intriguing musical settings, from New York to Nashville, from Morocco to Croatia, from to Ireland to India as well as England, Spain, Germany and the Navajo Nation. U. Rajesh, the Carnatic mandolin virtuoso of India has called John a true artist, while jazz guitarist John Scofield hailed his performance as burnin. Kruths picking once inspired Robert Plant (of Led Zeppelin) to enthuse: great mandolin playing, mate! Blues/rock guitarist James Blood Ulmer told Kruth, youre a real entertainer after he watched him wow the crowd at a tribute to Neil Young in Prospect Park in 1994. And the

godmother of punk, Patti Smith, after listening to Kruths Songs from the Windy Attic told John: I like your album. Youve got a nice voice.

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