Mp3 Ross Crean - Blackwater



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The anti-folk singer/songwriter goes back to his Celtic roots, mixing traditional Gaelic and English song with contemporary songwriting. Featuring John Doyle (founding member of Solas) and Pat Broaders (Bohola). 13 MP3 Songs WORLD: Celtic, FOLK: Celtic Folk Details: Singer/songwriter Ross Crean returns with a recording that takes him back to his Celtic roots. Featuring John Doyle (founding member of Solas) and Pat Broaders (Bohola). When those who know him are asked to describe Ross Crean in one word, the one word that is never uttered is "normal". Indeed, his life in music and words has been quite atypical, even compared to artists that thrive both inside and outside the music industry. His attachments to rock, folk, opera, celtic, and other world musics have drawn him up to be somewhat of an enigma to those who can not quite grasp what he creates. "When it comes to the creative process," Ross said, "I just do what comes naturally, whether it is writing, recording, or performing. There really is nothing to get. It's just who I am." Having a great passion for music and singing, Ross began training in several vocal styles in his teens, including rock, opera, sean-nos (old-style Celtic singing), and Indian and Middle Eastern vocal ornamentation. In college, he began his professional career as a classical bass-baritone, but his emphasis in that field switched quickly to avant-garde and twentieth century classical music. His three-octave range brought him several opportunities to perform pieces that required considerable vocal acrobatics. By the age of 25, Ross had performed with the Chicago, Toronto, San Francisco, and Moscow Symphonies, as well as the Parisian Chamber Consort. Longing for more musical adventures, Ross founded the now-defunct Tremera's Theatre, a world music ensemble that gained much critical acclaim in Europe, primarily in France and Russia. Ross' part-operatic-part-folk voice lead many fans and critics to compare him to the much-loved Dead Can Dance vocalist Lisa Gerrard. At the same time, he was also performing solo with his own compositions in Europe. The emotionally-violent compositions

"Missa Dementia", "The Mysteries of Uncle Archibald", and "Xenophysius Obscura" gave Ross a lot of critical acclaim in Europe. "The one thing I learned from those couple of years," he said, "is that the audience WANTS to be moved. It doesn't matter if it's happy or sad or complete devastation, as long as there is some emotional connection with what they are hearing and seeing." Always desiring the live audience connection, Ross started performing at much more intimate venues, with his voice, a guitar, and a piano. The experiences lead Ross to make the music he makes now: part folk, part rock, part world influences, and extra noise thrown in. "I honestly don't know what to call it." he said. "Anti-folk, folk rock. pop folk, whatever...it's music. That's all I want to consider it as. Open labels lead to more open minds, in my opinion." With two E.P.s under his belt, Ross most recently released his first full-length CD titled "This Too Shall Pass". The record is part live material, part studio material, and many tracks are both at the same time. This continues Ross' typically unconventional approach to recording and performing. "During the last three years, many friends and fans have commended me for the energy I put out in my live shows, and I wanted that kind of energy in this record," Crean said, "so I dug up some live recordings I had from my last tour in 2004, and my co-producer and I decided to take that material and build up additional instrumentation and vocals to see what would happen." The result is a haunting album displaying Crean's deep and powerful (and at times ethereal) voice. His competency as an artist becomes extremely evident when his voice, combined with his honest and bold songwriting, covers not only the usual topics of love and loss, but also the shakiness of matrimony, weakness, after 9/11, self-hatred, and prostitution. Crean, however, approaches some of these topics poetically, leaving some listeners baffled. "Some people don't like the way I bring things across", Crean laughs, "but that's how I choose to say the things I say. I like the occasional bout of obscurity and cryptic-ness. It makes people think. It makes ME think." Yes, he's certainly making us think. -- Matthew Barrett

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