

Mp3 R.c. Banks - Conway's Corner



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This internationally critically acclaimed CD is a raw and rootsy musical exploration by a pioneer of Texas music. 13 MP3 Songs BLUES: Texas Style, ROCK: Americana Details: If experience is indeed the best teacher, then R.C. Banks has earned a Ph.D. in real American music. From the time he hit his first stage with his accordion at the age of six in his native Lubbock, TX, Banks has cut a swath across the Southwest in a succession of bands playing a kaleidoscope of styles, often at the same time. Along the way, he has worked with such folks as former Small Face Ronnie Lane, a then 14-year-old Charlie Sexton and Austin legend Harvey "Tex" Thomas. His songs have been recorded by Lane, Joe Ely - both on his own and in an as-yet unreleased duet with Linda Ronstadt - Charlie and Will Sexton, "Long Black Veil" co-writer Mary Welch and Texas country-folk thrush Kimmie Rhodes. Yet he has remained one of the largely undiscovered treasures on the lively Austin and Texas roots music scenes until now, with the release of Conway's Corner on Loudhouse Records. The disc has already been declared "one of the best albums I've heard this year," by Australian critic and deejay Eric Black, who notes how "every track on this album is an absolute gem." Likewise, Banks' hometown weekly, the Austin Chronicle, named Conway's Corner the #1 Texas Album of the Year, while critics have been running to the kitchen to cook up superlatives to describe its multi-stylistic, soulful musical stew and encapsulate the richness and heart that pervade the disc. Austin American-Statesman critic Michael Corcoran likens Conway's Corner to a pot roast "that's sizzling with all sorts of chopped up ingredients like carrots, kale, onions, bell peppers and celery, plus a few bones of mysterious origin for a flavorful twist." He declares the tasty platter "one of the most invigorating CDs to pull up a chair and twist one off in a long time." Similarly, Rockzillaworld warns diners, "It isn't Lean Cuisine, friends, it is a smorgasbord of pickled pigs feet and hard boiled eggs, of collard greens, black-eyed peas, blood sausage and Tabasco sauceS. [I]f you're ready for a

down-home, poor-folks Southern musical banquet, dig in." Or in other words, Conway's Corner is a delicious musical repast that is ruggedly nutritious if also a bit dangerous - as the best genuine American roots music should be. It's rocking roadhouse Southwestern soul that is "a no-frills celebration of the good times, hard knocks and broken hearts of a Texas Saturday night," says the Austin Chronicle. And if anyone knows the ingredients for a musical stew that transforms Saturday evening into the night of your life, it's R.C. Banks. After all, he's been doing just that for nearly four decades. Starting out with accordion lessons and performances at age six, teed off on his parents' affection for Lawrence Welk and the Ray Coniff Singers, Banks also lived and heard the music from the other side of life during his summers working as a cowboy on his grandfather's ranch outside Clovis, NM. Then, on the radio, he heard Elvis for the first time, followed soon after by Ray Charles, which was a major revelation. "I knew he had something I wanted and that I wanted to be part of," says Banks. In junior high in Lubbock, he began playing baritone sax in school bands while also borrowing a guitar and amp from a friend down the street to start his first rock'n'roll group. Banks took up trumpet in the show band he played in during his college years at Texas Tech while digging on blues acts like Memphis Slim and the Butterfield Blues Band. His group Street Theater landed in Los Angeles for a stint, and later Banks played Louisiana music with some expatriate Cajuns in the Colorado Rockies before moving to Austin. Once there, Banks embraced the eclectic roots music styles that Austin music is known for. Throughout the 1970s, he played in such reliable club acts as Showdown, The River City Rockets, The Blue Beats and The Texas Shieks at such seminal Austin music joints as The One Knite, The Rome Inn, Soap Creek Saloon and the original Antone's nightclub on Austin's Sixth St. At the dawn of the 1980s, Banks hooked up with singer and songwriter Harvey "Tex" Thomas to form The Danglin' Wranglers. The band's renegade country Sunday night shows at Hut's Hamburgers are legendary as some of the finest nights of music ever in that very musical city. He followed that with a stint in the Groovemasters, which introduced a teenaged Charlie Sexton to the Austin scene, and playing with his pal and Loudhouse Records labelmate, accordionist Ponty Bones, in The Squeezetones. Banks then took his own accordion back up to form Zydeco Ranch and explore his love of Louisiana music while also playing with famed British rocker Ronnie Lane, who had relocated to Austin. Along the way Banks started releasing records of his own as well as waxing three albums with Zydeco Ranch. The sum of all this considerable journeyman experience has imbued Banks with a musically rich palette that makes him "about as close as anyone in the state to what a space

alien would call a Texas musician," notes Jim Beal, Jr. on the San Antonio Express-News. With Conway's Corner, Banks' fourth album, rapidly winning international acclaim, one of the best kept secrets in the Lone Star State is now being recognized an avatar of genuine Texas music. As Michael Corcoran urges in the Austin American-Statesman, "Do Banks a favor. No, do yourself a favor and buy this."

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