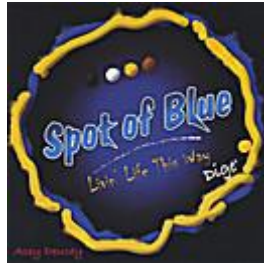


Mp3 Spot Of Blue - Livin' Life This Way



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Texas' Best Kept Secret 11 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Modern Country, POP: Today's Top 40 Details: EAR CANDY Music Reviews: FEBRUARY 2006 Gary Hankins Spot of Blue, "Livin' Life This Way" (Indie Release) A great mix roadhouse country blues and ballads that don't swing to the slick pop-trendy country that permeates most country radio airwaves today. There is a twist of rockabilly and Appalachian bluegrass to give this the album a unique sound. "Just a Cowboy" starts out like a country version of the Beatles "Blackbird" giving a very interesting song. At times Gary Hankins has an Elvis Presley voice, especially on the slower songs. A great alternative to today's average country and special kudos to the excellent guitar playing. spotofblue Rating: Review by Scott H. Platt KWEEVAK Music Magazine SPOT OF BLUE LIVIN' LIFE THIS WAY: Spot of Blue is founder Gary Hankins and a band of diverse, talented players. Gary is a singer/songwriter and rhythm guitar player. Hankins grew up in a musical family and has lived and worked in various parts of the United States. Gary pens poetic, real songs about America, life and travel. His music has a down-home flavor that blends a country base with assorted genres. Livin' Life This Way is Spot of Blue's impressive debut release. It features eleven earthy yet well-arranged songs that are light yet layered and serious. The CD explores a range of moods and "Hankins' vocals can capture the weary cynicism of Johnny Cash or the soft optimism of Jim Croce." 'Acec Deucey' is the playful opening track with cutting guitar chords and breaks flowing over a snappy rhythm. Hankins' vocals on the first song flip from gruff to smooth. The title track has a slow almost jazzy feel as Gary softly sings about the state of people and the planet. A subtle violin and backing vocalists also adds to the rich, reflective nature of the song. 'Amber' is a colorful tune that explores a full spectrum in under four minutes. Gary Hankins is an imaginative artist and Spot of Blue hits the spot! Recommended Tracks: (1,6,7) [USA/TX 2005 - web] (2006 Review by Laura Turner Lynch for Kweevak.com) SMOTHER.NET Music

Reviews of World Music, Adult Contemporary, Reggae, Jazz, Blues, Classical Dec.2005 The windy plains of Texas is the home of Spot of Blue. The main songwriter for the band is Gary Hankins and his guitar play swaggers between blues rock, countrified rock-n-roll, and roots rock. His unconventional voice reminds one of a smart blend of Johnny Cash and Elvis Presley. Spot of Blue could easily rock a juke joint or any bar east and west of the Mississippi. Good tight songwriting with an emphasis on rockin. -

J-Sin ARTIST BIOGRAPHY-SPOT OF BLUE Gary Hankins got the nickname 'Dige,' (short for digit), from his great grandfather, a Spanish orphan who was one of the first policemen in San Diego California. Five generations later, Dige has taken his nickname to the corners of the country before finally landing in Wichita Falls Texas, the home base from which he has launched his first album, Spot of Blue, a collection of songs that, like their creator, are made from the richness and variety of the world. Hankins was born in Wichita Falls Texas where his father spent forty years playing with a country western band. Everyone in Hankins' family was musical. He remembers sitting with his family while his father, mother, and uncle would sing country ballads set against the storied Texas landscape. Hankins moved to San Diego when he was still a baby and grew up near the sea, where his grandfather, a Portuguese fisherman, was still working on a tuna fleet near the bay. Hankins moved back and forth from Texas to California for the next few decades absorbing on one side, the country winds of the Texas grass land and on the other, the salt air and ocean culture of San Diego. On the coast, Hankins learned to love surfing, the freedom of the rolling sea and the musical independence of the ocean wind. Surfing his way from Mexico up the coast, Hankins visited and eventually moved to Hawaii where he spent several years surfing among the paradise shores. As if carried by the waves he eventually crossed the ocean again and, (by land) moved around the west living in Los Angeles, San Diego, and Las Vegas. Hankins' employment history has been as varied as his address: he designed web pages in Hawaii, worked at the family store in Texas, and in California he became an actor being featured in dozens of commercials and bit parts. Acting, chance, and romance carried him across the ocean again to the Czech Republic where he acted in a cult film and toured Europe, falling in love with the landscape of Prague and Paris. In Las Vegas, Hankins encountered the underside of humanity, working for a mortgage company he saw men drive into town in Bentleys and leave by bus. Eventually, while still living in California, a series of events would irreversibly change the direction of Hankins' life. It started with the tragic death of an old friend and the news that his father was growing ill. The musical blood in Hankins' veins was already stirring when he moved back to Texas to be

near his father. Back in Wichita Falls, Hankins found himself inspired. Everywhere he looked, musical ideas filled his mind. A pasture of grazing cows, the wind flowing through the windows in his father's house. Although Hankins had always played and sang music, something in his life had snapped, and he knew that there was something inside him that needed to come out. Over the next year, Hankins began to write prolifically. The events, scenery, loves, and tragedies of his life were cohering into a new persona, a musical voice that Hankins began to nurture. Hankins located a studio in the area and began recording his music. At first he was recording solo pieces and multitracking his instruments until he met Tommy Nash, a brilliant guitarist who heard and loved Hankins' unique compositions. Working together, Hankins and Nash began to rework the music, adding complexity and flavor to the milieu. One thing led to another and the two moved to a new studio where they befriended other musicians and piece by piece Spot of Blue came together. With a growing list of talented musicians, Hankins' music has reached new levels. His own varied history blended with the inspired performances of his band mates creates an inspired sound, something that mixes a palette of the American landscape and harnesses it into a beautiful and unique composition. Spot of Blue contains the freedom of the sea, the open air of Texas, the delicate colors of Hawaii, and the music is unlike anything else. Sometimes the music is haunting, other times forceful and laden with the triumphs and failures of a rich life. Hankins' vocals can capture the weary cynicism of Johnny Cash or the soft optimism of Jim Croce. Spot of Blue's debut "Livin' Life This Way," is sure to capture fans from across the musical spectrum. With his first album recorded, Hankins believes he has found a calling worth the time. He already has another album planned for the beginning of next year and new songs continue to emerge in his consciousness, waiting to receive life from his band. "It's all about visualization," he says. "I want people to hear the music and create their own visualization, their own ideas about it." Hankins' music is full of imagination and it is not hard to imagine that while listening, we might be drawn into the curving spray of the California coast or thrust into the shadows of a lonely foothill. Spot of Blue has the power and honesty to inspire, but the rest is up to you. DEBUT ALBUM FROM SPOT OF BLUE: LIVIN' LIFE THIS WAY Spot of Blue may have originated in the windy plains of Texas, but the sound is more difficult to place. Gary Hankins,' the songwriter and guitar player for Spot of Blue, takes his inspiration from a life spent traveling the world and sampling the rich diversity of American culture. His music defies conventional labels being derived from, but not indicative of, a wide variety of styles. Spot of Blue must be experienced to be understood. "Livin' Life This Way" is the debut album for

Hankins and Spot of Blue. Hankins' lyrics are thoughtful meditations, delivered with all the attitude of Elvis and the poignant emotion of Jim Croce. His guitar rolls like a Texas tumbleweed across his stories, portraying the artist as a part of his surroundings. Accompanying Hankins for Spot of Blue is the brilliant Tommy Nash on lead guitar. Nash makes his guitar howl like a coyote on "Just a Cowboy," and sways with the sounds of the surf in "Amber." Rolling bass lines are provided by Aden Bubeck, a veteran of electric and stand-up bass who understands the subtleties of his work and hums perfectly with Nash's guitar and Hankins' lyrics. Two drummers, Jordan Richardson and Joey Carter, lent their talents to Hankins' songs, providing rhythm for his countryesque ballads and ambience for his more emotional torch songs. In addition to the main body, Hankins is also fortunate to have the assistance Douglas Edwards who plays haunting strings on "It Calls Your Name," and adds subtle string accompaniment to several other songs. For his empathic plea, "Spot of Blue," Hankins' breathy voice is joined by the nearly spiritual tones of his backup singers; Ace Crayton, Katelyn Patterson, and Julie Temple. Each song on *Livin' Life This Way* is taken from a moment of personal resonance within Hankins' life. "When They Arrange the Flowers," talks about the floral arranger, designing bouquets for Valentines Day or for a funeral, detached from the hopes of the person who gets the flowers. "It Calls Your Name," is an ode to the sound of the wind as it flows through the windows of his father's house. "I might see cows out in the field," Says Hankins, "and I would write a song about it, but relate it to people's lives." Hankins' life with his many unusual experiences gives him the foundation for his songs but the final sound is the combination of Hankins' inspiration and the personal, emotional contribution of his band. "Everyone in the band puts a part of themselves into the songs." He says. Spot of Blue has a sound that seems to follow the mind of its creator: some songs bounce with a joyful rhythm while others tug at the emotions of the listener drawing them into a lonely embrace or the melancholy shine of a tear drop. Hankins talks about love, death, and life with a wisdom and empathy that comes from his experience. "It just comes from within." He says. "I will hear something or see something and I create the story in my mind." Hankins is a storyteller and with Spot of Blue, people are finally beginning to hear his story. As "*Livin' Life This Way*" is released, Hankins and his band will attract those who relate to his lonely lyrics and those who hear the drama of cult cinema in the band's more haunting compositions and the optimism of the California sun in their more flamboyant songs. Throughout, Hankins' lyrics seem to carry an upbeat message about love and togetherness that gives the entire album, even the darker tunes, a vaguely comforting resonance. Hankins' message is

consistently one of love, as he says in Spot of Blue: "Cant we all just live together. take this world. and make it better."

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