



Gurf Morlix "**Last Exit To Happyland**" www.gurfmorlix.com Records

A fixture on guitar in Lucinda Williams' road band for over a decade, Gurf Morlix [once again] became an Austin resident back in 1991 and eventually the owner/proprietor of Rootball Studio. Over the last decade or so, at Rootball, Morlix has helmed recordings for Robert Earl Keen, Mary Gauthier, Ray Wylie Hubbard and Slaid Cleaves. Also recorded there "**Last Exit To Happyland**" is his sixth solo recording, and follows "**Birth To Boneyard**" [2008] which was an instrumental/film music version of the previous year's vocal recording "**Diamonds To Dust.**"

Possessed of a hoary, lived in voice, drummer Rich Richards apart, Morlix plays every instrument and wrote the ten songs on "**Last Exit To Happyland.**" Featuring an organ and Richards' drum kit, a pseudo reggae beat propels "Walkin' To New Orleans." In the closing line of "Crossroads" the lyric name checks Robert Johnson. Patty Griffin adds her voice to "She's A River," "I Got Nothin'" and "Voice Of Midnight," while, according to the liner, Ruthie Foster "*moaned and wailed*" on the swampy, soulful sounding "Drums From New Orleans."

"Music You Mighta Made" is a tribute to the late Blaze Foley [d. 1989], whom Morlix worked with in Austin and Houston through the late nineteen seventies, and Barbara Kooyman [Barbara K of Timbuk 3] adds her voice to the mix – rather appropriate, since the Duct Tape Messiah befriended Pat [MacDonald] and Barbara when they arrived in Austin. Undoubtedly deliberate, Morlix's melody sounds, spookily, like one that Blaze would have written. Regarding the closing selection "Voice Of Midnight," the liner bears the dedication – "written for Kim and Mac" - Mac being keyboard player, long time Austin resident and a nineteen sixties member of Mod British pop group The Small Faces, Ian McLagan. McLagan's wife Kim perished in a road accident during 2006, and Morlix's lyric haunting evokes the sense of loss.

Folkwax Score 7 out of 10.

Arthur Wood.

Kerrville Kronikles 01/09.