

Americana UK review July 24th 2008

Rory Ellis "Two Feathers" (Villainous Records 2008)



Excellent album that deserves attention from Australian singer/songwriter.

This is the fourth album from Melbourne based Ellis who ploughs a furrow between the fields of folk and blues helped by a distinctive baritone and a gift for an arrangement within which to frame his narrative lyricism.

There are fiddles, banjos, guitars and even the trusty Hammond here. Songs about compulsory unpaid overtime 'Work', race riots in Sydney 'Suburban Soldier', a hint of self pity 'Rollin On' with its wonderful steel guitar, the shattering of innocence and the lack of excuses for war 'No Love in this War' and the beautifully fragile title track that examines childhood and its dreams with the gorgeous refrain 'with two feathers in my fingers I thought that I could fly'.

The quality occasionally dips as the tunes fail to live up to the sentiments; the aforementioned 'Suburban Soldier' is meant to be a harsh marching beat and ends up sounding like a dirge but this is an occasional fault. Even a highly sentimental song to his daughter 'Little One' remains just the right side of the tracks thanks to some exquisite playing and backing vocals.

This is a long album but Rory Ellis puts few steps wrong. The production is sympathetic and energetic. All instruments get their own space to breathe and the spaces around them add to the mix; subtle splashes of colour such as the horns in 'Take Me Away' have an almost Rubinesque feels about them which is high praise indeed. Some times an artist shoots himself in the foot by self producing – not the case here. Beautifully packaged too!!

Date review added: Thursday, July 24, 2008

Reviewer: keith lovejoy

Reviewers Rating: 7 out of 10

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