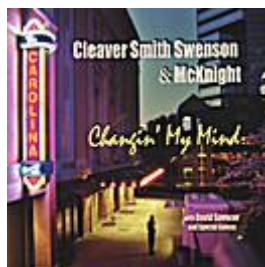


Mp3 Cleaver Smith Swenson & McKnight - Changin' My Mind



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This is a musical variety show on one CD ranging from Texas two-step to slow ballads to get-down, turn-around, go-to-town boogies. 16 MP3 Songs POP: Folkly Pop, FOLK: Folk Pop Details: Review by Ben McNeely - North Carolina Journalist The more that I listen to homegrown music, the more I like it. Living in an area that is replete with Bluegrass, Folk and Mountain Music, I have gained a appreciation for all things acoustic and three-part harmonies. Tuning into "A Prairie Home Companion" every week to hear Garrison Keillor's soft baritone and listening to the bands and acts that transport the listener back 60 or 70 years ago to the age of the radio variety show, it almost makes me wish that I had been born back then. With Cleaver, Smith, Swenson and McKnight's newest release, "Changin' My Mind," the boys and co. have offered a musical variety show on one CD. Ranging from Texas Two-Step to slow ballads to get-down, turn-around, go-to-town boogies, the group offers something for everyone. The first half of the album is mostly original works from the band. "Ridin' on Kansas!" gets the show started with a fast-paced, square-dance instrumental. Then "Summer Song" slows it down with its backwoods ballad tempo and storytelling. "Autumntime in Massachusetts" by the Triangle's traveling troubadour, David P. McKnight, is a favorite of mine. I had heard earlier versions of it and am glad to hear this with full instruments, complete with oboe and clarinet. Dave's soft falsetto, the clarinet, upright piano and bah-chink of the high hat gives this piece makes me want to get up, take a pretty girl in my arms and dance a jig right on the front porch. Dave may be singing about "that Pilgrim land," but this tune was born and bred in the heart of Carolina -- no doubt about it. And I love it. The band's treatment of Gershwin's "Blue Skies" made me smile the first time I heard it and it instantly gets stuck in your head. I don't think Georgie-Porgy could do any better with this. The same goes for "Summertime" which does live easy on this album. With the title

song "Changin' My Mind" the quad travels to the beach and into Marguritaville. Along with the originals on this CD, they all take a style and dash it with the flavor of the songwriter. McKnight's, naturally, take on a ramblin' attitude, while the others bring on a reminiscent feel. The other instrumental, "Last Call," is a classic interlude ala "Prairie Home" but it comes too early in the album. It really belongs at the end, after "Karen" and "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow" as a final treat to amble out of the auditorium to. This album is a treat and has something for everyone. The covers are masterfully done and bring something new to already-recognizable tunes. And the original works get the toe tapping and speak directly from the heart of the songwriter. This is a good album to have anywhere -- in the car with the top down, at the beach with a beer or sitting on the back porch, grilling steaks. All I know is that I can't wait to get up to New England now and then and share this with my Yankees friends. -- Ben McNeely Check out our first CD: "Back Home Again" cdbaby.com/cd/smithswenson

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