



Michael Fracasso "A Pocketful Of Rain" Texas Music Group

This is Fracasso's first studio recording since the 1998 Charlie Sexton produced collection "**World In A Drop Of Water,**" and Michael self-produced this new twelve track release. Fracasso's live album "**Back To Oklahoma**" released in late 2001, and cut a year earlier at Greg Johnson's Oklahoma City club, The Blue Door, actually featured half a dozen new Fracasso compositions but none of them resurface here. "**A Pocketful Of Rain**" contains eleven brand new Fracasso songs, including the co-written album title track. Mark Hallman, one of Michael's partners in the 1990's Austin songwriter supergroup, Hamilton Pool, is the collaborator. Topping off the set is a cover of Townes Van Zandt's "Loretta" complete with Byrdsy sounding 12 string support from Mac McNabb, Mark Patterson's solid backbeat and backing vocals from fellow Austin resident, Beaver Nelson.

In the opening cut "All Or Nothing," a love song that's tinged with expressions of regret, the narrator recalls how, at the outset, "*We married for love, We were the best of friends,*" and in the chorus articulates the wish, now that he has *nothing*, that "*I had saved me just a part of that love.*" Although the precise nature of the narrator's indiscretion isn't defined, his revelation "*If I broke your heart, well I couldn't tell you why, Sometimes the night can lead you astray*" points in a fairly obvious direction. Support vocalist on this cut is Michael's pal, the estimable Ms Patty Griffin. The Mainer adds her vocal support to three other cuts, and two of them also feature Eliza Gilkyson.

Michael was a member of New York's Fast Folk community of writers during the early/mid eighties, and has been a resident of Music City Texas for over almost fifteen years. Cultivating his songwriting chops in the foregoing creative environments, his compositions consistently feature hook-laden melodies and lyrics that are never less than thoughtful. The aforementioned folk-rock/pop co-write "Pocketful Of Rain" is a prime example, and features melodic references to Lennon & McCartney and The Byrds. Subjectively, the story line is based upon one of those [male] characters only too willing to settle for the easy life. When his current lady contemplates their future with "*Really like you darling but there ain't no hope,*" this *dreamer* with a *pocketful of rain* wisely draws the conclusion "*I ain't getting rich, Hanging around digging this ditch.*"

"K.C." turns out to be the initials of the narrator's love interest [in the song of the same name], while "Devil's Deal" with vocal support from Ms Griffin, in one of two blues numbers on "**A Pocketful Of Rain,**" the other being [obviously] "Ragamuffin Blues." In terms of the tune that is picked out on acoustic guitar, "Whiskey Mother" possesses definite stylistic references to the music of Stephen Foster. I also believe that the liner omits a credit for Ms Griffin's support vocal, while the lyric, verse on verse, throws up disparate images of family members who have passed, destitute street people, while the world weary narrator has been "*Holding on to nothing but your one last kiss.*" Subtitled "[For Giovanni]," "Silver Spoon" is Michael's way of celebrating fatherhood [his son was born recently], while "Hungry" which immediately precedes it, focuses upon child abuse, as witnessed by the lines "*He says to your face that your love is an art, At his touch your world falls apart at the seams.*" In fact Fracasso, in "Hungry," cleverly, does not define whether the child is male or female. The humorous and lyrically quirky closing cut on this collection, "Shoot'n For Love," opens with revelation "*I don't want to meet Bob Dylan.*" This is one of the aforementioned cuts featuring support vocals from Messrs. Griffin and Gilkyson. According to the song's narrator, he's quite satisfied without *the mansion, the fame and all that stuff.* In fact putting it simply, and, in the narrator's own words "*I'm shoot'n for love. Hell, aren't we all.....??*"

Folkwax Rating 7 out of 10

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