

Mp3 Jack Erdie - Pumpkin



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Modern Folk, Acoustic Blues, Angry, Political, Gentle, Humorous 15 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, BLUES: Acoustic Blues Details: Jack Erdie revisits his Pentecostal past on 'Pumpkin' Pittsburgh Post-Gazette By John Hayes, Post-Gazette Staff Writer Hands are clapping inside a rural West Virginia church house. The Pentecostal brethren bear witness as the pastor lays on the fire and brimstone, admonishing them to stand up, rise up, leap up and be saved. But one member of the flock is still sitting. The young boy cranes his head back and covers his face, blood spontaneously hemorrhaging from his nose. It's not the first time the pastor's fiery sermon has drawn his blood. Scowling, a lay sister leads him dripping to the basement, throws a damp cloth over his face, lays hands on his head and prays. He's a "demon seed," she tells him, "oppressed by the devil." Twenty years later, still sore from childhood memories of blood, guilt and humiliation, Jack Erdie stands at a different kind of pulpit bearing musical witness to his past sins for a congregation of folk fans. His secular story songs ebb and flow with the cadence of a Bible-thumping sermon; his political, social or intensely personal messages bristle with a passion that doesn't quite draw blood. A fixture at Pittsburgh's open mikes and singer-songwriter stages, Erdie revisits his Pentecostal past and a host of vices on his contemplative second independent album, "Pumpkin." He hosts a CD release party Friday at the Rex. For most of the past decade, Erdie has kept busy on the fringes of Pittsburgh's entertainment scene. Co-founder of the New Teeth Productions theater troupe, he collaborated on shows that drew critical praise. A writer and singer of traditional-style folk songs, he's part of a songwriter's group sponsored by Calliope: The Pittsburgh Folk Music Society, has showcased his songs at the roving Acoustic Challenge, and has co-hosted the open stage at Bloomfield Bridge Tavern and the Threepenny Opry song circle at the Starlite Lounge. Remnants of his theater background surface in his powerful voice, nuanced delivery and compelling stage sense. Remnants of his

rural childhood surface in his songs. "I believed when I was younger that I was called to be a minister," says Erdie. "Now, while I no longer believe in certain tenets of the Gospel, I still believe I'm meant to be a conduit and I'm still working at the vulgar end of it. ... There's a catharsis in music and I'm trying to touch it; I'm trying to get there but I'm not there yet." Most of Erdie's songs are rooted in real-life experiences and woven into a lattice of traditionally based musical structures. "Can't Get There From Here," which has seen some airplay at WYEP, swings to the country side. "I'm Sorry Jesus" mixes memories of his childhood blood-spurting with some soul-searching and comic relief. "Pumpkin With a Face" is a tragic rural novella, and "Let Their Heads Roll" pontificates with a partly political, partly anti-authoritarian edge. Erdie's fondness for American roots music is rooted in the traditions he found in a Sons of the Pioneers album that he rented from a West Virginia public library. Ordinarily a solo artist, he invited the musicians who helped him record "Pumpkin" to join him at the release: Art Gazdik, Stacy Mates, Andrea Scheve, Doug Wilkin, who produced the album, and Mark Perna, underwriter of both of Erdie's CDs.

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