

Mp3 Hillbilly Winos - Live From The Living Room



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An alternative country/blues band featuring edgy songs with a lot of heartfelt playing. "Tuneful and lyrically intriguing, Hams songs compare favorably to Steve Earle and Uncle Tupelo." Kevin McKeough, Chicago Tribune 14 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Country Folk, COUNTRY: Country Blues Details: Hillbilly Winos are an alternative country band featuring edgy songs with a lot of heartfelt playing. Acoustic instruments including Guitar, Dobro, Violin, Mandolin, squeeze box, harmonica and percussion. "Tuneful and lyrically intriguing, Hams songs compare favorably to Steve Earle and Uncle Tupelo." Kevin McKeough, Chicago Tribune AltCountryTabReview (Great Britain) Review by: Doug Floyd "The Hillbilly Wino's are a three piece made up of Jeff Ham, Matt Teolis and Kent Arnsbarger who are supplemented by 'Honorary wino's: Steve Doyle on dobro, Jim Teolis on upright bass and Ludmilla Ludkovsky on violin. They have been around for three years or so, touring mainly in the Chicago and Northern Indiana area. Essentially the conduit for the writing of Ham, this is a great record with which to establish the credentials of a new band. The Wino's combine country rock and folk in a manner rather reminiscent of John Mellencamp's "Scarecrow" and "Lonesome Jubilee" period albums, with particular accent on the twang as well as a number of examples of stunningly delicate and honest song writing. Though you would never believe it from the excellent production, this album was recorded (as the title states) live in the living room of Jeff Ham on a Roland digital hard disk recorder. The sound of this album hits you pretty straight between the ears, there is a wasted back-road country feel with sparse use of slide dobro and occasional fiddle bringing just the right tone of lonesomeness to the dealings. With attention paid to melody and pace, every song nuzzles into the memory banks like a faithful old hound after just one or two listens. A similarity to fellow Indiana songwriter Mellencamp cannot be ignored but there is also a taste of Steve Earle there too, especially with the presence of "John Dillinger" a story song very much in the Earle

mould. The set starts up with a fairly pedestrian "Asphalt Skin" a pleasant enough tune, but maybe not dynamic enough for the entry level song, but "The Grind" more than makes up for it. A startlingly bleak contemplative narration of the being stuck in a rut (boy do I know that feeling) and what a man would do to get out of the daily grind of the title. "Spirit dance" assumes a ragtag country blues air, with dobro and guitar duelling it out at the end, but in an ever so laid back manner. Songs like "This House", "Rochelle", "Second Best" and "Fire and Ice" vie for the best ballad honour, featuring some warm and tender lyrics: "Sky bleeds the sun and the moon shows her face She lets down her hair and the stars fall in place" ..and some gracefully gentle accompaniment holding the songs up to just the right amount of light. There are three well chosen covers on the album alongside the eleven originals, Tom Waits' "Drunk on the Moon", which maintains the essence of the original while stamping a carefully considered freshness upon it, Fred Eaglesmith's "105 Water in the Fuel" and a very satisfying reworking of Townes van Zandt's legendary "Poncho Lefty". This album will stay on constant rotation in this house for months, it is as honest and simple as you could care to hear, the band has obviously spent some time honing these songs into such fine form. "Fire and Ice" is probably the best of the set in that it exemplifies what makes a great song work - pure and simple is often what is best and this one is so fragile that you fear it may just break. Well worth checking out if you like your music on the dusty desert-road side of alt.country." - Doug Floyd

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