

# Mp3 Angry Johnny & The Killbillies - What's So Funny?



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Stereo review, october 1998 "what's so funny?" \*\*\*\* (4 out of 5 stars -- excellent) they're on the loose again. Set to thrashing guitars, saxophone, tuba, and banjo, this sonata for serial killers is far too well done to dismiss as novelty. 18 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Americana, ROCK: Americana Details: The Village Voice, January 1, 1999 The most rip-roarin,' butt-kickin,' combo yet to bust out of the so-called No Depression ranks. -- Holly George-Warren Entertainment Weekly, June 12, 1998 "What's So Funny?" (Grade B-) Unremitting three-chord stab-and-slash fests (some quite tuneful), written and sung by the guitarist/artist who painted the cover for Dinosaur Jr's Where You Been. Angry Johnny delivers the '90s equivalent of Dock Boggs' old Appalachian murder ballads. In 50 years, academics will ponder this stuff, drawing conclusions about the dark side of the American soul. Will Johnny snicker at their gullibility, or nod in assent? Only he knows. -- Tony Scherman Billboard, May 2, 1998 FLAG WAVING: "White trash music" is how Angry Johnny describes the sound he and his band, the Killbillies, make their sophomore Tar Hut Records album, "What's So Funny?," due May 5 through E-Squared/Alternative Distribution Alliance. The Easthampton, Mass. based trio, which also includes bassist Jim Joe Greedy and drummer Dwight Trash, plays a somewhat-befouled mash-up of punk rock and country music, with distinctive black-comedy lyrics sporting violent trailer-park scenarios. On several tracks, the band is augmented by guitarist Eric "Roscoe" Ambel and members of the local outfits The Lonesome Brothers and Steve Westfield The Slow Band, who bring a drunken Dixieland feel to some tracks. Imagine Shane MacGowan or Tom Waits playing the Hank Williams songbook, and you get the idea. Angry Johnny (who is listed in the Easthampton phone book under that name) explains that his band's style was bred by a strange confluence of influences. "I was listening to Black Sabbath, Alice Cooper and Edgar Winter, but I couldn't play that," he says. "Punk rock came along, and I could play that . . . I was raised on Tex Ritter and Marty

Robbins by my dad before that." The movies also had an impact on Angry Johnny's weird worldview: He cites such bizarre B-pictures as "Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry," "Vanishing Point" and "Race With the Devil" as favorites. You can hear echoes of these oddball road pictures in such seething Killbillies narratives as "High Noon in Killville" and "The Joneses." And let's not forget another prominent band icon: Massachusetts bank robber Michael O'Driscoll. "He's a Robin Hood [figure]," Angry Johnny says, 'He vowed he'd never be taken alive. Now he's doing 315 years in a federal pen.' Aside from his cracked country music, Angry Johnny gets some kicks as an artist. He has designed both of the band's album covers: Its 1996 debut, "Hankenstein," featured Williams as Frankenstein's creature, while "What's So Funny?" features a chilling portrait of killer clown John Wayne Gacy wielding a bloody ax. He also contributed artwork to a Dinosaur Jr. Set. "I must have painted a thousand fucking paintings,' he says. "I've had a couple of shows. The art world never really welcomed me with open arms." The Killbillies have developed a loyal local following but not a young one, Angry Johnny explains. "Kids don't seem to get this shit, and that's cool . . . our audience is old. They drink whiskey, and they buy me a lot of whiskey." In May, the Killbillies will play live dates in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Connecticut; the band has tentative dates in the South and Mid-west this summer and hopes to tour Texas in September. -- Chris Morris STEREO REVIEW, October 1998 "What's So Funny?" \*\*\*\* (4 out of 5 stars -- Excellent) They're on the loose again. Set to thrashing guitars, saxophone, tuba, and banjo, this sonata for serial killers is far too well done to dismiss as novelty. But it's Angry Johnny's punked-up vocals and obsessed songwriting that you'll really remember. Of course, after listening to this stuff, you'll want to drive a stake through the heart of anyone who ever looked at you cross-eyed. - Alanna Nash Originally released on Tar Hut records People who are interested in Tom Waits Neil Young Nick Cave should consider this download.

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