

## Mp3 Danny McGuinness - Room 809



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midwestern alt country with a rock influence. 10 MP3 Songs ROCK: Acoustic, FOLK: Modern Folk

Details: Room 809, the latest release from Chicago-based artist Danny McGuinness, captures a thoroughly unpretentious, inspired jam session that showcases McGuinness' songwriting and vocal prowess backed by the improvisational mastery of guitarist Kent Van Der Kolk. The duo sat down for a demo session at Los Angeles' Bel Age Hotel (in room 809), and in the process hit a musical stride that lasted for hours. Friends stopped by bearing liquid provisions, and you can practically taste the brew and hear the good-natured quips when you listen to this release. By evening's end they had an album's worth of material, and it seemed the only reasonable next step was to release an album. This record is a refreshing departure from today's more common slick, technologically adept musical fare. Each track expresses the kind of intimacy and immediacy that makes acoustic music unique and appealing, while also containing the gritty rock and roll sensibility with which veteran rocker McGuinness has formerly established himself. (McGuinness' musical background includes fronting the progressive hard rock band Coven of Thieves as well as the more melodic pop/power rock band Icos.) Each track distinguishes itself as a stand-alone treasure, yet collectively they hold together as one of those rare finds, an album you can listen to over and over again as you try to figure out which track is your favorite. There's storytelling ("Whiskey", "Designed") and romantic yearning ("Waiting for You", "Forever Be Mine"), an acknowledgement of the harrowing times we live in as well as an enduring message of hope for the future ("Good Rain," "The Road Ahead", "Monday Coming Round"). There's also an original, humorous take on the angst-riddled breakup song, "Breathe", (refreshing lines from which include, "How long has it been since we were friends, or some make like that? Well we thought we knew each other then, yeah, well I'm over that.") All this is complemented by a remarkable chemistry between two gifted artists at the top of

their game. McGuinness' history with both Coven of Thieves and Icos includes tours of both the United States and Europe. Icos released a debut album, Incurable Contact, then signed to Mercury/Slipdisc and recorded a follow-up, At the Speed of Life, at Abbey Road studios. The label changed hands and in the process McGuinness negotiated a release from his contract and co-founded an independent label, Heatshield, with former Slipdisc executives. He released a pop single on Heatshield, "Summertime," which was later licensed to Corona Beer for a national radio ad campaign. McGuinness toured in support of the single; highlights of that tour included opening for Jimmy Buffet and Shawn Mullins. In between these escapades he lived in Amsterdam for a year, alternating between busking and playing huge music festivals, where he honed his solo acoustic chops. McGuinness and Van Der Kolk are touring the U.S. in support of Room 809 throughout 2005.

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