

Mp3 Thom Beckman - The Stray Dog Cafe



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Combining a taste for pop craft and classical acoustic, strong anthemic compositions lie side by side with more introspective moments, the two building up a soundscape to a familiar and friendly sonic place where the mind can wander. 13 MP3 Songs POP: Delicate, FOLK: Folk Pop Details: Acoustic records can be a surprise. Sometimes even a surprise to the artist. That is certainly the story with Thom Beckman's Stray Dog Cafe. Combining a taste for pop craft and classical acoustic can be a sticky proposition; but once in a while something like Stray Dog Cafe comes along and forces you to re-evaluate the state of acoustic music. Strong anthemic compositions lie side by side with more introspective moments, the two building up a soundscape to a familiar and friendly sonic place where the mind can wander like the passenger that counts mileposts along the side of the highway. As a song cycle, the tunes seem to naturally flow, like the fantasy soundtrack to your road trip from Tahoe to Salt Lake, taking breaks in the little places, where the locals have a story to tell. In listening to Stray Dog Cafe in this way, it all coheres into a seamless whole. Even Thom was surprised to discover that the compositions all belonged together, the journey of the composer taking shape musically in the moment. The songs on the album began humbly enough on a simple 4-track cassette. Initially, the tapes contained the atoms of songwriting slated to be part of something completely different; part of a project where Thom was the primary songwriter and intended for loud electric guitars. The songs had plans of their own, however, because a new batch were inspired by a favorite nylon-string guitar... that guitar is largely responsible for the direction of Stray Dog Cafe. Hiding out in The Torture Chamber studios, Thom was able to give the songs an opportunity to gel and take shape, layering on ideas and building textures. The limits of recording on 16-track analog and restricting himself to a small group of acoustic guitars helped to ensure that the songs stayed simple and elegant, but with some opportunities to stretch and find new sounds

with familiar instruments. Although there are no vocals, the songs are lyrical-- the stories hummed in the fret-buzz and intertwining melodies. Enjoy Stray Dog Cafe for what it is, a most pleasant and unexpected surprise, and a hell of a good acoustic album! -Tim Thomas

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