

Michael Johnson

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MOONLIT DÉJÀ VU
Red House Records

The self-produced MOONLIT DÉJÀ VU is country hit songwriter, Michael Johnson's first solo outing to feature original material for close on a decade and a half. While sharing a bill with Red House recording artist John Gorka at the Dakota Jazz Club & Restaurant in Minneapolis, Johnson intimated a desire to return to acoustic music. Among a few pointers, John suggested that Michael talk with Red House—the result being this eleven-song, easy listening collection. A life-long restless traveller, Johnson has settled once again in Minnesota, having resided there from 1969 to 1985. Johnson's name is appended as writer to only three compositions—with Karen Taylor-Good and Lisa Aschmann on "One Mile Apart" and with Tom Keeton on "Emilio" and "SoSo." The narrators of the first title, a female El Paso resident and a man living across the border in Juarez, reflect upon the short distance separating them—one mile—yet the vast social and financial divide between those who have and those who have not. In returning to Minnesota, home to the Red House imprint, Michael was reunited with his daughter, Truly Carmichael and they perform "One Mile Apart" as a duet. "Emilio" paints a bittersweet portrait of a flamenco guitarist who lives in an attic. Lastly the melody to the 1946 composition "You Make Me Feel So Young," which Sinatra included on his classic SONGS FOR SWINGIN' LOVERS album a decade later, when wed to Johnson's "SoSo" lyric, results in a parody regarding aging. Michael Johnson's voice and acoustic guitar are front and centre throughout this disc, with subtle support where necessary, from bass, drums, percussion, accordion, flute, cello, violin and viola. The five songs penned by hit writer Hugh Prestwood include "April Fool," "Learning How To Love" and album closer, "Kiss Me Goodbye," while our own Clive Gregson supplies "My Favourite Lies."

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