

Mp3 Randy Kaplan - Perfect Gentleman



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A literate, lyrical, irreverent double c.d. that both honors and lampoons sex, love, death, and religion. Guitars, keyboards, yard-sale organs drum samples - all played by Randy. 28 MP3 Songs FOLK: like Ani, FOLK: like Joni Details: "Classy and intelligent acoustic observations from Brooklyn-based writer. "Perfect Gentleman" is a 28 song double album that, rarely for such a large beast, doesn't outstay its welcome. Built around Kaplan's high and light vocals and acoustic guitar, it incorporates a variety of samples, primarily organs and slightly strange sounding drums, to create the rhythm tracks, all of which he plays himself. But despite this, it is essentially a simple, not to say nostalgic, album that allows space for the lyrics to breathe. And those lyrics don't underestimate their listener's intelligence, being literate and occasionally not a little highbrow (and that's not a criticism), unafraid of multi-syllable words or obscure subject matter. Kaplan is a craftsman in the tradition of Paul Simon, to whose "Still Crazy After All These Years" "Perfect Gentleman" is first cousin. There are other similarities to Simon as well, as Kaplan is very much a sharp observer and chronicler, rather than a heart on the sleeve writer. But he's not so detached as to forget his common humanity, and his songs are by turns tender, compassionate and understanding. He also has a sense of humour that flits through the songs, notably on "Buff's" lament for a body gone to seed and "Never be Alone"'s protagonist who has a mobile permanently welded to her ear. Two of the best things here is "Girl in a Big White Sweater" ("drove away in a little red car"), which paints an entire picture in those twelve words and builds to a frenetic unrequited climax and "Eve", about the original. "Perfect Gentleman" is well worth seeking out, as on this evidence are Kaplan's previous four offerings."

-Jeremy Searle - americana-uk.com _____ "RANDY KAPLAN ... stands alone, within equidistant small-rock-hurling reach of PAUL SIMON, WOODIE GUTHRIE, IVOR CUTLER and THE LONESOME ORGANIST. With 28 songs on two CDs and a total playing time of way over two hours your

reviewer is just never going to be able to guide you with any certainty. But some things do stand out. His musical approach is homemade cheerful multi-instrumental confidence with a harmonica. It's delightful small scale foolishness with plunder chests full of styles and rhythms sitting under clever drolleries and nifty tunes that include lines like "she makes me listen to Tom Jones while she talks Japanese on the telephone" or "I'm going to die right here. Get me a notary. I want a big big funeral!". There are a lot of instruments making very pretty, quirky, funny and sometimes dead right noises throughout. It's just dead good entertaining perkiness. And I almost guarantee that Mr Kaplan sells van loads of these albums at gigs in New York (did I mention he was born on Long Island?). His personal story telling, his cheerful nuttiness, his ability to slip into and out of the mournful or the weird ... these are the qualities that the man will convey most in person. When you get the full album for yourself, see if you can find the "Eye of a Tiger" quote. You can then go look for his four earlier albums. Good luck! -Sam Saunders -

whisperinandhollerin.com _____ "Quality recordings from lo-fi underground recording popster Randy Kaplan. Kaplan's tunes are nice and laidback...often recalling the music of Paul Simon and Bob Dylan. This is a whopping collection of songs...two discs containing a total of 28 tracks. That's a lot...if you like what Kaplan is doing, these discs will provide a great deal of spinning power. Unlike most underground songwriters, Randy doesn't write weird or crazy music. Instead, he writes tunes that could easily be accepted by the general public. (Rating: 4+++)" -Baby Sue - babysue.com

_____ "Not many people would sing about Eve (as in the Bible's Eve) being the first human hermaphrodite but Randy Kaplan explores that notion on his enigmatic "Perfect Gentleman". He performs his tongue-in-cheek vocals over an assortment of vintage organs and boisterous guitar with a light rhythm section bleeding on the edges. His voice is what's at the center of the mix with an earnest take on life and all its hypocrisies. The album doesn't lack in depth either including length as it reigns in strong of the double disc variety. He's certainly unique and his unique song arrangements will keep fans coming back for more salivating the whole way. - J-Sin - smother.net _____ An anti-prophet who asks only that he be given as big a funeral as Jesus and Moses, an overweight middle-aged man who carries around a picture of his shirtless teen-aged self in order to lure women, a woman who spends most of the day with a cell-phone pressed to her ear (even when she's on the toilet), the ghosts of Edith Wharton and Alexander Hamilton, a trucker driven to prostitutes by southern evangelical radio preachers, the first human on earth (the hermaphrodite, Eve). These are some of the

characters on Randy Kaplan's new double c.d., *Perfect Gentleman*, released this month by Yellow Thing Records Books. "Over the past couple of years I've amassed a collection of cheap yard-sale organs," Randy explains. "I used their built-in drum samples to create the rhythm tracks for the songs on *Perfect Gentleman*." Kaplan utilizes these rock, jazz, waltz, swing, bossa nova, dixie, cha-cha, and rhumba beats to fashion songs ranging from simply-structured folk and country ballads to torch songs, lampoons, spirituals, and satires to songs with chromatic melodies, dissonant harmonies, and striking modulations. By editing, manipulating, and overlapping beats from these various 1970's organs Kaplan takes control of them, sometimes transforming the crude and kitschy samples into more polished and developed sounds and sometimes just placing a sound 'as is' into a new context. In much the same way, the characters in these songs often seek to gain mastery over their chronic pathologies, or at least to acknowledge them. "Kaplan makes us smile as he points out hypocrisy ... (He crafts) exceptionally tender songs (and) pens understated tunes that, the more we hear them, eventually evolve into anthems." -*Newsday*, New York

Kaplan's disparate influences are evident in the broad range of styles of these 28 songs: from John Prine (*Rusty New*) to Antonio Carlos Jobim (*Little Bee*) to Paul Simon (*Stay New*) to Stephen Sondheim (*Twice*) to poet John Ashbery (*None of Us Has Ever Died*) to filmmaker Eric Rohmer (*Perfect Gentleman*). "Melody, lyrics, arrangement, production ... it's all here ... The lyrics stand on their own as poetry, unique and compelling in its imagery." -*The Inside Connection*, New York

Randy lives in Brooklyn, New York where he's appeared at *The Bowery Ballroom* and *The Bottom Line*. He was a regular at the original *Sin-* and now performs monthly at *The Living Room* on Manhattan's Lower East Side. For a comprehensive list of the clubs in over 30 states where Randy has performed please visit [randykaplanand go to the biography section!](#) "Long Island-born Randy Kaplan sings of modern romance, male neuroses, and quirky character studies with the off-kilter viewpoint of a man who appreciates the blurred edges as much as the finer points. Like Leonard Cohen before him, and his friend and musical compadre Dan Bern, Randy's self-effacing lyrics make you laugh, cry and blush at their honest simplicity." -*The Bottom Line - Required Listening Preview*; New York "His Delta blues/country/folk blend of styles is the perfect medium for his John Prine-like sense of humor ... downright refreshing." -*The Music Paper*; New York "Kaplan is a cheeky songwriter with enough personality to stand out from the dulling crowd." -*Time Out New York*

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