

CD Reviews

The Good, The Bad & The Ugly.

New Releases & Re-Issues

Editor's Top Picks:

A Guide To The Star Ratings In Maverick:

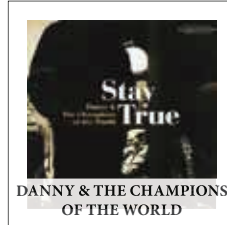
★ Avoid

★★ Poor

★★★ Good

★★★★ Very Good

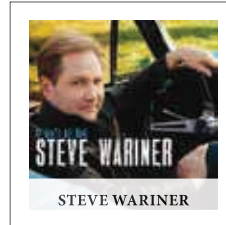
★★★★★ Excellent



DANNY & THE CHAMPIONS
OF THE WORLD



GARY HALL



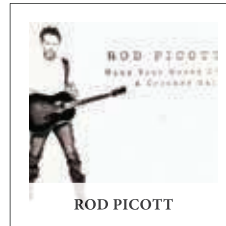
STEVE WARINER



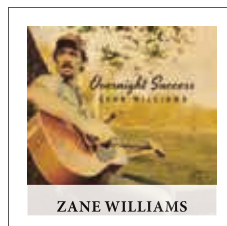
EMILY HERRING



RON BLOCK



ROD PICOTT



ZANE WILLIAMS



VINCE GILL &
PAUL FRANKLIN



MY DARLING CLEMENTINE

Artists Featured In This Month's Issue:

Al Stewart – 104
Alan Jackson – 71
Benjamin Folke Thomas – 103
Blackhawk – 104
Bo Porter – 103
Brett Eldredge – 80
Brian Wright – 88
Brooks Williams – 71
Buffy Ford Stewart – 100
Canyon Ryde – 103
Cara Luft – 88
Case Hardin – 80
Charley Pride – 107
Cherry Lee Mewis & Max Milligan – 71
Chip Taylor – 81
Chris Weaver Band – 80
Chris Young – 88
Clive Gregson – 82
Dan Fogelberg – 116
Dan Whitehouse – 99
Danny and the Champions of the World – 72
Dave Acari and the Helsinki Hellraisers – 82
Dean Dillon – 107
Diana Jones – 82
Doc Watson – 108
Dr Hook – 108
Earl Poole Ball – 101
Emily Herring – 83

Gary Hall – 72
George Jones – 108
Gill Sandell – 100
Glen Campbell – 110
Greg Trooper – 89
Heather Stewart – 102
Hem – 90
Jason Daniels – 103
JJ Lawhorn – 72
Joanna Mosca – 100
Joe Diffie, Sammy Kershaw, Aaron Tippin – 95
John B Spencer – 116
Jolie Holliday – 83
Karen Lynne – 73
Karyn Oliver – 100
Kimmie Rhodes – 90
Lucky Bones – 74
Lucy Ward – 90
M Callahan – 83
Madeline Smith – 74
Madison Violet – 84
Mando Saenz – 79
Marshall Chapman – 101
Marty Robbins – 110
Meaghan Blanchard – 74
MG Boulter – 101
Michael and the Lonesome Playboys – 75
My Darling Clementine – 98
My Sweet Patootie – 101

Neal McCoy – 84
New American Farmers – 75
Owen Moore – 100
Patty Griffin – 110
Paul Ansell's No9 – 84
Paul Overstreet – 111
Peter Bruntnell – 111
Radney Foster – 112
Rain Perry – 76
Red Bird Sky – 100
Ricky Skaggs & Bruce Hornsby – 91
Roadhouse – 76
Robin Dean Salmon – 100
Rod Picott – 91
Ron Block – 85
Ruth Moody – 86
Ry Cooder & Corridos Famosos – 92
Sara Petite – 92
Sarah Savoy & the Francadians – 94
Sean Taylor – 103
Stacie Rose – 103
Stacy Grubb – 112
Steve Goodman – 113
Steve Wariner – 77
The Barn Birds – 78
The Breedings – 86
The Carrivick Sisters – 78
The Deep Dark Woods – 94

The Dirty Guv'nahs – 78
The Greencards – 94
The Hallelujah Trails – 95
The Howlin' Brothers – 102
The Marshall Tucker Band – 116
The Randy Rogers Band – 76
The Sadies – 95
The Smoking Flowers – 86
The Tractors – 114
The Wiyos – 103
Tierra Blanca – 102
Tim Grimm – 96
Tim Hus – 103
Tim O'Brien and Darrell Scott – 79
Timothy Craig – 100
Tom Rush – 96
Tommy Cash – 114
Tony Joe White – 97
Troubadour Rose – 100
Tyler Farr – 98
VA: Live at Caffe Lena: Music from America's Legendary Coffeehouse – 104
VA: The Golden Demon – 113
Vince Gill & Paul Franklin – 98
Wanita – 87
Willie Nelson – 87
Zane Williams – 93

beautiful, yet simplistic canvas of acoustic guitar and soaring strings.

The Last Pirouette and Marching Through The Green Grass provide the project's more quirkier moments. Two utter highlights of the record and both very different from one another, the former begins rather reservedly with Lucy's region-drenched vocals calling on the gathering crowds, before breaking into a steady, rich arrangement of strings and piano; whilst the latter is a folkishly-energised toe-tapper, explosive in places, with lyrics to tempt a smile about what preferred occupation her lover should have, plus an infectious chorus led superbly by Lucy's sprightly voice.

Lucy is a singer-songwriter with a powerful pen and a talent that can only ever be raw, and this 12-track treasure is perhaps the best example. I can see this one doing very well in deed. **Emily Saxton**

www.lucywardsings.com

Ricky Skaggs & Bruce Hornsby CLUCK 'OL HEN (LIVE)

Skaggs Family Records

★★★★

Scorching record of an unusual mixture of musical styles that just works god damn it!

As a reviewer one always strives to put prejudices to one side when a CD arrives awaiting your review. On first glance the opportunity to write about Ricky Skaggs & Bruce Hornsby's new album (a live one at that) did not set my heart racing. I, of course, was aware of the fact that Skaggs had brought his masterful mandolin playing to many a band, Emmylou Harris's Hot Band for one, and admired the man's talent. However, I could not say the same for Bruce Hornsby. His style of MOR pop was filed alongside Huey Lewis, Don Henley etc, as disposable back in the mid-1980s. But with a heavy sigh I thought: 'I am a professional, let's go to work!'

Well, from the off, this album grabs you by the muscles and brain cells that control the tapping element of your feet. Because as they launch into *How Mountain Girls Can Love* one quickly realise that this band is hot! They take a fast tune and then drop a gear and put the pedal to the floor! Skaggs playing throughout is sublime. Whether on a fast lick bluegrass tune like Bill



Monroe's *Bluegrass Breakdown* or supplying a mandolin break on Hornsby's signature song *The Way It Is*, he just has to be the King, Emperor, Master, Lord or whatever the title should be of that instrument. Talking of *The Way It Is*, the live version displays some excellent virtuoso piano playing by Hornsby (maybe playing all those shows with The Dead did inject some rock vibes into him), cracking banjo from Jim Mills, fiddle from Andy Leftwich and overall injected some life into what has always been, for me, a very average song.

There are overall four Hornsby songs on this collection. While *Gulf Of Mexico Fishing Boat Blues* passes muster but I could have done without the indulgent 14 minutes of *White Wheeled Limousine!* But the rest of the album features some great bluegrass tunes old—*Cluck 'Ol Hen*—and new (ish)—*Sally 10*—performed in grand style by Skaggs and his Kentucky Thunder band. Fans of either artist will love this anyway, but for everyone else it is a toe-tapping good feel album that delivers.

John Jobling

www.rickyskaggs.com

Rod Picott HANG YOUR HOPES ON A CROOKED NAIL

Welding Rod Records

★★★★★

With relentless assurance, album-after-album, Picott's performance and writing get better and better

Rod Picott's sixth solo studio album, was funded via a Kickstarter campaign, one where the Mainer deservedly raised 50% over his \$25K target. Recorded in Nashville earlier this year and produced by R. S. Field (Billy Joe Shaver, Hayes Carll, Justin Townes Earle), Picott (vocals, acoustic guitar) is supported by Dave Coleman (electric/slide guitar) of The Coal Men, Mark Pisapia (drums, harmony vocals), his brother Joe (electric guitar, pedal steel, piano), ex-Guster/k. d. lang sideman who also engineered the sessions, James Haggerty (acoustic/electric bass), Lex Price (tenor guitar, mandolin, ghost notes), Jennie Okon Switzer (harmony vocals) and long-time collaborator David Henry (strings, whale sounds). In addition to helming the project, Field added piano,



percussion and vibes.

Where Rod's privately fan-funded WELDING BURNS (2011), painted intimately detailed blue collar portraits made believable by Picott's years spent hanging sheet rock, HANG YOUR HOPES ON A CROOKED NAIL merges that theme with lyrics that plough intensely personal/familial and intimate furrows. One of the latter, *You're Not Missing Anything*—'You left some things, I'll just keep them here, I've got a little place for souvenirs'—a Slaid Cleaves co-write sets the personal tone, concurrent with launching the album. The later *I Might Be Broken Now*, co-written with Amanda Shires, further pursues the personal via a gently swaying melody wherein the narrator concludes: 'I might be broken now, baby, what you done, But don't you be surprised when you see me with another one.' *Just A Memory*—'...I used to watch you sleep, Just to hear you breathe'—and *All The Broken Parts* complete Picott's reflections on love won and lost.

At just over two minutes *Bluebonnet* encapsulates the annual cycle of the Lone Star state's emblematic flower and, closing, personally muses 'It's just a little blue, Like a thought inside your head.' The album title surfaces in the mighty fine *Dreams* co-written with Shires and Cleaves, while the narrator intimates at the outset of *65 Falcon* that the purchased involved '...a hundred dollar cheque.' Narrated by a blue collar dreamer, *Where No One Knows My Name* is credited to Picott, Cleaves and New Jersey based singer-songwriter George Wirth, and the Mainer's eyes must have twinkled wickedly when he plucked, from the ether, every sly/barbed *Mobile Home* line. As he approaches his 50th year, Rod closes with a personal/ancestral themed pairing. In the penultimate, *Milkweed*, he focuses upon the ordinary things left behind at the end of a life. They include: 'Two by fours, cans of paint,' 'Creosote on his shoes' and for those still on this plane 'A hole somewhere down inside.' The ensuing *Nobody Knows* muses about 'Where you go when you go.' Song-by-song, in terms of an accomplished marriage of voice and instrument, HANG YOUR HOPES ON A CROOKED NAIL sounds amazing. As for Picott's 11 songs...they're gems that finely balance despair, desire and optimism with dexterity. **Arthur Wood**

www.rodpicott.com