

Mp3 Stephen Cohen - Stephen And The Talk Talk Band



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creative accoustic music using guitar,voice, sculptural percussion instruments, lap steel guitar, mandolin, bouzouki, accordion and jazz drums 13 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, NEW AGE: Ambient Details: Technically speaking, "Outsider Art" is art produced by the unschooled and or insane. Technically speaking, Stephen Cohen is neither. The apparently sane Portland-based performing artist, composer, visual artist and songwriter uses acoustic guitar, voice, original sculptural percussion instruments made from metals, woods, recycled and found materials to create records of quiet beauty. Cohen officially studied trombone and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Art from the University of Oregon. Still, the formal definition of Outsider Art is often stretched to include such as Stephen, and there is no doubt that his music shares many of the intriguing traits of the genre: a child-like aura, a hand-made quality, and unfiltered directness. "It's My Story" begins with a spoken voice introducing a, well, story, over a haunting acoustic guitar figure. Cohen's own voice comes in over the storyteller's, singing, "It's my story, it's my story, you can take it, please don't leave it." Mandolin, bouzouki, drums, and lap steel are added; different voices enter telling fragments of other stories with Stephen singing the refrain over them. The total effect is one of the most emotionally affecting recordings I have experienced in a long time. Cohen's singing voice recalls Randy Newman and John Martyn without sounding quite like either. His guitar playing channels the simpler elements of Ry Cooder and Cooder-influences Lightnin' Hopkins and Joseph Spence. Taken together in a tune like "It's My Story," it adds up to a definitive depiction of the desperate human need to communicate. It is art devoid of pretension. More sound sculptures than songs, the tunes on this CD share qualities with Cohen's actual sculptures of percussion instruments and guitars, to wit: warmth, whimsy, and an unexpected depth. A narrator talks about surviving a slide down a mountain in an avalanche and it evolves into--what else--a slide guitar piece. Other pieces revolve around talk, war,

politics, love, and children. Stephen has done weekly music groups with severely disturbed children, and the combination of love, patience, and deep caring that must be required for such an undertaking infuses his music. We live in an age where everyone can make a CD, and nearly everyone does. Just when I despair about the landfill this produces, I discover a CD like Stephen The Talk Talk Band. This work likely wouldn't have been produced in an era of record company gatekeepers. And in the pre-internet/website days, I probably wouldn't have found it even if it had appeared somewhere on vinyl. I have done my best to describe it but you need to experience it. You will either "get it" or you won't. If you do, you will be the richer for it. -Michael Ross, Puremusic(from puremusic.com/60cohen.html)

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