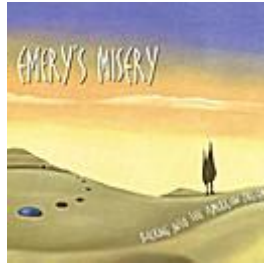


Mp3 Emery's Misery - Backing Into The American Dream



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Emery's Misery plays pop/rock that lives in the no-man's land between Steely Dan and Tom Petty. Think Sheryl Crow with testicles. Ick. On the other hand, don't. 13 MP3 Songs POP: Beatles-pop, ROCK: Classic Rock Details: Classic rock. Progressive pop. Jazzy rock. Funky blues. That's what Emery's Misery's sounds like. Well, kind of. Emery's Misery starts with a basic Beatles/Kinks/Dylan foundation and then throws all kinds of influences into the mix. So while the roots are in the 70s, the sound is 21st century. The band has a strong background in "progressive rock" (e.g. Pink Floyd, Rush, Yes, King Crimson, Steely Dan) and are experimental in their approach to music. But instead of expressing this with long free form jams ala Phish or the Grateful Dead, Emery's Misery channels their adventurous nature into shorter, more structured songs that are immediately accessible. Rather than displaying their musical chops for their own sake, Emery's Misery focuses on bringing the most out of their songs. So while the songs may adopt a conventional pop/rock format (think XTC, Tom Petty, Sheryl Crow), they are delivered with a strong punch and some surprising twists and undercurrents that keep them sounding fresh and interesting after repeated listens. Take this album, "Backing Into the American Dream". It starts out with a rollicking sea shanty, moves into a fast, jazzy number with Steely Dan overtones, then proceeds to a bluesy homage to Montana followed by a fast Joni Mitchell flavored tune called "Slow". And the rest of the album is similarly diverse. But with all the stylistic gyrations, Emery's Misery has a consistent and identifiable sound. Jonathan's warm, melodic voice has been compared to Al Stewart and the Housemartins. Mike's experimental bass work challenges the deceptively simple song structure and Dave's powerful drumming gives these songs a sonic wallop. The standout track here is "Looking For God." Some reviewers have come away calling them a "Christian Rock" band. Others have heard it and decided they are atheists. It has been called reverent and heretical. But given a careful listen, you'll hear

that the song is not trying to preach to you, but merely ponders how one God can be all things to all people...with a catchy hook and killer bass line to boot! And then listen to "Danger Island", which has been called the most appropriate song written about the 9/11 terrorist attacks yet was written and recorded months before they occurred. But before you go thinking that they are on some sort of heavy philosophical kick, check out "Warm" a tongue-in-cheek ode to a favorite body part. Listen to the song samples and you'll get an taste of some of the sonic flavors explored on Backing Into The American Dream. So who are these guys? Drummer Dave Craig recruited singer/guitarist/songwriter Jonathan Whitcomb and uber-bassist Mike Bates in 1998 and they immediately started forging their own sound. The recipe starts with Jonathan's melodic compositions that draw from many genres (punk to funk, folk to jazz), and stretch out with Mike's jazzy melodic and rhythmic counterpoints. Then Dave adds his rock steady driving undercurrent to keep everything rolling along. The result is a sound that is more than a sum of its parts. With lyrical subject matter ranging from the meaning of life to anatomical musings and the obligatory girls and cars anthem, Emery's Misery's sound is compellingly eclectic yet surprisingly coherent. And it's catchy as hell. So no, you can't capture Emery's Misery in a sentence. But if you like music that is smart, melodic, whimsical and a bit unconventional, give Emery's Misery a listen! Be sure to visit Emery's Misery's web site e-misery(click on the link in the column to the left) to check out their 2004 album "Dancing With The Adulteress". It picks up where this album leaves off and explores new territory as well.

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