



Kimmmie Rhodes Cowgirl Boudoir (Album Review) Sunbird Records

Rhodes' fourteen song Cowgirl Boudoir is a "been there" exposition of love, loss, survival, recovery and, most of all, precious memories.

Captured on familiar territory, Kimmie's Sunbird Studios in Spicewood, Texas, the recording and mixing of *Cowgirl Boudoir* is credited to Bradley Hartman and her son Gabriel (vocals, guitars, electric sitar, mandolin, ukulele, keyboards), with production (solely) credited to the latter. Other contributors to the fourteen selections include Dony Wynn (drums, percussion), Glen Fukunaga (bass), Tommy Spurlock (steel guitar, dobro) and Stephano Intelisano (keyboards), on backing vocals, Kimmie's daughter, Julie Goodnight, and, finally, the composer of two *Cowgirl Boudoir* songs, Johnny Goudie (vocals, acoustic guitar, piano). The pink-hued gatefold card liner carries a heartfelt dedication to Rhodes' long-time mentor, friend, musician, songwriter, studio/label owner the legendary Cowboy Jack Clement (d. 2013).

Miami bred, Austin based Cuban-American Goudie penned the opening opus "I Am Falling" which debuted on his 2005 album *Boy In A Box*. The only selection (here) that Kimmie wasn't involved in creating, it's a lyrically edgy affair on which Goudie shares the vocal. At the outset Kimmie's "Lover Killing Time" narrator establishes the parameters of her current relationship, sic. *"I'm so glad that you don't really love me, and I'm so charmed by how you carry on"* and later - tersely - intimates *"Cause I've had what you'll never be giving. All the love of a lifetime was mine."* The ensuing "None Of Us Are Innocent" focuses upon the relationships games that men and women play. The first of four songs co-written with Gabe, the melodically upbeat "Me Again" fulfils two roles. There are sufficient references therein to confirm it's autobiographical, and a love song to her late husband - *"A good man fell in love with me"* - the multi-talented Joe Gracey (d. 2011).

Kimmie and singer/songwriter Gary Nicholson are long-established composing partners. They share the "Don't Leave Me Like This" credit with one of Gary's collaborators, Canadian Colin Linden (Blackie and the Rodeo Kings). Therein the line *"I never knew how nothing felt until everything was gone"* fulfils a pivotal role. Allusions to loss also pervade the ensuing "Worthy Cause," while Gabe's electric sitar and an acoustic guitar are the principle support instruments on the lyrically melancholic "Always Never Leave," an ode to love graced by a ghostly apparition. A lighter more airy affair "Darlin' Oh Darlin'" mentions that he's *"sweet and sad,"* and it's followed by Gabe and Kimmie's "Trouble Is" wherein the narrator reflects upon the passage of time - past and future.

The sitar resurfaces on "The Sky Fell Down," another Rhodes' lyric that is open to (autobiographical) interpretation. Across sixteen lines, with mention of spring and autumn, the narrator enquires "Will You?" The "The Sky Fell Down" and "Having You Around" melodies possesses a Beatlesque quality. The latter, co-written by Gabe, Kimmie and Johnny Goudie, also features the Cuban-American's voice. Gabe's fourth collaboration "What Do I Have Now"

finds the narrator reflect upon personal loss. *Cowgirl Boudoir* closer “Yes,” a rhythmically sparky little hoedown, co-written with Nicholson, is propelled by a positively affirmative lyric.

Considering the prevalence of lyrical melancholy on *Cowgirl Boudoir*, Rhodes’ latest song collection closes with a winsome smile.

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From the desk of the Folk Villager.

aka Arthur Wood.

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