## Mp3 John Robinson - Hot



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Fluid and Innovative contemporary instrumental music featuring the artist as guitarist, composer and producer. 12 MP3 Songs ROCK: Instrumental Rock, JAZZ: Jazz Fusion Details: JOHN ROBINSON written by Duncan kimble Sydney-based John 'Robbo' Robinson has been one of Australia's most renowned guitarists for more than thirty years, and he is also an accomplished composer-arranger and a highly respected guitar teacher. John first came to prominence when he joined Sydney band The Dave Miller Set in 1967. The group was formed in early 1967 by Christchurch-born singer-songwriter Dave Miller. John joined a few months later and over the next three years he emerged as one of Australia's original 'guitar heroes', with the DMS becoming one of the first local bands to explore the heavy-rock style pioneered by acts like Cream, Hendrix and Free. John's work with the DMS inluded countless gigs up and down the east coast of Australia and tours to New Zealand and Fiji, Pacific cruises -- DMS were one of the first Australian pop bands to do this -- and even a pioneering tour to Indonesia in 1969. John featured on the five DMS singles, Why, Why Why, Hope, Get Together, the psychedelic classic Mr Guy Fawkes, and their final single, a cover of Chicago's Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is? After the failure of the last single, which flopped because of the infamous 1970 Radio Ban, the Dave Miller Set split. John soon put together a new group, the acclaimed Blackfeather, and secured a deal with Festival's new 'progressive' subsidiary Infinity. In April 1971 they released the classic Australian hard rock album At The Mountains Of Madness, which was a Top Ten hit, and had great success with the hit single lifted from it, the perennial favourite Seasons Of Change, which was also successfully covered by Fraternity. Unfortunately, the partnership between Robinson and singer Neale Johns broke up acrimoniously later in the year and it was then that John discovered that the band's name was in fact owned by their agent. Neale Johns formed a rival version of the band and John found himself unable to use the name of the

group he had formed. John then joined Hunger, the house band at Jonathon's Disco, which eventually led to his next project, the acclaimed studio supergroup Duck. Under the direction of producer G.Wayne Thomas they recorded a highly regarded album of rock and R&B covers entitled Laid. Released in mid-1972 and featuring Jon English and Bobbi Marchini on lead vocals, with backing by John, renowned jazz pianist Bobby Gebert, percussionist Larry Duryea (ex Tamam Shud), former Aztec Teddy Toi on bass and Steve Webb on drums; the LP is now a prized collectors' item. A touring version of the group was put together, with former Wild Cherries frontman Danny Robinson replacing English (who had by then joined the cast of Jesus Christ Superstar). After the end of the Duck project, John reunited with Dave Miller for a short-lived revival of the Dave Miller Set. In early 1973 John began working in earnest to develop his arranging and composing skills, which enabled him to get work with Festival producer Martin Erdman arranging recordings for Sister Janet Mead, Barry Leef and Jeff St John. John then formed the progressive power trio Eclipse with Tony Anderson on drums and Gary Evans on bass; John later augmented the group with electric violin and Moog synthesiser. By the time Eclipse folded, John had met the acclaimed Hungarian-born jazz-rock bassist Jackie Orzacsky and they formed a trio with drummer Joe Tattersall. They recorded the superb but little-known LP, Morning in Beramiada, which was released under Jackie's name. Throughout this period John worked on tracks for a solo album project which was finally released in 1974 by Festival under the title Pity For The Victim. It featured an all-star lineup including some of the best singers of the period -- Bobbi Marchini, Alison MacCallum, Barry Leef, Jeff St. John and Janice Slater -- with Patrick Bleakley, Benny Kaika and Teddy Toi (bass), Julie Pearson and Bobby Gebert (keyboards), Steve Webb and Bruno Lawrence (drums) and Larry Duryea (percussion). It is now a sought-after collectors' item -- only about 1000 copies were pressed according to John and it remains one of the great 'lost treasures' of Seventies Oz music. Sadly, it shared the same fate as the Orzacsky LP -- without a group to promote and perform them both albums sank without trace, which is a real pity, as they are both top-notch efforts. With his finances and live work at an all-time low, John joined forces with singer-bassist-guitarist Paul Radcliffe (ex King Fox) in a new six-piece band called Currents. which featured Greg Taylor and Andy Ross on reeds, Radcliffe on bass, Peter Itelly on drums, and John Levine on keys -- the first large ensemble John had worked with since Duck. Through Jackie Orzacsky, John had a brief but rather unhappy stint in Marcia Hines' touring band, and continued working with Currents until they disbanded in 1976. At this point, John decided to try his luck as a guitar teacher; not

surprisingly, he found himself in high demand and it has been the mainstay of his work for ever since. His many students include some very famous names, including Eric McCusker (Captain Matchbox, Mondo Rock) and Murray Cook (The Wiggles). The last project John was involved in ca. 1980 was an instrumental combo called The Electric Guitar Orchestra. This included John Levine from Currents, plus John Comino and Steve Robinson (no relation) who specialised in double-neck twelve-string electric. The group performed compositions by Robinson and Levine, including a Robinson arrangement of part of 'The Firebird Suite' by Stravinsky and they did some special 2JJJ radio broadcasts. The band was recorded by Willie Rout of Wirra Willa Studios as part of a grant John received from the Arts Council. Since 1980 John has concentrated on his teaching with great success, but he has also been working away constantly during his spare hours, writing, arranging and recording original music. He has amassed a very considerable body of work, sufficient to fill many CDs, and having heard a good deal of it I can attest that relects the skill, quality and inventiveness that we have come to expect from John. Happily, some of this music is at last seeing the light of day, commercially, and John has just released his first solo album in thirty years. HOT is a superb collection of some of the best of John's compositions, including the achingly beautiful instrumental Amelia and Requiem: SRV, a scorching guitar workout dedicated to the late Stevie Ray Vaughan. +++++++++ MILESAGO - Recommended Listening "HOT" John Robinson REVIEW It's been a long time between drinks, album-wise, for the great John Robinson. Renowned and revered as one of Australia's original rock guitar heroes, John first emerged as the guitarist with highly regarded Sydney pop band The Dave Miller Set. After they split in late 1969 he formed a new band, the legendary Blackfeather, and they scored a significant hit with the single Seasons Of Change (which was equally successful for their mates Fraternity.) The first version of the group held together long enough to record one of the landmark LPs of the period. At The Mountains Of Madness, but the group split shortly after that, with singer Neale Johns forming a totally new version of the group and John learning to his cost that he was not the legal owner of the name of the group he had founded. His next few album projects are highly regarded and much sought-after, but each was only released in small guantities and so they have become major rarities. He cut an album of quality rock covers with the supergroup Duck in 1972. This was followed by his first solo album Pity For The Victim in 1974, and in 1975 he joined in a brilliant collaboration with former Sirius bassist Jackie Orzacsky on the equally rare and wonderful LP Morning In Beramiada. From that point on, John largely retired from performing and concentrated on guitar teaching

and composition, and for the last 20-odd years he's been one of Australia's most sought-after teachers, with former pupils including Mondo Rock's Eric McCusker and The Wiggles' Murray Cook. It's hard to believe that it's been thirty years since John's last solo release, but he has been busy all the while, writing, arranging and recording a swag of original material. It's an continuing indictment of the local music industry that major labels are not prepared to get behind artists like John anymore, and listening to this wonderful compilation you will be left wondering "What's wrong with these people?". "Hot" brings together some of the best tracks from John's considerable store of original material. I've been fortunate to hear a lot of it, and I can assure that if you enjoy this record -- as I'm sure anyone will, who likes great contemporary music, well played and well made -- there's plenty more where that came from. There is really something for everyone on this record and it's a great sampler of John's ability to write and perform music that covers just about every genre. There's a very cinemtic guality about much of John's music and one can only hope that TV and film people will get to hear this music and give it the wider exposure it deserves. Just about all of his music would be perfect for soundtrack use, but it's also rare to hear instrumental music that can obviously fit into such niches while also providing a rewarding listening experience in its own right. The CD kicks off with, "Return from the Mountains" - a reprise of the intro to Blackfeather's Album - beautiful liquid guitars, climaxing with a pristine soprano voice (Ennio Morricone: watch out!). Second up is the surging guitar and synth rock instrumental Jungle Book that also showcases John's enormous arranging and production skills. It's followed by the truly gorgeous Amelia, a masterpiece that features an achingly beautiful acoustic guitar melody, highlighted by soaring electric lead. This piece won me over from first hearing and has become one of my all-time faves. Like Track 7, Mother's Day, you'd have to have a heart and ears of stone not to be moved by them. I have no doubt that if either of these tracks were to be played on an appropriate media outlet and given a modicum of proper promotion, there would be a veritable stampede to record shops to get them. If you want the kind of killer rock lead playing that John is well-known for, then you need look no further than his scorching instrumental tribute to one of his own guitar heroes, Reguiem: SRV, dedicated to Stevie Ray Vaughan. This ROCKS. Broken Hearts is the only vocal track on the album; it's a dreamy samba-style piece with an ethereal female vocal which amply demonstrates that John has lost none of his songwriting skills. The great pity about this track -- like just about all of the music on this CD -- is that Australian commercial radio has become so segmented and so heavily tied to formatted programming, that it would be all but

impossible to get this played. Midday On Blue Cay is another great cruisey guitar piece, definitely one to take with you and whack on while you're lazing on the beach or cruising up/down the coast this summer; you can almost smell the ocean on this one. Straits Of Magella continues the nautical feel, but with a darker edge and an intense, driving arrangement. Mother's Day as noted above, is a wistful acoustic ode to John's (and everyone's) mum. All I can do is exhort you to listen to it -- it's just beautiful. Pop this on the stereo next Mother's Day morning as you bring mum her brekky in bed and I guarantee there won't be a dry eye in the house! If you like your guitar with that smoky, late-night, jazz-blues sound and feel, Fat-back Blues will really hit the spot. It seques into Snakes Ladders, a fast paced piece with some frenetic synthesiser work; it might not be the kind of piece you'd expect from John but it shows that he's not stuck back in the Seventies, and it's a fine example of a piece written in the techno/hip-hop idiom that isn't moronic or lacking in meaningful musical content or structure. Manco's Theme revisits one of the standout tracks from At The Mountains Of Madness, a piece that was inspired in part by John's discovery of the music of Ennio Morricone. On the Blackfeather LP this was basically a guitar trio workout, augmented with strings. The new version still shows off John's awesome guitar chops to the full but its updated with a much clearer sound and full and dazzling synthetic orchestration. The CD closes with the aptly Antidote, a cool jazz-funk instrumental that provides the perfect conterpoint to the drama of the previous track. This is a really great track with a cool dancey feel and some tasty guitar, and it fades out with a truly "phat" drum break. A great car-cruising piece. This not a welcome return to form; John Robinson never lost his form -- he just lost the support of the local record industry, like so many other great Australian talents. The good thing is that computer technology has advanced so far, so fast, that John is now able to do it all for himself. He's already made the hard yards in writing, arranging and recording this very fine CD of all-original Australian music. All that remains is for us in the general public to put our money where our mouths are and support local artists by buying their music. Duncan Kimble

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