

# MAVERICK

## CD REVIEWS - THE NEW RELEASES

Though a simple tune, it is definitely the most moving song on the record 'she never dreams of me, she says there's two things you'll never see, solid proof of God and a postcard from me.' Overall this is a very interesting album, full of layer upon layer of tantalising songs and holds this singer songwriter in high acclaim—his work with lyrical content and narrative is powerful, and though I haven't been able to find out anything about the production of the album, it's a fine record indeed. **Laura Bethell**  
[www.myspace.com/liamdullaghan](http://www.myspace.com/liamdullaghan)

### Malcolm Holcombe TO DRINK THE RAIN

Music Road Records

★★★★

*Drawing on 55 years of personal experience, Holcombe surveys all the shades of life*

Since I NEVER HEARD YOU KNOCKIN' appeared around a handful of years ago, North Carolina based Holcombe has struck something of a purple/productive patch as far as his musical output is concerned. Not forgetting his five-song EP WAGER (2007), since 2005 the twelve-song TO DRINK THE RAIN is his fifth album. Produced by Malcolm's long time sideman Jared Tyler (Dobro, acoustic slide, harmony vocals), the recording sessions took place at Cedar Creek Studios in South Austin, during a seven day period last autumn. Keeping a tight rein on the sonic backdrop, Tyler apart, the core session players were former Johnny Cash sideman and Holcombe album regular Dave Roe (upright bass), from the current Jimmy LaFave band Bobby Kallus (drums) and Idaho bred fiddle champion Luke Bulla (fiddle, harmony vocals).

Andrew Hardin contributed to two songs and his acoustic lead guitar is up front and evident on the lyrically humorous 'live life to the max,' ragtime paced first song *One Leg At A Time*. On the latter the narrator's enthusiastic tone seems almost devil may care, while Holcombe's obvious affection and appetite for a tranquil rural lifestyle is apparent in the ensuing *Mountains Of Home*. The beauty inherent in such remote places is further explored in the segue *Down In The Woods* and *Becky's Blessed* (*Backporch Flowers*). Malcolm's gravelly vocal—he audibly chews on each word before spitting it out—is topped off by an assertive growl on *Behind The Number One*. A personal assessment of 21<sup>st</sup> century America's politics at home and abroad, allied to the narrator's struggle to keep his head above water financially, the latter sets the scene with opening lines that run to 'There's a land o' milk and honey, Full o' lawsuits left and right.'

While it's practically inherent in the title the narrator in *Those Who Wander* proceeds to affirm his restless spirit. The emotionally intense album title track is a bare to the bone exposition of Holcombe's alcohol-fuelled days, a time when he almost lost his grip on life and slipped over the edge into oblivion. It's a testament to his tenacity that he not only survived, but resurrected his career with veracious musical snapshots of what he's seen, done and experienced. *Comes The Blues* is a road song, while, couched in terms of the first person singular, the final selection, *One Man Singin'*, captures that moment when the songs of a barroom balladeer clearly lift the spirit of at least one listener. Holcombe's musical canon is not dissimilar to Van Zandt's; they certainly spent time in some of the same places physically and mentally, albeit separately. **Arthur Wood**  
<http://www.malcolmholcombe.com/>

### Moddi FLORIOGRAPHY

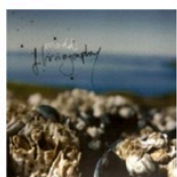
Propeller Records

★★★

*An escape from the hectic lifestyle and demanding days...*

From an island in the far north of Norway, Pål Moddi Knutsen is twenty-three years old. With a story of learning instruments he found around the place, and making music from a very young age, this musical genius has always written songs. FLORIOGRAPHY, Moddi's debut was recorded in Oslo with his band and for many months they continued to gather ideas well after the planned fourteen days of recording was over. Although it was released in February 2010 in Norway, the record is only starting to be released elsewhere. For those of you who have heard and appreciate the likes of Stornoway, this record is a blessing. For others, it will be an annoyance of small sounds and small vocals, mixed in with a track *Krokstav-emne* sung in Norwegian. It depends on your taste.

For me I'm not so keen, I found it meek and boring at times, but I can see the musical genius behind it, and respect the style and its proposed escape from a hectic lifestyle and demanding day. Opening with *Rubbles* the tune is slow and almost eerie, starting with strings for the first minute of the six minute track, finally bringing in accordion and with bountiful and passionate tones the folk-like tales unfold. *Magpie Eggs* is the second track and told with a grittier vocal, capturing more an attitude, than an absence of character and for me this is key. The definition on certain words creates an alt folk sound that I am familiar with and all of a sudden this record doesn't



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