



Bob Neuwirth "**Bob Neuwirth**" Water Records

This 1974 album was the initial opus in a recording career that has, in nigh thirty years, only seen the release of four other solo efforts, plus the 1994 concept collaboration with John Cale, "**Last Day On Earth.**" From San Francisco based, Water, one of the latest reissue labels *on the block*, this collection was originally a release on David Geffen's Asylum Records, and was overseen by songwriter/musician/producer and solo recording artist in his own right, the late Thomas Jefferson Kaye [d. Sept. 1993].

Neuwirth is supported by a virtual who's who of Nashville/West Coast players, including his close buddy Kris Kristofferson, the latter's long time keyboard player Donnie Fritts, and KK's then wife, Rita Coolidge. Also aboard are John Beland [Swampwater, Flying Burrito Bros.], Chris Hillman [Byrds, Flying Burrito Bros., Desert Rose Band], Stephen Bruton [Kristofferson, Bonnie Raitt], Terry Paul [Kristofferson's bass player] and Richie Furay [Buffalo Springfield, Poco]. As for those contributors who are now gone, they include vocalists Cass Elliott and Dusty Springfield. A number of cuts are supported by Jimmy Haskell string arrangements, while the songs featured boil down to seven Neuwith penned originals/co-writes and four covers. The latter quartet amount to Fritts' *big hearted* ballad "We Had It All," "Honky Red" from Canadian Murray McLaughlan, a less than two minute long rendition of Don Gibson's "Legend In My Time" [also covered by Hank Snow and Bob Dylan] a Country # 1 single for Ronnie Milsap in early 1975, and "Cowboys & Indians" from Bobby Charles/Ben Keith. Steel player Keith contributed to the sessions, which may explain the presence of the latter cut.

The uptempo opener "Rock & Roll Time" was co-penned with Kristofferson and Roger McGuinn, while Janis Joplin made "Mercedes Benz" famous, yet it was co-written with Neuwirth and beat poet/playwright Michael McClure [his works include "**Scratching The Beat Surface**" c. 1982]. Stuck in the genre groove, there's also a cut titled "Rock & Roll Rider," while "Country Livin'" contains reference to the, then, voguish *trip to the country to get it together*. Hailing for that period of the seventies when folk/country rock singer/songwriters were *ten a penny* it's great to have this quite acceptable, though hardly classic, disc available once more.

Folkwax Rating 6 out of 10

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