

new fans from all the lovers of Texas singer-songwriters that subscribe to *Maverick*. **DK**  
www.jamesmcmurtry.com

**Jenni Muldaur**  
**DEAREST DARLIN'**

Continental Blue Heaven  
★★★★

A blast back into the past from the daughter of Maria Muldaur



Vocalist Jenni Muldaur sings in a similar style to that of Duffy, using her powerful voice to deliver her passion and pain on her debut. After listening to *DEAREST DARLIN'* it is tempting to rummage through the wardrobe and find those old flares and flower head-band. *Just Ain't No Love* has a powerful groove which sets you back to 1970s, when Austin Powers would doubtless have been strutting on the dance floor.

Guest saxophone players Steve Elson and Lenny Pickett on *I'd Rather Live Like a Hermit* perform an infectious melody which played along next to Earl Garden's trumpet is phenomenal. Jenni is very much centre stage when she sings, but it seems she has no trouble with stepping back and letting these three guys shine their musical ability.

Title song *Dearest Darlin'* bounces through the seconds on the enjoyable and flouncy riffs of Sean Costello's guitar, to whom this album has been dedicated; he passed away a day before his 29<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Hopali is a traditional song consisting of claps and clicks, five backing singers and of course Jenni who gradually fades away from the mic, yet can still be heard a distance away with that vigorous voice of hers. Recommended to fans of Duffy and Paloma Faith. **CB**  
http://jennimuldaur.com

**Kenny White**  
**COMFORT IN THE STATIC**

Wildflower 87348  
13282  
★★★★

Jingle singer-writer shows his forte with more serious stuff



Talented New Yorker Kenny White has been impressing critics, fellow musicians and music lovers for a good few years now. In his early days, the piano-playing singer-songwriter was a big name in radio and TV advertising, writing and producing myriad commercials featuring artists as diverse as Linda Ronstadt, Dwight Yoakam, Gladys Knight, Ricky Skaggs and Kim Carnes. His music also enhanced numerous films and in 2002 he released his own album *UNINVITED GUEST* and toured with celebrity friends including Shawn Colvin, Peter Wolf and Richard Shindell. His follow-up CD, *SYMPHONY IN 16 BARS*, caught the ear of folk icon Judy Collins, who released it on her own Wildflower record label in 2005. Ms Collins is such a fan of the personable Mr White that she invited him to support her on the 2010 UK tour, so plenty of Britons have already

**Harper Simon**  
**HARPER SIMON**

Tulsi Records  
★★★★

Son of (Paul) Simon finally debuts ... and then some

As a teenager, his father hustled his words and melodies in the corridors of New York's Brill Building during the early 1960s. Harper James Simon, son of Newport, Tennessee born Peggy Harper and Queens raised Paul Simon, has waited till his fourth decade to release his first solo musical statement. The lyric to mid-album song *Tennessee*, co-written with his father, focus on his mother's Volunteer State roots. Since graduating from Boston's prestigious Berklee College of Music late last century, Harper has served his musical apprenticeship here—with London band Menlo Park—and in the States. Harper will be 38 this September, and that confirms—for me, at least—a mature head on mature shoulders. While he doubtless could have enlisted the interest of any number of labels, Tulsi is Simon's own imprint.

HARPER SIMON was partly recorded in Nashville where aided by Bob Johnson, one time Columbia Records and Simon & Garfunkel producer, he put together a session band. The band included a number of times gone by Music City legends—Charlie McCoy (harmonica), Lloyd Green (pedal steel), Gene Chrisman (drums), Mike Leech (bass), Hargus 'Pig' Robbins (piano) and Al Perkins (guitar). Only four of the album's ten songs hail from those sessions—and probably only the rhythm tracks—with the remainder recorded in Los Angeles, where he now resides, and his birthplace New York. The latter smacks of indecision, but as a musical entity HARPER SIMON is cohesive albeit with hints of genetic inspiration.

Genetic inspiration you ask? *Wishes And Stars*, *Ha Ha* and album closer *Berkeley Girl* could easily be long lost Simon & Garfunkel recordings. Is that imitation, tribute or simply some musical gene that is irrevocably Harper Simon? While I'd settle for the latter, let me add more detail. His father's vocal phrasing and intonation permeate *Wishes And Stars* and *Ha Ha*, while amazingly, Garfunkel's choir boy voice is channelled on *Berkeley Girl*—my favourite song on the album. Who is she I wonder? The Nashville oldsters I mentioned earlier are balanced by significant contributions from relative youngsters Sean Lennon, Inara George, Petra Haden, Eleni Mandell, Steve Nieve (Elvis Costello) and Marc Ribot. Harper only penned three songs on his own. *Ha Ha* was co-written with his father and Petra, while Papa Paul also assisted with *The Shine*, as did, curiously, Carrie Fisher—Mrs. P. Simon number 2. The foregoing should not be interpreted as reservations, rather as insights. Once you've heard all of HARPER SIMON your conclusion will be that it's a winsome marriage of pop, folk and country music influences. And well worth the wait ... **AW**  
http://www.myspace.com/harpersimon



been exposed to his music this year.

Kenny's latest album, *COMFORT IN THE STATIC*—his first British release—will surely make him even more friends. It contains 11 new songs which showcase his versatility as he breezes through a set that flows easily between jazz, blues, folk and pop and is characterised by gritty, soulful vocals and polished piano playing. The opening cut, *Useless Boy*, is an intriguing place to start, with its bitter-sweet vocal augmented by some atmospheric keyboard phrasing. The appealing *Please* has strong echoes of Elvis Costello and demonstrates White's ear for a catchy hook—those commercial jingles were clearly not wasted. The quirky *She's Coming On Saturday*, with its jazz chords and extended piano solo, could have been borrowed from the Lyle Lovett songbook, while the gentle *Who's Gonna Be The One* reflects Bob Dylan's country period. The closer is a poignant, painful ode to lost love entitled *Where Are You Tonight* and it wraps up a promising collection from a performer who has much to offer but needs to identify his best musical direction before heading confidently down that road. **BK**  
www.kennywhite.net

**Collin Herring**  
**OCHO**

Self-released  
★★★★

Good folk-rock album

It is no surprise to read that Collin Herring cites Neil Young as one of his biggest musical influences as at times he sounds so much like the great man, you only have to listen to the silky smooth *Trazodone* or the excellent *Little Aches*. Collin also shows that he can rock things up a bit as well on the driving *Passed Away*. Although not in the same league



as the great man, Neil Young fans should like Collin Herring. The major downside is that this CD only has eight songs, and at just over thirty minutes is a bit short. **DK**  
www.collinherring.com

**Kristin Connell**  
**DANCE OF LOVE**

Sesac  
884501212144  
★★★★

Disarmingly mature body of work from folk-pop singer-songwriter

This 12-song set is largely written by its sweet-voiced singer Kristin Connell, with only four songs not bearing her credit. She mixes acoustic guitars and soft, close-to-the-mic singing with splendidly evocative lyrics, which demand to be noticed. *If I Should Lose Your Love*, is an absolutely beautiful song written by collaborator McHugh. Filled with warm-hearted nostalgia, the innocence of youth and the wisdom of retrospect, with terrific lines such as: 'With a five-and-dime died my innocence/I started taking the road to making no sense' and 'Back when John was still alive/I didn't think a dream could die.' Most of the album is mid-tempo or ballad-driven, but there are times when it's brighter than a sunny day at the park, such as the gorgeously melodic *I Saw Elvis*.

*Till the Wheels Fall Off* is another number which takes the listener unaware. It's a rollicking little driving song, full of dusty highways and wanderlust, matched with some gritty and bluesy guitar work. *Highway 9* is another road song, but it couldn't be more different: it's a gentle ballad, name-checking Carolina and Tennessee (like all good American road songs should) and road-side phones, loneliness, empty roads and lovesickness. With *This Ol' Car*, it's impossible to ignore the



driving-theme of the latter part of the album. Largely, it's a metaphor—like she says: 'Life's one hell of a road.' Ultimately, *DANCE OF LOVE* isn't a typical album of a dozen disparate songs—it's a body of work; and a dang fine one too. **DJ**  
http://www.kristinconnell.com/

**Mama Rosin**  
**BRULE LEMENT**

Voodoo Rhythm  
VRCD55  
★★★★★

Second album in from uncage-able Ca-Genevans

As sure as Bobby Gillespie sings: 'I'm yours/You're Mine/Gimme more of that German wine' on Primal Scream's *Jailbird*, it largely depends on how much creaking Cajun you can shuck in your stinky socks till they split like guts on invasion sand, or eggs'n'grease at all-day breakfasts from Bakersfield to Batley and broken bones in bars you don't wanna move bowels in, never mind brawl in, as to how you'll fare with this great big platter of love's consumptive and discordant clatter. Fate be with you, for this should be summoned by every country cat, blues bombardiers and punk pickets or picnickers of all drainpipes and pinstripes. Yiss. Cajun, right? The bonkers, broken shoulder-bladed hollerings of seismically sluiced French-descended degenerates bouncing like ball-bearings down back-porch on pre-industrial bathtub somethin'-a-mines lamenting lost to mental and as-yet-fermented turmoils dogs of all descriptions, right? To the caterwauling crescent-moon colliding accordion crunch and keeling-over keen of a guy lost in midnight delirium on alcohol, crying on the ceiling or combine harvester amidst the cerebellum? Yeah, only this is more so, just doubly, trebly till yer tiltn'trembly all-sore-over

