

DUSTY RELICS

Red Sovine JUKE JOINT JOHNNY

Bear Family
BCD 17268 AH
★★★★☆

*Impressive
compilation of early Red Sovine up-tempo
recordings*

Red Sovine was one of the great unheralded country singers of the 1950s as this compilation proves. He excelled at straight honky-tonk like the fiddle-driven weeper *Till Today* and the up-tempo *Don't Worry* with classic barroom piano plonking away in the background. He also tackled novelty tunes such as *Okey Dokey* and *Billy Goat Boogie*, and even early slices of rock'n'roll including a dynamic rendition of Lattie Moore's *Juke Joint Johnny*. The good folks at Bear Family have a preference for rock'n'roll and rockabilly, often to the detriment of good solid country music, but at least on this 31 track compilation we do get a good helping of Red Sovine's more traditional-sounding country recordings though conspicuous by their absence are such early classics as the original recording of *Little Rosa*—Red's first narration hit—and the moving *If Jesus Came To Your House*. But being part of the 'Gonna shake this shack tonight' series there is an abundance of up-tempo tracks the best of which are *No Thanks Bartender* and *Wild Beating Heart*. There is one track out of context, Red's original version of *The Cajun Queen*, a single release on RCA that sunk without trace, but when covered by Jimmy Dean in 1962 became a country top 20 hit. Overall a pretty good collection by the late Red Sovine with the usual Bear Family booklet with full recording details, rare photos and loads of biographical information.

Alan Cackett

www.bear-family.com



Sweethearts Of The Rodeo SWEETHEARTS OF THE RODEO/ ONE TIME ONE NIGHT

SPV Country SPV
260812 CD
★★★★☆

Two re-issues from rodeo's sweethearts

Signing to Columbia Records in 1985, Sweethearts Of The Rodeo—a duo comprising Californian-born Oliver sisters,



Janis Gill (formerly married to Vince Gill) and Kristine Arnold—first rose to fame in the late 1980s with their distinct sound of contemporary traditionalism, lush two-part harmonies and hook-laden tunes. Throughout their predominant ten-year career the sisters—whom have recently released their new album, *RESTLESS* independently earlier this year—enjoyed several top ten single successes, including *Since I Found*, *Chains Of Gold*, *Blue To The Bone*, *I Feel Fine* and the infectiously chorused gem *Midnight Girl/Sunset Town*, to name but a few; all of which are included on this recent, double re-release of the sweethearts' first two albums: *SWEETHEARTS OF THE RODEO* (1986) and *ONE TIME ONE NIGHT* (1988).

Clearly knowing how to create memorable songs with hooky melodies and catchy arrangements, several non-top ten numbers really shine through on this revived collection, reminding us just why they found fame; *Hey Doll Baby*, *Gotta Get Away* and *Everywhere I Am* provide some very fine moments here; all three incredibly easy on the ears and inescapably unforgettable. The collection from the second release tells very much the same story as well, with the likes of *Gone Again*, *If I Never See Midnight Again*—its two-step rhythm, lush chorus and stunning harmonies making for a beautiful song—*Don't Look Down*, *You Never Talk Sweet* and the ballad-esque *Until I Stop Dancing* is just lovely. This collection provides the perfect re-introduction for any budding Sweethearts Of The Rodeo fan, sharing some of the girls' most celebrated numbers with a whole new audience. Pleasantly surprised and proud to say it, I'm certainly a fan! **Emily Saxton**

www.SweetheartsOfTheRodeo.com

Roger McGuinn BORN TO ROCK AND ROLL

Floating World
Records
★★★★

*Roger McGuinn's
solo sojourn with CBS
Records is summarised in twenty songs*

At 71 minutes duration, *BORN TO ROCK AND ROLL* gathers together 20 selections from McGuinn's five solo recordings for CBS Records (1973-1977). The Chicago-born musician's name is appended to 14 songs, ten being collaborations with his long-time



lyricist Jacques Levy. Of the remaining half-dozen titles, there's an arrangement of the trad—*The Water Is Wide*, plus, in order of appearance, covers penned by Charlie Rich (*Peace On You*), Spooner Oldham/Dan Penn (*Stone*), Joni Mitchell (*Dreamland*), Tom Petty (*American Girl*) and Bob Dylan (*Up To Me*); the latter being the musician to whom McGuinn will forever owe a debt for his '15 minutes of fame.'

Stylistically this compilation delivers snapshots of McGuinn's flirtations with jazz-rock (*My New Woman* and *Draggin*—the latter title replete with Beach Boy style high-harmonies) as well as country-rock, via a 1975 reprise of *Lover Of The Bayou* which originally appeared on The Byrds' *UNTITLED* (1970). The final song here, McGuinn's *Born To Rock And Roll*, made its debut on the reunion set *BYRDS* (1973) and two years later on *ROGER MCGUINN & BAND*, the latter being a solo collection McGuinn wishes he could expunge from his back pages. The Levy collaboration *Gate Of Horn* is to McGuinn's musical oeuvre, as *Creeque Alley* was to that of the late John Phillips. The lyric recalls the Chicago folk club that was owned and operated by Dylan's first manager, Albert Grossman, as well as the myriad of legendary folk musicians who graced its stage.

Same Old Sound finds Roger bemoan the in-concert musical 'straight jacket' that fans insist he wear, in terms of reprising Byrds hits. Between the first and second legs of Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue, assisted by David Bowie/Mott the Hoople alumni Mick Ronson (guitar), David Mansfield (guitar) of the Alpha Band, plus Rob Stoner (bass) and Howie Wyeth (drums), with Ronson producing, McGuinn recorded *CARDIFF ROSE*, acknowledged by reviewers and fans alike as his finest CBS solo release. Travelling back a few centuries, from the latter collection, the traditional sounding *Jolly Roger* celebrates the pirate life. As for the nom-de-plume of McGuinn's final CBS release *THUNDERBYRD* (1977), it acknowledges his participation in the legendary Rolling Thunder Revue (1975-1976).

This compilation first saw the light of day in 1991 on CBS Records. Apart from those musicians already name-checked, contributors to this compilation include Bob Dylan, original Byrds—David Crosby, Michael Clarke, Gene Clark and Chris Hillman, plus the late Dan Fogelberg.

Arthur Wood

www.floatingworldrecords.co.uk