

Mp3 Blue Rodeo - Tremolo



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Canada's most popular roots rock band, Blue Rodeo became a veritable institution in their home country, although they never quite moved beyond cult status in the U.S. Their sound is a basic blend of country, folk, and rock, but with a definite pop appeal. 14 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Country Rock, ROCK: Americana Details: Having clocked countless miles in their decade-long career, through enough endless highways and stuffy studio sessions to fill an epic documentary, the songs of multi-platinum-selling artist Blue Rodeo have cut a wide path in Canada. But after such hit albums as Five Days In July and Nowhere To Here, the band found a way (as well as a need) to reinvent themselves, and their music. "For Tremolo, the band had no knowledge of the songs before we entered the studio," says songwriter-vocalist Jim Cuddy. "We just went in without a lot of rehearsal and cut a song a day. We get too caught up in ideas and conceptualizing when we think too much. Our instincts are pretty good. If we go with that, it will be something we'll all like. We did very little talking this time. Otherwise, we're six individuals with very different ideas about music. So we trusted our intuition. First thought, best thought." This off-the-cuff approach re-inspired the band and put them back on the road to surprise, to that space where Blue Rodeo excel. Recorded after a year off doing solo projects, Tremolo sparkles with intimate details that glimmer, glow and almost slip by unnoticed. Little, eclectic moments of musical finery like the string quartet solo in "Disappear," what sounds like a backwards guitar break in "It Could Happen To You," or the Nashville-meets-Pet Sounds wonder of Frog's Lullaby," where dreamy strings swoon over crying guitars and a choir of mating frogs. Other songs benefit from this intuitive approach in less obvious, but equally rewarding ways. After the darker paths of Nowhere To Here, Blue Rodeo found themselves ready for a lighter touch, while still blending the introspective with the outwardly sunny. From the opening front porch swing of "Moon and Tree," with its pedal steel quickstep, it's apparent that Blue Rodeo has found a new

groove to kick up the dust. "I Could Never Be That Man" is irresistibly upbeat and rolling, while "Falling Down Blue" tells a lover's tale with the kind of grace and beauty that practically leaves Blue Rodeo in a class all its own. With the band trading instruments to unusual effect, the song seems to float in space, timeless and lovely. In a similar vein, "Beautiful Blue" unfurls slowly like a morning fog wandering delicately over an echoing piano, while "Brother Andre's Heart," a surreal story of a preserved heart, bruised knees and a hallucination, shows that Blue Rodeo's sense of humour remains intact. "We've grown more confident in the whole process," says Greg Keelor. "We just went in the studio and began with no arrangements and the songs just kept piling up. We never had a chance to fuss with them. That was nice. This is a real band record, it's not dominated by singer-songwriters. We were more relaxed this time." While Webster's defines tremolo as "a tremulous effect produced by rapid reiteration of the same tone," the title seems to fit all the musical cracks and crevices Blue Rodeo create, those unmistakable flashes that appear when the band's collective unconscious takes over the proceedings. "Everything becomes metaphorically resonant," muses Cuddy. "Somebody said when we all wearing headphones, Tremolo, the breath of electricity.' That really is what records are like. Some songs are exhalations, some are like inhalations. We got mesmerized by the concept, that tremolo was a gathering principle for all the songs we were going to put on this album. It's also a word that most people outside the record industry have never heard of." Blue Rodeo songs exist in the weird slope between country and rock, with a healthy dose, at least conceptually, of psychedelia. Where other bands might drive a song on all fours with obvious signposts to bridge, verse and chorus, Blue Rodeo always finds a unique side-road to explore. "There is a certain frequency of introduction of new ideas in each song," says Cuddy. "That's pretty consistent on Tremolo. Unlike the last one, we're not trying to create a mood then move around a little within that mood. Now we're actually trying to change texture frequently. There was a great sense of energy in the room while we were recording." What with the new wave of country-folk-punkers gaining their own moniker, No Depression, Blue Rodeo's brand of country rough and tumble seems to fit the genre. Not quite. "We come from a more psychedelic pop background," explains Keelor. "The imprint of songs for us is related more to '60s pop than country music. We came to country after all that '60s music was already in our minds. We put banjo [not to mention Chamberlain and Mellotron] on so many songs for the feel, the groove. We're looking for textural changes from that past that are more pop and rock oriented." "We don't build a song then add on to it," says Cuddy, describing part of the band's unique

sound. "We let something happen then we put support underneath it. If somebody goes off on a solo tangent, it's easier to add support under that. That comes from having enough trust to follow each other." Twelve years down the road, with six best-selling albums under their belt (Outskirts, Diamond Mine, Casino, Lost Together, Five Days In July and Nowhere To Here), Blue Rodeo has tackled the challenge of reinvention, of disguising their familial faces, with unusual vigor and success. "We've come to a peaceful resolution," says Cuddy. "When you're a band for a long time you inevitably suffer from constantly giving your contribution over and then having it altered by the group, where it's rejected or changed. Eventually people get so pissed off. In the last year we've done our own thing, which was incredibly beneficial. Now we're getting our rocks off knowing that we make a singular sound. That's very satisfying." "We didn't get so obsessed with details this time," concludes Keelor. "We just played it to friends and made casual decisions. We've laboured so much in the past. You can get so nuts you don't have any idea of how it's going to sound six months from now. We were a lot more playful this time and the result is a lot more enjoyable." All songs; 1997 Blue Rodeo Productions PRODUCED BY: Blue Rodeo John Whynot RECORDED AT: Chemical Sound (Strings recorded at Reaction Studios) MIXING ASSISTANT: Peter Wonsiak MIXED AT: Mushroom Studios MASTERED BY: Greg Calbi at Masterdisk ADD. MUSICIANS: COLIN CRIPPS guitar on tracks 1 9; JOHN WHYNOT background vocals on tracks 1, 7 12/guitar on tracks 5 7; string section tracks 7, 9, 11 12: ADELE ARMIN violin; ARTUR JANSONS viola; MI HYON KIM violin; KENT TEEPLE viola; KIRK WORTHINGTON cello; strings arranged conducted by JOHN WHYNOT. BOOKING AGENTS: Canada: Kay White at Trick or Treat Agency (905) 831 9191; US: Jonathan Levine at Monterey Peninsula Artists (408) 375-4889 MANAGEMENT: Susan Gentile for Blue Rodeo Productions ART DIRECTION PHOTOGRAPHY: Rose Kallal DESIGN: Patrick Duffy All songs by Keelor/Cuddy, except 'No Miracle, No Dazzle' by KEELOR/CUDDY/McADOREY/CRIPPS All songs published by Thunderhawk Music (Socan), except 'No Miracle, No Dazzle' published by THUNDERHAWK MUSIC/ KLYDE PUBLISHING/ QUEEN OF CUPS (SOCAN). For correspondence and touring information write to us at: PO Box 185, Station C, Toronto, Ontario, M6J 3M9. Our love and thanks to: Barb McAdorey; Paula Amato; Kay Michael White; Jonathan Levine; Ruth Kearney; Mimi Mark; John Whynot; Love to Rena, Devin, Emma, Sam, Mom, Dad, Loftus, Janet, The Polleys and my Beautiful Blue Mates; Anne Bourne; Charlie Earl; Penny Lawson; Albert Milchem; Elizabeth Syrett; Lesley Earl; Kevin Welford-Costelloe; John Milchem; Bill Grove; Rich Brown;

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