

Mp3 Splurge - Heavy Weather



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This Melbourne band combines catchy pop hooks, warm vocals and chiming guitars. Think the Church jamming with Oasis. 15 MP3 Songs POP: Beatles-pop, POP: Power Pop Details: SPLURGE is a four-piece Melbourne band that has been playing and recording together since 1997. Adelaide-born songwriter Greg Williams (Young Homebuyers, The Every Brothers) and guitarist Neville Hill (Napoleon Goes Solo) got together in Neville's front room to record eight-track demos of songs which were soon demanding a band setting. Joined by drummer Owen Smythe (Grin Dogs), they recruited songwriter Greg Arnold (Things of Stone and Wood) to play bass on sessions that led to the release of a 12-track, self-titled album in 1999. The recording of the band's brand new CD, Heavy Weather, followed an Arnold-Williams collaboration for Adelaide label Round Records under the guise of The Every Brothers. The boys 'went bush' with a portable studio to The Cabin in Hall's Gap for a weekend, recording ten songs live over two days, with songs being rehearsed and arranged on the spot. The CD was titled Tintinara Breakdown (a song they wrote during the session about the mysterious absence of a band member). Heavy Weather - produced by Greg Arnold and recorded by David McCluney - drew inspiration from this fast recording method. To keep the performances as live and fresh as possible, Splurge recorded the ten songs (all written over the previous year) after only a few rehearsals and arrangement sessions. Vocal and guitar tracks for the album were then recorded over a couple of days back up at The Cabin. The result is a more reflective album than their debut, but which captures the energy of ten real songs played by a real band. As an added bonus, five of the best tracks from the band's hook-laden, guitar-driven debut album are included! REVIEWS "In my book, eclecticism is the mark of a significant musical talent. And this eclecticism cannot be faked or forced, it is a skill and an attitude that an artist either possesses or doesn't. Splurge, viz. Greg Williams (vocals, rhythm guitar), Neville Hill (guitar, bass),

Greg Arnold (vocals, bass, guitar, keyboards) and Owen Smythe, hails from Australia and with its sophomore collection of original songs displays quite assuredly an eclectic mix of styles that displays confidence and ability. Furthermore, do not be fooled by the apparent stylistic focus as showcased by the opening "Come Monday Morning" and "I See That Now", which suggest the languid, West Coast folk-inflected power pop favoured by many an Aussie garage band with Teenage Fanclub references chiming and ringing their way into your heart. Splurge has much more to offer. This is immediately evident in the reverberating chords of the funky complaint "I Have No Control", the cool and soulful "She's Got No Soul", the poignant, acoustic-flavoured "Because You're Mine" and the gritty, Stonesey, horn-laden "What's The Matter With Me". As a bonus, Heavy Weather includes a generous five tracks from Splurge's debut, songs that lean more heavily in the power pop direction. If anything, these tracks (especially "Nine-To-Fivers' Daily Grind" and "Inside This Skin") deeply emphasize Splurge's harmonic strengths and complete this satisfying package with conviction." - Pop Culture Press (US) "Here's a surprisingly great new release by a Melbourne act that isn't all that well known yet.... The tunes come thick and fast here with some extraordinary production values for an indie band. The band have splurged in the studio especially on the guitar sounds, similar to Travis and perhaps even up there with The Church.... Lyrically Splurge come over like Liam from Oasis with a brain.... There is a Beatle-esq and Oasis sound to some of these tunes. She's Got No Soul is indicative of Splurge's innate ability to meld melody and mood purposely.. The use of brass gives the tune a whole epic life it needs..." - Drum Media "This album fit around me like a warm jumper; comfy, lovable and just a little bit scruffy. Spontaneous, honest guitars; simple and effective rhythms... Team that with witty lyrics and what you're left with is a superb left-of-centre folk rock album from this great Melbourne four-piece." - BMA Canberra Yearbook "Splurge are a four-piece band coming out of Melbourne. This is their second album, although two of the band's members, Greg Arnold (singing, bass, guitars and keyboards) and Greg Williams (singing, rhythm guitar) did record an album as the Every Brothers between the first album (simply titled 'Splurge' in 1999) and this latest offering. As a bonus to the ten new songs on 'Heavy Weather', Laughing Outlaw records have added five tracks from the band's self-titled debut. With 'Heavy Weather' Splurge have produced an album full of such wonderfully melodic pop songs that it can only be a matter of time before they are much more well known. Listening to track three on the album, 'I Have No Control', the name of Oasis springs to mind. It's probably the weakest track on the album, a rock by numbers song that wouldn't be

out of place on an Oasis album but what keeps it interesting is the lyrics; "I am not your lover, just your flunkey, and I've been hanging onto you like a hopeless fucking junkie". It must be said that there is an undeniable Gallagher sound in the vocals, although it is hard to know who takes the lead on this particular track as both Williams and Arnold are listed as singers in the sleeve notes. The other two members of the band are Neville Hill on guitar and bass and Owen Smythe on drums. Now, I'm going to risk upsetting fans of the band and maybe the band members themselves but I've got to say it. It had been nagging me who the lead singer sounds like on the stunning second track, 'I See That Now', which is an achingly beautiful song built on a wall of shimmering guitars and keyboards. Then it hit me, not only in the vocals but also in the whole sound and texture of the song; it's got Per Gessle from Sweden's Roxette stamp all over it. And before the hate mail starts coming in, make sure you check out Gessle's work with the Lonely Boys or even, at a push, a track called 'Kung Av Sand' he recorded with his old band, Gyllene Tider, before just judging the guy on his work with Roxette. He writes good, strong melodic power pop that will be around a lot longer than Sweden's golden boys the Hypes, (sorry that should be The Hives). So, in my book at least, comparing 'I See That Now' to one of Gessle's songs is a compliment. And it's more valid than the Oasis one as they have yet to come up with melodies so strong as those shown on tracks like 'Come Monday Morning' or 'Heavy Weather'. They've also never turned out a tune so tender and gorgeous as 'She's Got No Soul'. As the album progresses through songs like the acoustic driven 'Because You're Mine', it's obvious that this is a classy act who have produced an album which, like all great albums, has snatches of tunes which already seem familiar and vocals which the listener feels instantly comfortable with. There is a warmth to these vocals that will appeal to anyone who likes their pop music with chiming guitars and big, strong melodies. There is also just the smallest hint of alt country along the lines of, say, the Pernice Brothers mixed in there as well. The actual 'Heavy Weather' album ends with the song 'To Be In Love'. It has another breathtaking melody and vocals sung with such a passion and feeling that it sounds like the singer is singing his last ever song and giving it all he can. Then we have the five bonus tracks from the first album. The thought was there that maybe they couldn't match the beauty and brilliance of the previous ten songs. But they do. They are not quite as polished and maybe show a few more rough edges in places and are more in the power pop vein than the songs on 'Heavy Weather' but are none the worse for that. Tracks like 'The Man Who Used To Be On TV' could have fitted seamlessly in to the new album and are just as strong. There are a number of bands who can

turn out good, melodic pop songs but not many come to mind who do it with the confidence, feeling and passion that Splurge do here. They make it seem so easy. On the strength of the fifteen songs here I'd certainly go out of my way to get hold of their next release." - Pennyblack Website (UK) "The folks at Laughing Outlaw have really got something going. By the sounds of it, the label has been capitalising on the wealth of great pop and alt-country bands out in this vast brown land of ours and Melbourne's Splurge are no exception to this. "Heavy Weather" is a delectable treat that shows not only a keen eye for delicious pop treats, but also an emotive honesty that instantly warms to the listener. The opening track "Come Monday Morning" emanates a hopefulness that is kind of caught in the song title: a slight air of emancipation coming from "Come Monday morning/Will you see the real you?/Come Monday morning/you won't be surprised to find that I'm still thinking about you". Couple that with a alt-country lite feel with the guitarwork and keyboards reminiscent of Sydney's Golden Rough, with the Joe Pernice wispy vocals to boot. "I See That Now" follows thematically in the same path, albeit with more of a spaced guitar-centric start that moves into a richly melodic pop song. "I Have No Control" shows a more electronically aided rock effort that raises the tempo to an Alex Lloyd styled track. Contrast this to the acoustic pop of the title track and the very gorgeous gentleness of "She's Got No Soul", the variety of this album is fairly staggering. "Invisible Man" perches Splurge with a Hunters and Collectors styled track that is gets better and better with each listen. Folks, we don't get much more of a complete release than this one. Splurge must be commended for producing an album that not only has a constancy of great tracks, but one that will sound as good now as in ten years. A stellar effort that most bands would kill for, hopefully it will be picked up by all fine purveyors of Australian music. Definitely worth getting." - Oz Music Project

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