

Mp3 I See Hawks In L.a. - Country: Traditional Country



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Best Country Artist, L.A. Weekly Awards 2003 "The Hawks have updated Southern California country rock. Sinewy yet poetic." --Richard Gehr, Village Voice "The finest cosmic cowboy music since the Burrito Brothers." --Michael Simmons, L.A. Weekly 12 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Traditional Country, COUNTRY: Country Rock Details: ALL PROCEEDS OF CD SALES GO TO RED CROSS TO HELP HURRICANE KATRINA VICTIMS I SEE HAWKS IN L.A. iseehawks.com BEST COUNTRY ARTIST, 2003, L.A. WEEKLY AWARDS "Do two great groups constitute a, you know, scene? Along with Beachwood Sparks, the Hawks have updated Southern California country rock. Their music, driven by the fine steel guitarist Paul Lacques, is sinewy yet poetic--more nihilistic than decadent, with an urban-desert poetry all its own." --Richard Gehr, Village Voice "I See Hawks In L.A. play the finest cosmic cowboy music since the Burrito Brothers." -- Michael Simmons, L.A. Weekly I SEE HAWKS IN L.A. feature the spiritous musings of vocalist Robert Rex Waller, Jr.; the classic fiddle and vocals of Brantley Kearns (Dwight Yoakum, Dave Alvin); Paul Marshall (Strawberry Alarm Clock, Hank Thompson, Rose Maddox) bass and vocals; and Paul Lacques (Double Naught Spy Car), guitar, steel, dobro and vocals. I See Hawks In L.A. were just nominated Best Country Artist 2003, L.A. Weekly's Music Awards, second year in a row. Their eponymous song was named crucial listening in an L.A. Times cover story on Echo Park. In March 2003 Austin's South By South West welcomed the Hawks, who pleased Austin honky tonkers with their down home, made in California sound. The Hawks debut CD, "I SEE HAWKS IN L.A." gets rave reviews (SEE BELOW) and made the F.A.R. Alternative Country Chart and The Music Never Stops' Top Ten CDs of 2001. The Hawks also scored a "Modern Marvels" for the History Channel, a documentary on American cattle ranching from its roots in 19th century Texas to modern mega-factory-farms. The Hawks made soundscapes with old time fiddle, dobro, and jawharp, and brought the music to modern times with some

Merle Haggard's Strangers-type country stomp and some space age (al la "Jetsons") guitar and human beat box, contributing 50 minutes of original music to the documentary. REVIEWS and ARTICLES:

"When you first listen to I See Hawks in L.A., you hear the staples of Southern California country rock -- sunny harmonies and a Flying Burritos Brothers vibe -- with a bit of bluegrass mixed in. But listen closely and you'll notice that they're often giving the genre a twist. How else can you describe a group whose lonesome ode "Duty To Our Pod" is a love song about whales? These cosmic cowboys often seek "the beautiful narcotic place" that they sing about. And, not surprising given the band's name, flying references abound here, from planes to birds to the man who is "100 feet up in a tree." Despite their somewhat skewed approach, their music is grounded by top-notch playing (particularly from fiddler Brantley Kearns and guitarist/lap steel player Paul Lacques) and strong vocals. Besides the group's fine harmonies, frontman Robert Rex Waller moves smoothly between a rough-hewn singing style and a sweeter, Parsons-like croon. Whether they're tweaking country rock, as in the humorous honky-tonker "Don't Bury Me," or simply creating the stirring dysfunctional family portrait "To the Snow," the L.A.-based band acquit themselves quite nicely on their debut." -- Michael Berick, Country Standard Time

"In the title song he wrote, guitarist Paul Lacques turns one of the neighborhood's regular aerial features into a potent image of loneliness." --Richard Cromelin, Los Angeles Times

"I See Hawks In L.A. play the finest cosmic cowboy music since the Burrito Brothers--explicitly cannabinoided tunes encompassing expansive desert vistas and dysfunctional Hollywood losers. Dig their unreleased "Humboldt," the best marijuana anthem since 'One Toke Over The Line.'" --Michael Simmons, L.A. Weekly

"I got a fantastic shock when I heard the California country music I See Hawks In L.A. have been crafting lately. They were already fresh and trippy enough to get an L.A. Weekly Music Award, but now that they've been together for two years they deliver killer after killer, with flavors of Gram Parsons, Pure Prairie League and even the Eagles floating on the Hawks' own creek of sheer ease. Rob Waller's casually robust voice presents their tales of lust and strange places on a plush platter, while Paul Lacques' clean-cut guitar carves up the spaces between, along with Brantley Kearns (fiddle), Paul Marshall (bass), and John McDuffy (pedal steel)." --Greg Burk, L.A. Weekly

"'One more day on the 605,' laments Robert Rex Waller Jr. on the title track of I See Hawks in L.A., the debut album from the band of the same name. 'What if this place got buried alive?' he continues. 'The biggest quake the world's ever seen/Let the snakes take over again.' Like the band's name itself, the song situates I See Hawks' brand of country music squarely in Southern California, and it

does so in front of a musical background lush with steel guitar and fiddle (courtesy of Paul Lacques and Brantley Kearns, respectively), and foregrounded by Waller's world-weary, expressive vocals. "I See Hawks' landscape is an often forbidding one, bleak and lonely yet deeply human, with the shadow of death never far behind. The chorus of 'The Mystery of Life' could be the band's credo: 'In the end, it is each man's destiny to face the mystery of life alone.' Yet the album closes with two tracks that depart from this somber vision: the up-tempo, humorously defiant 'Don't Bury Me,' which brags, 'I'm gonna stay alive when I die,' and the tentative love song 'Baby,' which ends the record on a guardedly hopeful note: 'I think I'll hold you close when the cold wind comes.' "The members of I See Hawks have performed with the likes of Dwight Yoakam, Dave Alvin and Emmylou Harris, as well as with such outfits as the Magic of Television and Double Naught Spy Car. They've created a record that evokes sprawling desert spaces made hospitable by the presence of a few guys singing in gorgeous harmony. Dreamy and offbeat, the album stands up well against the best of country music while also achieving a surprising originality."

--Gwynne Garfinkle, New Times (LA) "Bent." --L.A. Times Campus Circle The L.A. Underground I SEE HAWKS IN L.A. Soar Atop Alt-Country World Halfway through our afternoon interview, I See Hawks in L.A. guitar player and vocalist Paul Lacques points out of the window of the Silverlake diner where we are seated towards the resplendent soaring wingspan of a bird in flight, which passes by as if on cue.

"There's a hawk right there," he says, forcing lead vocalist Robert Rex Waller, Jr. and myself to glance at what seems to be one on the wing, gliding directly above Sunset Boulevard. "We tend to see them as omens when we see them as a band." Sure enough, there are hawks in L.A. Not only in the sky, but in the world of alt-alt-country music. I See Hawks in L.A. formed a few years back and has been a mainstay on the re-emerging Los Angeles country scene ever since. Backed by the masterful fiddle playing of Brantley Kearns and the steel guitar of Paul Lacques, lead singer Robert Rex Waller, Jr. serves up a decadent helping of desert country rock that riffs on the pleasures of the soul. His somewhat vivacious range saunters from a Steve Earle-like plea for attention into Gram Parsons-like episodic peacefulness. Their self-titled debut record was hailed by critics and fans alike as a defining moment in the new country underground that began to take shape around the time that the Beachwood Sparks reminded L.A. why country-rock was once king. Songs like "Bury Me" and "I See Hawks in L.A." permeated a sad desert landscape that floated as high as the Hawks often claim to be. Now, as they prepare to release a follow-up album, the Hawks are ascending closer to the sprawling open sky that punctuates their music

with freedom. One of their new songs, the finely tuned marijuana love letter "Humboldt," shows that the Hawks are experimenting with a more rock-like sound, accentuated with the medicinal chanting that opens the song. "The new album just rocks more, it's a lot harder," Waller Jr. expresses. "The first record was very contemplative and a little quieter. The next one is more up and a little more experimental." With a new record due in early 2003, the Hawks continue to glide along the L.A. skyway. Hopefully, people will look up and recognize that there are not only hawks in L.A., but that they are poised for a musical takeover. -- Zach Selwyn, Campus Circle "A local band called I See Hawks In L.A. creates music whose sound and feel is unmistakably Californian-like sunrise over desert saguaros, and, yes, great winged wonders circling the San Gabriels. There's an almost timeless quality about it. It's not quite garage rock, not quite country, folk, gospel or bluegrass, yet it possesses elements of each. Not unlike SoCal's landscape (and culture), it's a seemingly incougruous hybrid. But when the disparate parts of I See Hawks In L.A. come together in harmony, on waves of lap steel, the results are plain gorgeous." -- Bliss, Pasadena Weekly "This album forces you to think uncomfortable thoughts. It reaches deep inside." 4 1/2 Stars --Rhett Ashley, International Country Music Association News July 2002 "I See Hawks in L.A. takes a slightly more cerebral approach to country music. This is not to say the genre is overrun with cavemen, but clipped onto the well-worn bootheels of this outfit is a spur of skewed wit, intelligence, and contemplation. The music itself is the very picture of congeniality - accomplished players strum languidly with reverence and grace, conjuring deep-seeded tradition rather than new country (aka, rock music from people in cowboy hats). There's a grass-roots essence running through the album, but the band sidesteps tradition in the lyrics with tracks like "Nicotine Vitamin C," the lovely sunset lullaby of "The Beautiful Narcotic Place I Reside," and the saddle-shop quartet of "A Dog Can Break Your Heart Too." Furthermore, "The Mystery of Life" and "Duty to Our Pod" seem downright existentialist in their approach. The modest bari-twang vocals of Robert Rex Waller Jr. and the other contributing voices are all appropriately unpolished, and everything goes down as smooth as molasses. This self-titled debut album has too much grit and professionalism to be a novelty act, but I See Hawks in L.A. is, in fact, such a smart band that they practically alienate themselves from the genre they fit so well. Also, the fact that they received an award for Best Country Band in the city of Los Angeles only furthers the notion that the quintet is a little left of center. With a nod and a dry smirk, these boys are the best-kept secret in philosophical tongue-in-cheek Southern hospitality that California has to offer. Only you can decide how

vital that is, but rest assured these boys can play." -- Glenn Swan, AMG "With 'alt-country' all but played out, I See Hawks in L.A. soars high above the thick smog of derivative bands traipsing around with shaggy haircuts and vintage Telecasters. On their eponymous debut CD (Ethic Recordings), the Hawks circle from Bakersfield to the Bay Area and back, taking off on an uptempo burner one minute and alighting with a ruminative ballad the next. Lead singer Robert Rex Waller Jr. spins psychedelic-tinged tales of love and wonder with a playful twang and a melodic register hinting at Neil Young. Paul Lacques offers up sublime pedal steel and some blazing Fender picking, while veteran Brantley Kearns contributes expert fiddle play--the three combine for lush vocal harmonies throughout the recording, and drummer Anthony Lacques drops the percussive anchor in just the right spots. With a pedigree that includes venerable SF rock outfit The Magic of Television and mind-blowing L.A. cult fave Double Naught Spy Car, it's no surprise that this band of raptors is headed straight for the stratosphere." --Mark Follman, CitySearch (San Francisco) "I just completed my 4th listening to the disc, and I'm here to report that I love it! I knew the playing would be great, of course, but I'm quite smitten with the songwriting too. Great stuff! It has skill, authenticity, soul, irony, and an underlying sadness that I find incredibly compelling. Brilliant work." --Barry Smolin, host/producer, The Music Never Stops KPFK 90.7 FM, Los Angeles TOP TEN CDS OF 2001 LIST "stuff as good as i see hawks in l.a. ain't easy for me to write about . . . you know, I never did get that rock critic job at the Deaf Gazette...but anyway....turn the cell phone off...keep your eyes on the road...visit this classic monument of sound and poetry...forget the camera for they have taken the clearest pictures...its american in the best sense of that word...its also my favorite record of the year, if not the last 5 or 10." -- Stew, from TNP I SEE HAWKS IN L.A. ***1/2 (out of 5) "Band di Los Angeles all'esordio. Sonorit roots, belle voci, arrangiamenti intriganti ed una manciata di canzoni di indubbio valore. Una bella sorpresa, per continuare a scandagliare la scena roots alternativa." --Buscadero (Italy) "The twang of a lap guitar travels the length of a western canyon; closer by, a mandolin ornaments the campfire darkness. There is a gorgeous spaciousness to these new songs by I See Hawks in L.A., uncrowded by the usual meaningless pop clutter. In this new spaciousness the 'Hawks' fashion for themselves an unapologetically expressive and heartfelt songwriting style. Waller's voice carries the emotional power of Steve Earle -- but funnier, lighter, and more inventive." -- Oliver Broudy, editor, The Paris Review MP3s, band schedule, photos at: iseehawks.com CD available at Amoeba, Rockaway, Tower Sunset and at CD Baby and milesOfMusic.com

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