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## MAVERICK

### CD REVIEWS - THE NEW RELEASES

#### Folk Thief LOVE HEARTACHE & OBLIVION

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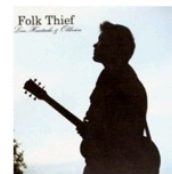
★★★★☆

*Charming but oft times dark indie folk from Canada*

As a way of grabbing the listener's attention, opening your debut album with the lines 'In pools of blood the children play/the dead will line the streets today' takes some beating. Slightly disappointingly, this doesn't presage a Nick Cave-style gore-fest, though Canadian Dave Hadgkiss (for Folk Thief is he) offers up his fair share of darkness and devilry and the primal screaming that completes album closer *The Devil Behind Me* is genuinely disturbing and frightening. In fact, devils and hell are a bit of a theme with Hadgkiss. As well as the aforementioned, in *After The Accident* he has: 'an angel on my shoulder but the devil owns my soul' and in *A Light for Liberty* the narrator pleads: 'don't use my body to fuel the flames of a bonfire down below.' Fortunately for the listener's mental equilibrium there's also the charming *Brand New Love* and the intense but sweet *Breathe*, with the latter boasting lovely harmonies from Kelly Haigh.

It's also worth noting that, while the music is of course the main thing, nice packaging is always a joy, and the triple fold sleeve, liner booklet made from proper textured paper, the close-up shots of a decaying guitar, all add to the sense of care being taken and enhance the purchasing/listening experience immensely. Care has also clearly been taken with the tracks included—the album is only ten tracks and thirty-three minutes long so there's no filler or desperate shoehorning in of sub-standard fare. Overall this is a haunting little work, full of insight and with plenty to say that's worth hearing about its eponymous subjects. **Jeremy Searle**

[www.folkthief.com](http://www.folkthief.com)



#### Foster & Lloyd IT'S ALREADY TOMMORROW

Effin' 'Elli Records

★★★★☆

*A toe-tapping collection of tasty country-pop Foster & Lloyd musical grenades*

The appearance of the thirteen-song IT'S ALREADY TOMORROW marks the termination of a twenty-one year long recording hiatus for the musical partnership of Texan Radney Foster and Kentuckian Bill Lloyd. Of course they have performed the odd, mainly acoustic, show while they came of age, and even recorded a song for LOWE PROFILE (2005), a Nick Lowe tribute collection. However it was at the request of the Americana Music Association that the most recent reunion took place during late March 2009, when the duo closed the organisation's six-concert fundraising series Live at the Bluebird Café. A flame was rekindled...IT'S ALREADY TOMORROW is the result. Cheap Trick's Tom Petersson (bass) and Keith Brogdon (drums), plus Sam Bush (mandolin) sat in with the pair at the Bluebird, and do so again on this release.

Every one of the songs here, at least, bears the writing credit Foster & Lloyd, although Guy Clark fans will instantly recognise *Picasso's Mandolin* co-written with the craftsman and included on the latter's 1992 album *BOATS TO BUILD*. The Foster & Lloyd reprise features an additional verse, to which, in the background, Mr. Bush has added nimble-fingered mandolin licks topped off by an intricate solo outro. Elsewhere Petersson and the duo collaborated on the fashion statement in song *Lucky Number*.

Launched by their trademark brash power-pop jangly guitars the album title song opens this collection, wherein the 'slightly older' narrator reflects on the seemingly rapid passage of time and his happy marriage—'Love took the wheel when we started this deal, Time flew by in the blink of an eye.' Beth Nielsen Chapman adds her distinctive voice to the aforementioned *Lucky Number*, while Petersson plays bass and electric guitar on the lyrically risqué *Hold That Thought* which closes with a raucous guitar wars sound-scape. There's a definite grab 'em and shake them into submission edge to most of these songs. On the few occasions that the pair pause to draw breath, they indulge the listener with jaw-dropping ballads as in the testament to love *If It Hadn't Been For You* and, later, the brooding *Don't Throw It Away*.

The front cover of the liner booklet has been deliberately stained to look worn and aged. The songs however display a lyrically maturity that the thirty somethings who recorded FOSTER & LLOYD (1987), FASTER & LOUDER (1989) and VERSION OF THE TRUTH (1990) could not have aspired to. The wisdom that comes with age (and parenthood) is clearly apparent here, particularly the heartfelt album closer *When I Finally Let You Go* wherein a father anticipates the day that his beloved daughter will become someone's wife. **Arthur Wood**

<http://www.fosterandlloyd.com/>



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CD REVIEWS • NEW RELEASES