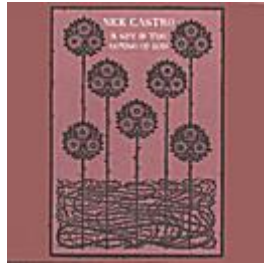


# Mp3 Nick Castro - A Spy In The House Of God



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Beautiful psychedelic Folk with echoing layers of harmony and imagery. Uses many instruments from Asia and Middle East as well as guitar. Very Romantic, very trippy. Male and Female vocals. 11 MP3 Songs ROCK: Psychedelic, FOLK: Modern Folk Details: "...this is no indie-pretender "acid folk" here kids, but the real deal, exquisitely played, recorded, and messed with, to form a full-on flowing LP that takes you on an embryonic journey from start to finish. Looking for the new Nick Drake, Bread Love and Dreams, ISB or even COB? Then "A Spy in the House of God" is the devotional songwriting headswirler you didn't know you were after, with the personality, chops, magic, and utter magnificence to back it up. Castro is in full command of his sonic tapestries, and wowed all at the Million Tongues fest in Chicago this past August..." -Steve Krakow aka Plastic Crimewave MILLION TONGUES FESTIVAL Some of you will recognize the name Nick Castro from his track on the compilation CD that was released on Arthur Magazine's Bastet imprint last year. (This comp came out in conjunction with the Million Tongues festival in Chicago where Castro performed alongside many old and new psychedelic greats including Michael Yonkers, Simon Finn, LSD-March and Josephine Foster.) The Hollywood multi-instrumentalist spent a better part of 2004 holed up in his home recording the songs that make up this great debut album. Like many of today's folk-oriented singer-songwriters, Castro's music is rooted in the tradition set by psych-folkers like the Incredible String Band, Pentangle and Simon Finn. But these are merely touchstones and as a whole A Spy in the House of God is an originally diverse and heady outing. Castro himself is an accomplished guitarist; his finger picking fluid and at times recalling John Renbourn -- check out "Dear Stranger." However, he also utilizes sitar, flute, glockenspiel and harmonium -- to name a few -- to weave a rich, psychedelic-hued tapestry of sound around his songs. At face value album opener "Jack of All Seasons" and closer "Ordinary Life" are fairly straightforward, but it's what's in between these two

bookend tracks that gives A Spy in the House its soul. Adventurous (but not over the top) production, Eastern influenced instrumental interludes and mysterious drones flow between and often connect the vocal songs; though only 32 minutes or so long, there's a lot to take in. Fans of Six Organs of Admittance, Espers, as well as the aforementioned artists will want to make Nick Castro their first music purchase of 2005." -Gerald Hammill, OTHER MUSIC "...Nick Castro's LP 'A Spy in the House of God' [is] an album which seamlessly blends elements of Donovan, Ben Kunin, P.F. Sloan, and Syd Barrett and deserves to be heard by as wide an audience as possible." -Phil McMullen, PTOLEMAIC TERRASCOPE "'A Spy in the House of God' is the unveiling of the year. Nick Castro, who spent a year working on this album, emerged from his cocoon at the Million Tongues Festival in Chicago. Shortly after, 'A Spy in the House of God' was released into the world. With psychedelic nods and dreamlike imagery, Castro is a master craftsman. His songs flicker in the air like distant stars; they're subtle at first glance, but as you dig deeper, you realize how immense they really are. This record opens with the mighty 'Jack of All Seasons.' This might be the best opening track on any album released in 2004. It's organic drone opening and machine-like chiming lead into a delicate acoustic ballad. When listening to Castro, I envision two star-crossed lovers, frolicking in the autumn air. Under a canopy of red, orange, and gold, there is nothing that can ruin these moments. 'Jack of All Seasons' is a celebration of the simple beauty that is found in pure love. There's an underlying innocence in Castro's words that are highlighted by ringing glockenspiel accents. On the outro, an acoustic guitar solo dances with maracas and shakers. It's the aural equivalent of watching these two lovers disappear across the horizon, into the sun bleached sky. It's an amazing piece of music. One thing that sets 'A Spy in the House of God' from other, similar, albums are the instrumental passages interspersed between the more song-oriented material. 'Zoey' is the most memorable example. Its rhythmic industrial clatter is hypnotic. Various instruments make an appearance throughout this track, but the most impressive part is when heavily reverbed vocals float on either side of the mix. I feel like I'm hearing the traumatic journey of a ghost looking for a way out of purgatory and into the afterlife. It's haunting. I also love how it seamlessly flows into the next track, 'If Your Soul Could Sing.' This song offers more melodic insights into Castro's skull. The brilliant sequencing of this record cannot be understated. It flows perfectly. But it doesn't end there. In fact, there is not a weak moment on 'A Spy in the House of God.' It's an album that reaches out and grabs you, never letting go until the last notes of the closing track, 'Ordinary Life' fade to black. With it's 1950s AM Radio quality,

"Ordinary Life" is the story of a time and place where things were simple. Shades of Simon Finn creep up, especially in the pop-infused chorus. "He once had a wife, she didn't understand him much," he bellows. "But he didn't mind," he continues. There's heartbreaking beauty in this song about missed opportunities and the inevitability of death. It closes the album with an inspired whisper, urging you to take chances you might normally pass up and to seize moments as they appear..." -Brad Rose FOXY DIGITALIS

"Nick Castro has made here a wonderful, only partly singer-songwriter album, with some nice songs, with acoustic guitars and oud (like the beautiful "Jack of All Seasons" or "No Sweeter thing"), and with some more acoustic meandering textures, and small instrumental improvisations (like the "Ukelin suite" ; with on "Zoey" and on the intro of "If Your Soul Could Sing" the use of some tape-experimenting and semi-acoustic experiments), with the use of an Incredible String Band like- flute (like on the beautiful psych-folk song "Winter's Chill", and even more on the instrumental "Flight of the Mourning Dove"). All these elements give the complete album an overall and definite acid / psychedelic folk result. Another instrumental, "This was that and then" is a dreamy improvisation on dulcimer, sitar, oud and flute. The song "Dear Stranger" with acoustic guitar might follow a bit the tradition of early John Renbourn, even when it reminds me also of a Pink Floyd song, then it turns into a psych-folk instrumental with additional flute and harmonium, called "The Opposite of it"...A recommended album." -Gerald Van Waes, PSYCHE VAN HET FOLK (Belgium)

"On his debut album, A SPY IN THE HOUSE OF GOD, Nick Castro sounds as if he has spent his whole life listening to his hippie parents' folk and psych record collection. That can't be a bad thing, because by blending finely picked acoustic guitar with noise tinged sound collages, Castro's debut is what you might call a modern psychedelic folk masterpiece. The moment you feel as though you have the record pegged, a sitar drone or a distant female vocal arrives out of nowhere and sends the music into different, transcendent realms. Now that bands such as Fairport Convention and The Incredible String Band have become hip names for record dorks to drop, Nick Castro just might receive the attention he so rightly deserves" -Michael Dybinski, ART VOICE

"Nick is a solo artist and this is his debut solo CD. As I did not receive much info with the CD, I am assuming that Nick plays all the instruments, which includes bells, guitars, keyboards, and flute "The Jack of all Seasons" opens the CD and features some beautiful guitar playing and maintains a bit of a Pink Floyd feeling. "No Sweeter Thing" begins with some organ and guitars and has a real Asian feel to it somehow. This is some really great slightly psychedelic folk music. "Winter's Chill" features some simple but nice flute playing to accompany

the acoustic guitar. "Flight of the Morning Dove" continues and reminds me of Pierre Bensusan. "Zoey" is a very strange psychedelic freakout number! This is followed by "If Your Soul Could Sing", which starts with some hand drums and a very middle eastern style guitar and then the only electric guitar on the CD kicks in and disappears as someone walks across the room and voices repeat themselves over and over (female). Then Nick begins to sing and play acoustic guitar and is accompanied by a female vocalist. "This Was That And Then", begins with flute and goes into another Indian inspired guitar piece. "Dear Stranger" has a guitar part that reminds me of "Out On The Western Plains" by Rory Gallagher. "The Opposite Of It" is a short strange piece of music that leads into the closing number, "Ordinary Life". "Ordinary Life", closes the CD as a nice acoustic love ballad. This is some really great slightly psychedelic folk music with an experimental edge to it. While I don't think Nick is a brilliant vocalist, I have really enjoyed this CD a lot and we have heard it many times in the house now! I highly recommend that you check out the great interview with Nick at the following link! [foxydigitalis.com/foxyd/castro1.html](http://foxydigitalis.com/foxyd/castro1.html). Fans of the Finnish band Octopus Syng will enjoy this CD quite a lot. " -Scott Heller, AURAL INNOVATIONS "In Los Angeles, I'd bet that Nick Castro is king of the hill, he's got nimble fingers as a guitar player, and knows the history of his style (three different people approached me afterwards and compared his style to John Renbourn). Castro leaves a patina that is very California over what he does, despite his love of English Folk traditions..." -Jeff Breeze, PERFORMER MAGAZINE "With his ever evolving voice, Nick Castro cuts to the murk of the ancient matter of the new class of acid folkies deeper and clearer than his contemporaries, showing a range and depth of understanding that would make John Renbourn and Anne Briggs proud. Unlike his contemporaries, his songs avoid indie masquerade and hidden pretension, resulting in a more finely tuned, textured approach, framed by a complete understanding of the musical worlds in which this young musician explores. Castro's ability to play a variety of folk instruments with the know how and invested interest of a Robin Williamson is impressive, helping to fully construct a musical adventure that works effortlessly to include the listener as an extension of the songs themselves, rather than mere spectators to the overall sound." -Frankie Delmaine TRASH MAGAZINE Nick Castro is a psychedelic folk musician from Hollywood, CA. Something of a self-taught musicologist, Nick began studying music at a young age. His music is an unusual and eclectic mix of styles spanning many eras of American and World music. His technical prowess as a musician lends itself to Nick's unique songwriting style. Nick's solo debut, "A Spy in the House of God" is a magnificent, enchanting and sometimes

frightening work of art. A keen ear will hear Nick's diverse and often rare influences. Magical Power Mako, Tir Na Nog, world musics from Celtic to Gamelan, Incredible String Band, Dreamies ...the list goes on. A list so diverse as to seem almost contradictory yet Castro weaves an intricate and soulful masterpiece unlike anything in the scene today. Castro grew up playing piano and eventually guitar. He studied piano under Jazz great Daniel Jackson and then magnetic tape composition under Igor Korneitchouk. He was the singer and lead guitarist in many garage bands around the San Diego area. His most recent work was a collaboration with Josh Quon (Upsilon Acrux and Day Called Zero) known as Children of Gauhd. It brought much praise from Magazines like Dream who said of their debut recording, "Kinder Des Gottes": "Hearing that this outfit are from Southern California is a slight mind boggler; Josh Quon and Nicholas Castro make a very strange dark Euro, Japanese and otherly series of songs and sounds over the course of this hour long excursion into the murky twilight. Some of this sounds like it was recorded in the underground chamber of some labyrinth in a hidden world. Casting weird shadows and leaving traced afterimages dissolving in the air. Shimmering hallucinatory ghost songs like something one might expect from Current 93, Nurse With Wound, or Coil. Overflowing with mysterious ambiance and textures; this feels like dreams running in sequence, eyes moving under eyelids, slow motion hashish hazes and the overheard auras of lives motion and sensory details in passing wordlessly and eloquently." "A Spy in the House of God" is written, performed, produced and recorded by Nick Castro. He spent most of his nights in the last year creating this album while working as a sound engineer for Amoeba Music in Hollywood. A litany of instruments appear on the record from ouds to teapots. They are all played by Castro. Stay tuned for his next release FURTHER FROM GRACE to be released on June 7 2005 from Eclipse Records and Strange Attractors.

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