



Antje Duvekot **"Big Dream Boulevard"** Black Wolf Records

In late May 2006 Antje Duvekot was one of the annual, half-dozen New Folk Songwriting competition winners at this year's Kerrville Folk Festival [+]. A month earlier, and mostly produced by Seamus Egan leader of the Irish/American band Solas, **"Big Dream Boulevard"** was released by Boston's Black Wolf Records. A studio recording it had been preceded by this German/American's captured in concert self-releases **"Little Peppermints"** [2002] and **"Boys, Flowers, Miles"** [2005]. Of the eleven cuts on **"Big Dream Boulevard,"** six songs have been reincarnated from the latter recordings.

In the opening cut "Dandelion," at the outset, Duvekot's besotted narrator references couples from real life, the silver screen and literature, then turns the focus on her own situation *"And you were like my Hollywood movie, The butterflies and the Central Park kiss."* Addressing her love interest *"But you were looking for an orchid, And I will always be a dandelion,"* without bitterness, this seemingly steely individual reflects that [as a dandelion] 'she' may be invisible to the world, but is also wild and free, and well capable of *"throwing you a fire in the sky"* while all 'he' sought was a delicate, shrinking *"tea light."* "Dandelion" previously appeared on **"Boys, Flowers, Miles"** and this version was produced by Flynn [*], who is also credited as having provided the 'music.' Subjectively an 'I want out of this affair' song that references standing on the Lorelei rock, the rhythmic groove established on "Go Now" [**"Boys, Flowers, Miles"**] evolves into one that's cyclical and hypnotic on "Diamond On Your Hand," the first of a trio of new songs here co-written with Egan. Another love song, therein Antje embraces mankind's feelings of entrapment by life's vicissitudes *"Still feel like you're walking in a shoe box, mapping out a dead end, In the uncharted country, out on ecstasy's border."*

In "Jerusalem" Duvekot exchanges politics of the heart for those of the martyr with a gun or bomb, as she scrutinizes a front line city *"Where old grudges run deeper than mud."* "Sex Bandaid" [**"Boys, Flowers, Miles"**], produced by Seamus Egan and fellow Philadelphian Phil Roy, is a cautionary tale about succumbing to addiction, all *"For another damn spin on your merry-go-round."* "Helpless Kiss" co-written with Egan, opens with four lines that poetically depict destruction sic. a *"comet,"* 'headless statues,' the *"Great Wall of China"* – melting in the rain [oh Jimmy, what a web you once spun] - and *"Pompeii,"* then cuts to the chase *"The fog in our bedroom was thicker than before, I called your name and it felt like war."* Employing an all-American 20th century setting – ball games on a Sunday, with Coach Joseph – Duvekot's fictional "Judas" [**"Boys, Flowers, Miles"**] attempts to throw light on the disciple's early life. *"Judas' father would be drunk off his ass,"* and *"Last night Judas' father threw his son against the wall."* Like the *"I am invisible"* female narrator in "Dandelion," Antje attests how *"in the back of the schoolbus"* Judas was *"Invisible to everyone."*

Mike Brenner's lapsteel adds a country tinge to "Pearls" [**"Boys, Flowers, Miles"**], although this cut won't make the airwaves due to the presence of a 'parental cussing noun' in the closing line of the penultimate verse. It's the on the edge story, and reflection on life, of a drug addled junkie who trips on "Big Dream Boulevard," and has been waiting, forever, for some heaven sent grace. The thought occurs that, in life, to cure one's 'infirmity' you first have to acknowledge the problem. Cut from subjectively similar cloth, "South" is a 'this is/was my life' deliberation wherein Antje addresses *"The politicians in command"* who *"are washing their hands"* as well as 'a mother with the blues' who, similarly, lost touch with reality and with her offspring. Mortality and memory are the facets of life at play in Antje's "Anna" [**"Little Peppermints"**]. Aged eight-five, and surrounded by family – who she 'sees' as strangers, in her own mind this perplexed old lady is able to recall her early life via recollections of *"1925 in New Orleans."*

The languid album closer “Hold On,” co-written with Egan, counsels the listener to endure misfortune and hard times, because that’s how life is. Hidden at the end of this cut there’s a thirty-second long reprise of the “Go Now” chorus.....

As an entity “**Big Dream Boulevard**” is a low-key partially acoustic/partially electric affair, pleasant, but hardly earth shattering. A number of cuts suffer from a chorus that is over-long, but more particularly, repetitious to the point where the door marked “exit – access the next verse” vanishes. I found that aspect a personal irritation.....

Note.

[+] – During the early afternoon on the first Saturday and Sunday of every Kerrville Festival – this year was the 35th – sixteen New Folk finalists perform two songs each. Five of this year’s winners performed in the Sunday [and Texas] heat. Duvekot obviously stood out, as she was the fourth performer on Saturday.

[*] - Flynn produced Ellis Paul’s most recent recording “**American Jukebox Fables.**” Ellis and Antje are managed by Ralph Jaccodine, founder of Black Wolf. Ellis sings on three cuts on “**BDB.**”

Folkwax Score 7 out of 10

Arthur Wood.

Kerrville Kronikles 07/06.