

...the new releases

Katy Lied ECHO GAMES

Independent

★★★★☆

Echo Games proves that Katy Lied could re-invent themselves time and time again and it would just keep getting better—not to be missed album of my year!!

Katy Lied released a single *Late Arrival* last year that graced the BBC Radio 2 airwaves and was followed by an album of the same title. *Maverick* reviewed the album in November 2008 calling it: 'Fine Americana music with a 1970s Southern California sound.' However, the band that you may or may not recollect was fronted by Dan Britton, who had left the band to concentrate on solo projects when they started focusing on the second album release. Now returning to our airwaves with ECHO GAMES, Katy Lied is fronted by Katie Harnett and includes the rest of the band that we knew from last year including chief songwriter/guitarist Duncan Hamilton, bassist Ian Thomson and drummer Paul Burgess. Produced by Nigel Stonier, most of the songs are written primarily by Duncan Hamilton but also sees Hamilton in collaboration with Dai Smith (ex-Stories member), Thea Gilmore and their producer Stonier.

This is an immense release, featuring a wide range of content and some marvellous musicianship that often focuses the record on Katie's vocals and the lyrical content that is impeccably toned and well-crafted. The opening track, also titled *Katy Lied* is a story about a girl called Katy and her partner and their many shattered dreams stating 'Katy tried, but Katy lied.' With a rock-pop tone that is both catchy and wonderfully tuned to the current popular market, I think it's such a shame that so many have no idea about this band. *Mr Vertigo* takes on the same California country-rock sound that was evident in the previous album, but fronted by Katie brings in a Sheryl Crow sound that wasn't previously possible. The guitar playing throughout this record is tremendous as are all of the musicians featured. *When It Rains* takes on a less-is-more sound to open and then moves forward with a gritty grunge rock style that still encompasses that Americana tone. *Echo Games* the title track has to be one of my favourite tracks on the album—it's the pinnacle of the release hearing the entire band somewhat out of their comfort zone creating something that is both eerie and progressive. Slide guitar and distorted electric, manipulating the sound with synthesizers, creates a haunting background canvas upon which the vocals just build. The rest of the album carries such variety in both vocal and instrumental content. *Watch This Space* and *Sun Comes Out* are two tracks that must be heard and enjoyed from the latter part of this record. I truly cannot offer enough praise to this release—I only received it yesterday and already I've listened to it ten times over at least! **LB**

www.katylid.com



the inspiration for the former, while, named after a Wendell Berry poem, Caroline's love ode *The Wild Rose* employs the words of Berry and Chile's Pablo Neruda.

Radiant acoustic hues and words that require deliberation pervade Herring's fourth. **AW**
www.carolineherring.com
www.myspace.com/carolineherring

Chip Taylor YONKERS NY

Train Wreck

Records

★★★★

All about the young Voight boys and how Jamie became Chip Taylor

An eleven-song cycle, YONKERS NY finds Taylor in autobiographical mode. The lyrics came the Voight brothers as they traverse their pre-teen and teen years, and how Chip, in adulthood, became a musician/gambler. Actor Jonathan Vincent 'Jon' Voight is the eldest, followed by world class volcanologist/geologist Dr. Barry Voight and musician James Wesley 'Jamie' Voight aka Chip Taylor.

With \$10 stolen from his father—he left an IOU—in the opening song *Barry Go On (Put Yourself On The Mountain)* the eight year old induces his baby brother to explore the world beyond the Voight home. The punch line—Barry, already a rock collector, was too big to explore a 'cave' in the nearby Mile Square Wood, so guess who was conned into the underground world that day? The boys and their father Elmer, a golf club pro who for many years convinced his kids that he was an FBI agent, appear in the ensuing *Charcoal Sky*. In addition to club and ball, *Gin Rummy Rules* reveals that Elmer possessed other skills—'I live the life of a gambler that's my shame' then he adds: 'I take more than I give most nights.' Jamie confides learning mathematics while watching his

father gamble.

The effect of the mid-1950s movies *Blackboard Jungle* and *Rock Around The Clock* on American teens was life-changing and *Hey Jonny (Did You Feel That Movie)* recalls that era. While mainly referencing the gambler Jamie was to become, *Without Horses* is also a tender love song by dint of the line: 'What would I do without horses and you.' There's also a sly reference to his 1976 album *SOMEBODY SHOOT OUT THE JUKEBOX*. *Bastard Brothers*, the YONKERS NY centrepiece, finds Jamie reveal how his pre-teen fiddle—his brothers hated hearing it—and ukulele, led to playing guitar in a high school country band, a deal with an 'old black record label' and life as a songwriter. There's more of Jamie's early life as a musician in *Piece Of The Sky* and *Saw Mill River Road*. Propelled by a boogie woogie piano, *Yonkers Girls* is all teen testosterone, and the album closes with a bittersweet tribute to *Yonkers NY*.

YONKERS NY is a double disc set—on one the songs include Taylor's narrations, the other features the songs alone. There's also a thirty-two page booklet with the lyrics, Chip's recollections, plus photographs of Yonkers NY and the Taylor family. The support players include John Platania, Kendel Carson and Greg Leisz. YONKERS NY is engagingly melodic, insightful, poignant and occasionally downright humorous. <http://www.trainwreckrecords.com/>
<http://www.myspace.com/chiptaylorsolo>

Cliff Eberhardt 500 MILES

Red House Records

★★★★☆

Fine singer-songwriter with the cream of Texas musicians and a slight blues edge

This album was recorded in



Texas at Blue Rock Artist Ranch and Studio, and produced by owner/musician Billy Crockett. Blue Rock is an amazing multi-media facility that I visited for one of their monthly concerts the week before Cliff began cutting this album. Do yourself a favour and check their web site. Mention Blue Rock to touring American singer-songwriters familiar with this facility and most immediately begin drooling. True. OK—commercial over.

The first track apart, Eberhardt is supported by the cream of Central Texas players. They include Mike Hardwick (guitar), Colin Brooks (resonator guitar, lap steel), Joel Guzman (accordion), Glenn Fukunaga (bass), Chris Maresh (upright bass) and Rick Richards (drummer), while Karen Mal supplies background vocals on a few cuts. Accompanying his voice with acoustic and slide guitars, Cliff opens with a slow, stunning rendition of Hedy West's almost fifty-year old *500 Miles*. Now considered an American folk classic, West constructed the song from fragments of a melody that an uncle sang to her back in post WWII Georgia. The only other cover in this collection is John Hiatt's almost two-decade old *Back Of My Mind*, the tale of a confused youngster who finally finds redemption in adulthood.

Having opened with one road song, Eberhardt closes his eighth collection by revisiting *The Long Road*. Written two decades ago when he toured Italy with Richie Havens, it became the title of Eberhardt's 1990 debut album, which was released by Windham Hill Records. On the love ode *I Want To Take You Home With Me*, Crockett's mandolin and Guzman's accordion weave a dreamy backdrop, the narrator in *Lonelyville* replays for the listener his seemingly never-ending run of bad luck, while the disconsolate *Break A Train* narrator sums up love lost in

the lines: 'You can break a heart, But you never learn to like the sound.' In terms of presentation Cliff leans toward the blues on much of this album, and the memorably melodic *Easy Street*, complete with finely restrained vocal support from Mal, is one of this collection's standouts. **AW**
<http://www.cliffeberhardt.net/>
<http://www.myspace.com/cliffeberhardt>

Deadstring Brothers SAO PAULO

Bloodshot

Records-B5159

★★★★☆

Real whiskey

soaked rocking

country/blues music

When reviewing their last album I wrote that they had found their ideal sound which was a country-rock version of the Stones, and that is still very evident on this new release. I also added that by using the vocals of Masha Marjeh more helped to off-set the highly emotive voice of Kurt Marschke, but sadly since then Masha has left the full band although she still adds backing vocals on the rocking'n'rolling *Houston* with great boogie woogie piano from Ross Westerbur, plus the wonderful ballad *Adalee* on which Kurt's voice is majestic. Masha also duets with Kurt on the superb closer *Always A Friend Of Mine* which is proof of just how damn good they are singing together.

Other members of the band are long-time drummer E Travis Harrett, and brothers Spencer (electric guitar, pedal and slide guitar) and Jeff Cullum (bass) who all help to form a good musical nucleus to help vent Kurt's strong emotionally charged vocals. Kurt's voice soars as much as the tremendous slide guitar solo on the swampy rocker *The River Song* with additional organ accompaniment from Chris Codish. The ballad *It's A Shame* is another perfect vessel to showcase Kurt's powerfully emotive voice, and he excels even more on the truly excellent *The Same Old Rule* on which his hurting vocals send shivers up your spine.

This is heart-wrenching, bulldozing, guitar laden, in-your-face country-rock with a swamp-infested bluesy feel helped along with nerve-jangling vocals and fiddle, pedal steel, slide and electric guitars plus a rhythm section of the highest quality. **DK**

www.myspace.com/deadstringbrothers



Deborah Bonham DUCHESS

Rhino (ATCO)

452476

★★★★☆

Powerful vocals

assisted bloody

marvellously by her stupendous band.

This being her third album, this issue is testament to the fact that the Bonham family are just a brood of awesomeness that continues to release some quite downright sublime music. Every music fan knows the sad fate of brother John, but his younger sister has released

