

Mp3 Ryan Lee & The Mindless - There Is No Music



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A smart, heart-on-sleeve sound that blends the naked emotionalism and melodies of Nick Drake with the bold invention of John Frusciante, occasional Radiohead-influenced sonic tweaks, and, oddly, Exile-era Stones. That's some good shit, and so's the group. 9 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Pop, POP: Beatles-pop

Details: Honesty can be ferocious. Shocking, really, in our culture of perpetual hype, viral marketing and endless spin. That's why a pure openhearted statement like Ryan Lee Crosby's debut *There is no Music* has the power of a silent canon blast. The young singer-songwriter with a warm, natural voice and extensive sonic guitar vocabulary doesn't want to sell you on anything -- not an image, not a stylized musical approach, not manufactured cool. Crosby's gentle singing and beautiful melodies, coupled with his perceptive and often highly personal lyrics, are an immediate notice that the music business machine doesn't have its cogs buried in his heart. If anything Crosby's message is to believe -- in ourselves, in the power and strength of the human spirit, and in music's capacity for healing and joy -- even if that requires bucking all the odds. Nonetheless, *There is no Music*, with Crosby's inviting songs and exceptional emotional and sonic command, is the work of a major artist in the making as well as a person of depth. "I am preoccupied with truth," Crosby says, without the slightest hint of pretension. "I want to find what's true in the world and let that guide my work. I believe that if you are open with your creativity and the way that people react to each other, then you're going to end up in a special place where humanity comes out in song, because basically our inner lives are all the same. It's easy to forget that when you're one of millions of musicians trying to reach people through the internet and when your performances are used by clubs to generate alcohol sales, but if you can get through all that and stay open to really tell the truth about yourself, then your truth will speak to other people's truth too." *There is no Music*, which won Crosby a nomination for Best Singer/Songwriter in the prestigious 2006 Boston Phoenix/WFNX Radio

Best Music Poll, sparks such little epiphanies. They ignite from the soft patter of acoustic guitar that's the album's backbone, and in the wild electric excursions of Crosby's lead guitar. The band's musicianship pivots on an axis of influences that includes Galaxie 500, REM, Neil Young, and John Frusciante, while Crosby's lyrics read like pages torn from Charles Bukowski, Raymond Carver and Henry Miller. Under these influences, the album is a trip through the highs and lows in Crosby's own heart and mind that becomes something broader in the narration. Crosby's autobiographical tales of quiet struggle amount to a larger investigation of what it means to be human -- to feel pain, confusion, need, delight and hope at fever pitches, as peaks in the valleys of routine that make up our daily lives. "A lot of the songs on There is no Music come from my experiences of 2003 and 2004, which was a very dark period. I was in and out of hospitals and bars and sleeping wherever I could find a roof over my head," Crosby explains. These memories form the foundation of his vocal style. When he applies a sweet, slightly strained and quivering whisper to the lyrics "late last year I nearly died/it was the second time I tried" in "Belief in Me and You," the approach is earned, not artifice. Crosby began writing these songs after besting an addiction to tranquilizers that was compounded by habitual drinking. He was also in an estranged relationship with his father that was complicated further by guilt when the elder Crosby contracted cancer. Add to that the fall-out from the break-up of his previous band, Cancer to the Stars, which had lived in the territory between trip-hop, punk and sleek modern Anglo pop. "It got to the point where I wanted to make a clean break with my musical past and with other aspects of my life," Crosby recounts. As he focused on redirecting his creativity, he began playing in several other bands on the Boston music scene. In January 2005 he created Ryan Lee the Mindless with There is no Music's producer, Daniel Daskivich. Crosby says, "After I stopped abusing tranquilizers and anti-psychotic medication, I began to feel the need to communicate, which developed into a rabid interest in popular music. I was obsessed with its potential for connecting people, and this idea was something that Daniel and I bonded over. He has an innate pop sensibility and a strong ear for arrangements and instrumentation. He's also a talented producer and intensely goal-oriented. Daniel's knowledge and work ethic are the foundation of the band and the album." After the album's completion, Crosby assembled his backing band the Mindless and started touring regionally. His brother Adam Crosby recently signed on as drummer, rendering the experience of playing these songs all the more emotionally cathartic in a live setting. "Adam's had his own struggles with hard drug addiction and isolation, which has really given him the ability to understand where these

songs come from. His joining the group has enabled us to come together as brothers and people, which makes us all that much closer to the music. These songs were written out of a desire for love and contact, so to be able to share that experience with my brother after so much time apart has been truly beautiful, almost like feeling the presence of God. It's the beginning of a whole new story."

***** "Crosby's autobiographical tales of quiet struggle amount to a broader investigation of what it means to be human -- to feel pain, confusion, need, and maybe even satisfaction at fever pitches, as peaks in the valleys of routine that make up our daily lives. And Crosby's directness and devotion to melody make it all easy to absorb, even if you've never chased a Darvon with a gin-and-tonic." - Ted Drozdowski, Boston Phoenix "As a performer, Ryan Lee Crosby is anything but your earnest, run-of-the-mill guy with a guitar. Crosby has turned his story, once sad and seemingly doomed, into a tale of redemption and freedom found through music. His voice, haunting and lithe, is at the forefront with threadbare honesty."- James Reed, Boston Globe "Boston's Ryan Lee Crosby spins personal hardship into songwriting gold." - Doug Wallen, Philadelphia Weekly

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