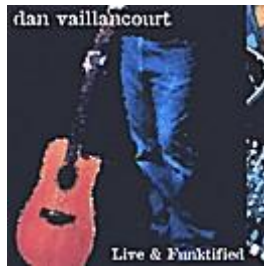


Mp3 Dan Vaillancourt - Live & Funktified



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The easiest descriptor may be folk-funk, but that fails to account for chatty spoken-word bits, hip-hop goofs, and straight-ahead pop songs. -The Onion 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, ROCK: Acoustic

Details: When I was young, I would watch "Reading Rainbow" on TV and towards the end of the program a bunch of little kids would review little kid books... Being a little kid myself, I was much more apt to have believe a little kid than let's say... The author. This being said, I don't want you to waste your time hearing what I have to say about my own CD but instead let you read a very honest and detailed review of the album. I think the album is pretty darn Funktified... But "don't take my word for it..." Craig Clarke from Green Man Review, which has become "the reference standard for review magazines in its field," has recently reviewed Live Funktified. Green Man reviews claim, "...unlike some 'zines, we do not apologize for reviews that are not positive. If it's makee, we'll say so, period. If we say it's good, you know it's damned good!" Quick Summary: "It's in Vaillancourt's cleverly simple lyrics, his virtuosic licks, and his humorous stage banter where he really distances himself from the continually growing cadre of singer-songwriters." "Live Funktified" Review in The Green Man Review (greenmanreview.com) By Craig Clarke, December 2003 I'd like to begin this review by saying that "funktified" is my new favorite word. I just like saying it. "Funktified!" See how much fun that is? Try it. And fun is the driving force behind this album. Dan Vaillancourt recorded himself live mostly during a club appearance in April 2002, playing his lighthearted songs alone with his "custom-funktified 10-string guitar." The sense of immediacy comes through from the riffs of the opening song, "Slide Up," including a healthy amount of showing off from a man who knows how to make his guitar do anything he wants. (The solo in "Walkin' Out My Door" is reminiscent of Jimmy Page's acoustic renderings like "Black Mountain Side" and "White Summer.") It's an ideal introduction to his style and instantly transports the listener to a table at the front watching this

young blond man sing, play, and most of all entertain. It's in Vaillancourt's cleverly simple lyrics, his virtuosic licks, and his humorous stage banter where he really distances himself from the continually growing cadre of singer-songwriters. "Thinkin' A You" continues the feeling -- a song that is universal in its meaning, and one which he doesn't mind embellishing with vocal acrobatics. One of the highlights of the album is "Play for You" where Vaillancourt sings about not making much money from his music, but that "sometimes a poor man can give more than a man born with a silver spoon." In the middle of the song, he digresses by telling about how his usual partners -- the Dan Vaillancourt Orchestra, a jazz ensemble -- were unable to make the performance. He then proceeds to fill in for them by vocally imitating trumpet, upright bass, and drum solos, all the while maintaining the backing rhythm on his guitar. This performance shows just how determined he is to entertain his audience. This crops up again on "Radio Star." Vaillancourt takes various friendly jabs at Nickelback, Vanilla Ice, and Destiny's Child while telling an also self-deprecating story of his own fictional attempts at celebrity in Alice's Restaurant fashion. It's the centerpiece of Live Funktified and is particularly important in that it shows just how inherently ridiculous it sounds for a white man to say "bling bling." Fortunately, Vaillancourt is in on the joke. The prior track, "After All," finds him playing with words in a hip-hop style ("my permanence doesn't seem to last...all my absolutes are just temporary") that shows he's really in the groove at this point. After "Radio Star," Vaillancourt slides into "Preface" in which he states his wish that "if you met someone that they had a preface" and so he writes his own for our benefit, continuing his story of not having money (from "Play for You") but he'll "sing for you, if you've got the time." His songs are eminently quotable and I find I'm having to restrain myself from relating scads of his lyrics here. (They're all available on his Web site: danvaillancourt.com) "Preface" is followed by the first true ballad on Live Funktified -- "Fly Like an Angel." It reminds me a bit too much of the band Live in its over-sincerity -- and it doesn't really fit the tone of the album -- but it's a good opportunity for him to show his songwriting range. This ends the full-recorded performance that comprises the majority of Live Funktified but we CD listeners are treated to "Casey Rose" ("a song about a little girl I met on a mission trip in Haiti"). The lyrics, on the surface, could be taken as a romantic love song -- but underneath lies a purer sentiment that turns into sweet nostalgia. This sweetness is then turned on its head with "That Day," a song of domestic violence seen from the outside. Memories of "First Love" -- and how easily people separate from each other -- end the disc, with Dan shilling CDs and free stickers ("for those of us who are poor"). Then, a minute later, a welcome

hidden track extends the fun "Play for You" into eight minutes, putting Vaillancourt before a more appreciative audience (the previous crowd was conspicuous in its silence), and for which I was glad because, even though Vaillancourt's performance is less polished here than before, it shows that he doesn't treat his songs as set in stone, ready to change timing, tone, or even title at a whim for the sake of entertainment. The crowd is responding, the tone is improvisatory -- with banter and storytelling taking up a large part of the track -- and the jazz solos are more involved. This track truly exemplifies the "folk-funk" feel of Vaillancourt's music. It's a great capper to a fine, fun-filled, Funktified album. --Craig Clarke--

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