

Mp3 Chris Whitley - War Crime Blues



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A sense of hope and beauty resonates in Whitley's vital, very human musicality. 11 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Blues, ROCK: Folk Rock Details: An anti-war protest album may seem like a quaint, hippie notion to some. Yet the title of guitarist Chris Whitley's War Crime Blues now seems sadly prescient -- just as its driving emotions of frustration and anger, sorrow and pity, threaten to feel like fresh wounds for the foreseeable future. On the eve of his spring U.S. tour, the Texas-born, New York-bred Whitley recorded these starkly poetic, from-the-hip solo performances in a studio near his expatriate home in Dresden, Germany, as well as in a Paris hotel room and in a park, birdsong and all. The mix of apposite covers and potent originals may carry a cautionary message of "Life is short (and then you die)." But for all the raw feelings channeled into these songs, not a single verse is stridently "political" or superficially nihilistic. A sense of hope and beauty resonates in Whitley's vital, very human musicality. Although he is armed here with the traditional Delta tools of nicotine-stained voice, keening National Steel guitar and rhythmic boot, Whitley's concern is the living spirit rather than the dead letter of the blues. He remakes "The Call-Up" by the Clash, a moving solicitation of dissent directed at the young always sacrificed in military misadventures. His gritty take on Lou Reed's "I Can't Stand It" evokes the feelings of civilization unraveling that are common to anyone who watches too much CNN. As their titles indicate, Whitley's own "Made From Dirt," "War Crime Blues," "Ghost Dance" and "God Left Town" are haunted, haunting cries of sympathy and antipathy by turns. Perhaps most powerful is the closing track, an a cappella version of the old pop/jazz standard "Nature Boy." The famous closing lines have never sounded more desperately, elusively true than here, with Whitley sounding like a fallen angel offering hard-won wisdom: "The greatest thing you'll ever learn/Is just to love and be loved in return." People who are interested in should consider this download.

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