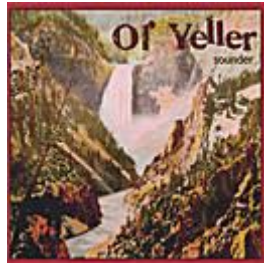


Mp3 Ol' Yeller - Sounder



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Roots Rock, Folk Rock, Americana, Classic Rock 14 MP3 Songs ROCK: Classic Rock, ROCK: Roots Rock Details: CD REVIEW . CITY PAGES VOL 25 #1239 . PUBLISHED 9/1/04 Ol' Yeller: Sounder by Peter S. Scholtes Ol' Yeller Sounder SMA Records Understanding Minnesota rock 'n' roll means wrapping your brain around the possibility that our finest singer could be found, on a Fourth of July weekend, in an Iron Range bar one block from the largest hockey stick in the world, covering Modern English's "I Melt with You." Rich Mattson isn't modern or English enough to deny a plastered mob its nostalgia. Nostalgia is one of his great subjects, after all, along with dreams of returning northward for good, chasing fireflies and raising chickens far from the reach of corporate capitalism. He's so unpretentious that when his great band the Glenrustles broke up, he lifted a new name out of a goofball pun on classic canine lit (Ol' Yeller as in "old guy who yells") and now does the same with the group's fourth album, Sounder (as in "emitter of sounds"). The guy's allegiance to the rural and the working class is so natural, he makes Fogerty look like a poseur. But Mattson's gentle voice isn't easy to write for, and he knows it. With more character than Stipe, less texture than Westerberg, his singing is transcendent among harmonies, as on the lush jangle of "Nightstand," an ode to believing in bands. The song sounds like Wilco's best Woody Guthrie rewrite, in part because Mattson has a new bassist, Greg McAloon, and guitarist, Andy Schultz--and Schultz can really sing. "I don't understand what you're talking about/But I know that the feeling is right," Mattson croons, and you realize he's reading your mind. Elsewhere, the craftsman in him avoids sacrificing the merely likable to worry about astonishing anyone. When his voice hits that perfect Blue yster Cult register, below which guitar lines can safely churn, it's a pleasant place to visit. He's rocking harder now, with a couple of cuts slipping in under the two-and-a-half-minute mark (the punky "13th Grade" and "Reward"--bonus nostalgia and anti-capitalism, respectively). Drummer Keely

Lane, always the Big Ben of thwack , comes to the fore of Mattson's production this time. But the highlights are quiet departures, like the strummy country of "Drawing Blanks," a blues for the inarticulate, which sounds like Valet's take on the Auteurs. More modern, more English, in other words: Can synthesizers be far behind?

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