

Review by Freddy Celis 'Rootstime' Belgium July 2008

English translation (from Dutch) by Marijke Bruinsma

See link at bottom to read actual interview online (in Dutch)

'It's being said: John Harley Weston's voice is a cross between Neil Diamond, Paul Carrack and Paul Rodgers and his music comes close to Bruce Springsteen and John Cougar Mellencamp. Fair is fair - the comparison is very close, we hear them coming back as we listen to the CD 'Welcome Back To Reality' from Scotland migrated Australian. The first song: 'Whatever Makes You Happy' combines a lot of the above mentioned famous gentlemen, the voice of Neil Diamond, the sound of Springsteen and the swinging handclaps, Cajun accordion we often find in Mellencamp's songs.

This 10 track album was created on acoustic guitar and later studio recorded with adding more instruments nearly all played by the singer-songwriter himself. Though his vocal ability also gets your attention. His voice is strong and the broad range seems to come with ease and sounds majestic similar of Neil Diamond's sometimes bombastic songs.

Its been since 2004 that we first heard about this artist and his album 'Hope Harbour' with the combination of rock songs, influences of blues, country and roots music. The same combination is evident with his latest album although the songs are stronger compared to his previous album.

'Believe In Yourself' and 'I'll Never Leave You Lonely' have a strong beat and they both rock just like the 'Big Boys'. All tracks are created with catchy melodies and crafty guitar work with John's voice a great foundation. You will enjoy; 'Picklefork', what a lovely song (very Neil Diamond). Strong voice and instrumentally of high standard (again memories of Mellencamp) the accordion played superbly! That talent is present in the performance of the Australian classic 'Waltzing Matilda'. With so many versions of that song Weston's intimate translation has to be added to the gallery of the greatest.

Other favorite songs from this album are the soundtracks 'Welcome Back To Reality' (foundation). And the tribute to Paul Rodgers with 'Let Your Live Begin. Remarkable is the emotionally loaded acoustic track 'Righteous Son' a reference to Van Nguyen a young Australian convicted and executed for drug smuggling. This sounds like Johnny Cash visiting and the beautiful sounds would also turn Bruce Springsteen green of envy.

Don't hesitate to add this great album to your collection.
You'll enjoy this

If you're Dutch you can read review online here, flick to page 2, click on John Harley Weston <http://www.rootstime.be/CD%20REVIEWS/2008/2008-JULI10.htm>