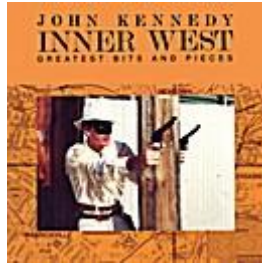


Mp3 John Kennedy - Inner West - Greatest Bits And Pieces



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Career spanning collection of 'Urban Western' tunes recorded by Australia's second best singer-songwriter. 18 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Country Rock, ROCK: Americana Details: In the last ten years, John Kennedy has been around the world, living and making music from Berlin to Hong Kong. Now living in Sydney once again, Inner West is Kennedy's first Australian release since the Have Songs, Will Travel album on Red Eye Records in 1990. Inner West presents for the first time on CD, re-mastered versions of the John Kennedy's Love Gone Wrong hits of the mid-'80's. It also covers the early pop of JFK and the Cuban Crisis and the mid-'90's songs of his Berlin band, John Kennedy and the Honeymooners. Travel and heartache were always at the center of Kennedy's songs. On Inner West there are explorations of relationships and pop postcards aplenty. Music writer Clinton Walker has observed, "Before Paul Kelly arrived in Sydney in 1984 and became the next big thing with songs like "From St.Kilda to Kings Cross" and "Incident on South Dowling St" - long before Tim Freedman formed The Whitlams to take the 'Newtown Sound' to the top in the nineties - it was John Kennedy who was already naming the names in songs like "King Street" and "Miracle (in Marrickville)", shaping the original 'urban and (inner) Western' sound." Spanning over a decade and many band line-ups, studios and labels this collection draws attention to the constants in Kennedy's long and mixed career: rich vocals and strong songwriting. It charts his progress from his Costello influenced naive pop to the development of a distinctive style he called Urban and Western; a style which draws on pop, country, folk and rock influences and combines traditional instruments with contemporary production and country themes with urban insights. This collection supports the view that John Kennedy is arguably Australia's second best singer-songwriter. With this release he sets out to reclaim his position in the Australian music scene. REVIEWS "His name aside, John Kennedy is all American. From the singer's country influences to his love ballad to the

"world's most famous widow" Jackie O, Kennedy bleeds red, white, and blue. And yet he's thousands of miles away. The Australian singer/songwriter's latest album, *Inner West: Greatest Bits and Pieces*, is a collection of some of his most well-known numbers from his days with John Kennedy's *Love Gone Wrong*, *JFK and the Cuban Crisis*, and *JFK and the Honeymooners*. While he was in those bands some 20 years ago, musicians of the same vein such as Elvis Costello or Bruce Springsteen were making it big, or selling out stadiums, or making comebacks. Kennedy could have been famous I guess, but after listening to the 18 songs on *Inner West*, you kind of get the feeling that Kennedy was busy doing other things-like collecting stories and turning them in to damn good pop songs such as *Juliet Jones* and *Headline Romance*. Kennedy certainly didn't play stadiums. He played gigs. Kennedy's stomping grounds in the Western suburbs of Sydney are the main ingredients to practically every song and by the time you're finished listening, you'll have memorized the geography of the land, particularly in *King Street*, *The Ghost of Newtown*, or *Miracle* (in Marrickville). While Kennedy's stories stem from a specific area, his musical influences take pieces from Roy Orbison, The Clash, Buddy Holly, Morrissey, and most importantly---Country-Western. With kangaroos rather than horses, Kennedy proves that the notion of "The West," can be a universal-filled with heartbreak, lonesome travels, drinking, fighting, and twangy guitars. Trust me, he isn't trying to disguise his influences either. On *The Texan Thing*, Kennedy starts off with "I grew up with John Wayne and had faith in the Lone Ranger." The West is a serious fascination for him, as it is for all men. Unfortunately, the West truly is a state of mind rather than any one place you can visit anymore, and if it does still exist it sure as hell isn't in America. I want to believe that John Kennedy will always be playing gigs in his beloved western suburbs of Sydney, sweating, breaking guitar strings, and drinking pints of Foster's. And I pray that he never makes it big." 5 stars!!! - *Privy Magazine Website*

"And still they keep on coming. It's getting almost embarrassing reviewing a *Laughing Outlaw* release. I'm running out of superlatives to use. I can, however, find fault with one thing this time. The cover is a slight letdown and doesn't do the music it contains justice. The image of Kennedy (I presume it is he) dressed up as the Lone Ranger holding up a couple of guns has little appeal, although I must admit that the photos of the real Lone Ranger and Tonto on the inlay raised a smile. The cover gives an impression that this is an out and out traditional country and western record. It isn't. Far from it, in fact. Kennedy calls his music "Urban and Western to give journalists a pigeonhole to put me into", and that is a pretty accurate way of describing the sound he makes. Kennedy's family migrated from Liverpool in the mid 60's to live in

Australia. In the intervening years he lived in Hong Kong, England and Holland before returning to Sydney a couple of years back. He seems to have picked up various influences along the way ,and turned them into something very unique. I listened to this album a lot before I did any research on Kennedy. As I am not from Australia where he has had his biggest success,his is a new name to me. I wish now that I had written my review earlier and not spent my time listening to the record every spare minute I had. I thought that I was smart in noticing the snatches of Elvis Costello, Buddy Holly, Roy Orbison and The Clash Kennedy had slipped into his songs. But on doing my research I found out that it has all been said before. The fact remains though that, at times, all of the above artists can be heard on these songs although Kennedy's own voice, which is powerful and rich, emerges on a number of tracks where he proves he has a voice which easily matches any of the above. In fact, when there are no traces of any influences and Kennedy sounds like only he can, that is when he really shines. What we have here is an album that is a greatest hits of sorts. There are tracks from all parts of Kennedy's long career. He has had a number of bands in the past, including John Kennedy's Love Gone Wrong, JFK and The Cuban Crisis, John Kennedy and The Honeymooners and he has also performed solo. The album kicks off with 'King Street' from 1985 . It's hard to believe that this track is over 15 years old. It still sounds fresh with its twangy guitars and strong vocals (with just the slightest touch of Costello) and great harmonies all wrapped up in a gorgeous melody. Another Laughing Outlaw release, another fantastic lead-in track. We then jump 10 years to 1995 for the second track, 'The Ghost Of Newtown' and it is obvious that the exceptionally strong first track was no fluke. It's a driving slab of well... let's just say Kennedy summed it up well with his description of Urban and Western. Again it is full of chunky, twangy guitars and has a melody to die for. By the third track, 'Miracle (In Marrickville)', it is obvious that the melodies and Kennedy's outstanding vocals are going to be present and correct on all 18 of the tracks here. He offers up the Costello influenced 'The Texan Thing', while there are traces of Buddy Holly on the brilliant 'Juliet Jones' (both from 1982) . 'By The Light Of Day' from 1993 is a ballad that in a perfect world would be blaring out of radios everywhere. Of the 18 songs here all but 2 were written or co-written by Kennedy. But even the 2 covers are inspired choices. I doubt that I am alone in thinking that the Rosanne Cash version of John Hiatt's 'The Way We Make A Broken Heart' is the definitive version. I've lived with it for so many years now that I never thought I'd see the day when another version would even come close. But Kennedy has topped it with his reading of the song. His rich vocals, which are sung with just the right

amount of emotion ,bring out the beauty of the song. It is likewise with the other cover version, which is of the Bee Gees 'To Love Somebody'. In spite of some stiff competition from the many other covers of this song, I always thought that the Gibb brothers original was the best. But Kennedy's version, actually a duet with Billy Baxter, is up there with it. Their are voices both well suited to the song and the two singers make this version exceptional. Although comprising of songs from 1981 through to 1995, you really don't notice that the songs have such an age difference. Such is their timeless quality. It sounds as though it was made as an album, as the songs flow so well together , rather than a collection of tracks which span 14 years. With outstanding releases from Jack Nolan, Spike Priggen and Michael Carpenter (to name but 3) already under their belts this year I hate to say it again and repeat myself, but this is another Laughing Outlaw release which deserves your attention. I can honestly say that this album will never be far from my CD player and hasn't been since the first time I played it. One to carry with you." - Pennyblack Music Website (UK) "Laughing Outlaw's connection with americana grows seemingly more tenuous with each new release, but that's not to say they're worth ignoring because of that - indeed americana or not on a strict basis, many of the label's releases still excel over its genre-intensive counterparts' by a long way. The new collection of songs by Australian based singer-songwriter John Kennedy is a point in question. Described as the country's second greatest singer-songwriter (the implicit reference is to the great Paul Kelly of course), Kennedy hails from one of Sydney's most cosmopolitan suburbs, Newtown, and the sheer scope of the communities and the stories of people's lives who live there pervades everything that Kennedy sings about. Admittedly, having lived there makes listening to (and indeed reviewing) the songs mean much more than they would to the average listener in the UK, but songs like "Miracle (in Marrickville)" and "The Way We Make a Broken Heart" have enough presence with Kennedy's rich vocals and powerful songwriting to make their own mark. It's difficult to pigeonhole in any particular genre - Kennedy can sound like Nick Cave one minute, Merle Haggard the next (he calls his music "Urban and Western"), but that at least means his appeal goes beyond the usual suspects - and with Kennedy having all the signs of being such a talented singer-songwriter, that can only be a good thing. " - 3 / 5 American UK Website (UK)

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