

NEW RELEASES

Antje Duvekot NEW SIBERIA

Pantjebare Publishing

★★★★☆

*In word and melody,
Duvekot journeys
from a darker,
younger self to a better, older place*



On NEW SIBERIA, Richard Shindell (guitar, Wurlitzer) retains the role of producer; the venue for the sessions on this occasion being Scott Petito's NRS facility in Catskill, New York—noted producers, Petito and Ben Wittman contributing respectively, bass and drums/percussion. Also making appearances are permutations of Marc Shulman (electric guitar), Lincoln Schleifer (bass), Jane Scarpantoni (cello), Sara Milonovich (fiddle), Mark Erelli (mandolin) and John Gorka (background vocals).

On her web site, Antje describes NEW SIBERIA as '...a journey from a darker, younger self to a better, older place.' That 'journey' begins with the curious *Into The City* with, verse-on-verse, the first in a series of surreally worded scenarios being: 'You floated in on a helium balloon; Out of your fishbowl and into the fire.' Returning to almost reality, Amelia Earhart's navigator narrates the fictional *Ballad Of Fred Noonan*, wherein he relates that his love for the pioneering pilot was unrequited. Towards the close, Noonan concludes: 'I was just a pawn in your adventure.' *The Life Of A Princess* is an allegory for Antje's chosen trade, while the ensuing *Phoenix*, according to Antje's web site, is '...a song about my mother that took me twenty years to write.' In the opening line of the latter title, Duvekot asserts: 'I am your daughter carved from your stone,' and subsequently offers the insight: 'I rose up like a phoenix, rose up from your ash. You just turned your back and I'll never understand.' Where a good deal of this collection surveys the past for answers, by its closing chords, the album title song is both optimistic and forward looking.

Transplanted from Heidelberg, Germany when her parents split, *Glamorous Girls* finds Duvekot recollect her difficult mid to late-teen years attending a Greenville, Delaware high school. Therein, for those who are experiencing similar difficulties, she offers the ray of hope '...that you...will find a place in the sun. You'll be shining when your time comes.' Duvekot's image filled *Noah's Titanic* lyric—as well as her vocal delivery—find her channelling Bob

Dylan, while *Sleepy Sea Of Indigo And Blue* features the dark vocal tones of the inimitable, John Gorka. The love depicted in *Four Stitches* is sublime and remains a fond remembrance—this song alone is worth the cost of the album. In spite of the repeated: 'It was a total disaster; it was a perfect date,' there are hints of future possibilities for the odd couple portrayed in *The Perfect Date*. Featuring Duvekot's acoustic guitar and vocal, plus Petito's bass, the album closes with *Juliet*, a tender paean to a once upon a time friendship.

Arthur Wood

www.antjeduvekot.com

Bill Wence ANALOG MAN IN A DIGITAL WORLD

615 Records 15024

★★★★☆

*Bill Wence has
created a very enjoyable Americana album*



Bill Wence has spent a lifetime in music working mainly as a piano man behind such singers as Wanda Jackson, Tom T. Hall, Bobby Bare and numerous others. He's also scored a few hits as a songwriter for Ronnie McDowell, Cristy Lane and others, hit the country charts himself in 1979-80 and even worked as a successful radio dj. The 70-year old veteran releases this third 'Americana' album, a workmanlike collection that covers all the bases ranging from old-school country, blues-inflected tunes, funky country-soul and even vintage pop. To each of these differing styles he brings an honest approach and much integrity. But it has to be said that there's nothing here that made me sit up and get really excited. But having said that, it's an album I'm sure to return to often.

He offers standards like *Unchained Melody* and blues classic *Fannie Mae*, and ventures into country with Melvin Endsley's *I Like Your Kind Of Love*—one of the strongest cuts. There are several names that have leant their incredible talents to this recording including Byrd Burton (guitar) and Stick Davis (bass) from the Amazing Rhythm Aces, Charlie McCoy (harmonica) Sister Morales and the Jordanares (background vocals) and also Gretchen Peters and Jonell Mosser who pair up for some of the most incredible soulful harmonies I've ever heard, especially on *Thirty Years*, their vocals a perfect foil for Bill's gruff

and tough attitude. The melody and the background vocals have an airy, 1960s feel. Becky Hobbs joins him on *I Like Your Kind Of Love*, the pair creating a great vocal combination.

Bill Wence has made a broad selection of songs, and it all works with his superb piano and McCoy's harmonica adding eloquent diversity to the quality of musical styles throughout the CD. **Alan Cackett**

www.billwencepromotions.com

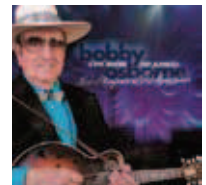
Bobby Osborne & the Rocky Top X-Press NEW BLUEGRASS & OLD HEARTACHES

Rural Rhythm

RUR-1099

★★★★

*Traditional bluegrass
from a 60-year veteran*



Bobby Osborne has been recording and performing bluegrass music since 1949. In the mid-1960s, the Osborne Brothers (Bobby along with brother Sonny) were ostracised by bluegrass purists for adding drums and electric instruments to their line-up as they produced some of the most exciting and vibrant bluegrass-country ever heard. Though Sonny retired in 2005, Bobby is still out there recording and performing with his excellent Rocky Top X-Press. This new album is very much in the traditional bluegrass style with the usual line-up of acoustic bass, guitar, fiddle, banjo and Bobby himself on mandolin and lead vocals. There's a mix of well-known standards like Fred Rose's *Low And Lonely* and Paul Craft's *Heartache Looking For A Home*, alongside some excellent new songs like *Born In Kentucky* and *Why Don't You Turn Me Loose*.

As is to be expected the instrumentation throughout is exemplary and though Bobby's lead vocals are occasionally a little shaky, his emotional voice enables him to handle the tunes and allows him to easily communicate their messages. *The Last Bridge You Burn*, one of the highlights, is a song that Bobby wrote back in 1972, but he'd forgotten all about it, the song coming to light when his son, Boj, was searching through some of Bobby's archives. This is the kind of album that will warm the hearts of traditional bluegrass fans everywhere. **Alan Cackett**

www.bobbyosborne.com