

God (Andrew is clearly a believer as there is a short prayer on the back and we learn - again from the website - that she has been on a "a spiritual journey" of late) but it is often a little unclear.

The opener, *Angel Love*, introduces us to Andrew's soft, wispy, whispered rather intimate vocals which I found rather beguiling, and is good, if unremarkable pop fare. It has effective hooks and rich, sumptuous string arrangement with a particularly arresting tense, trembling passage just after the chorus. In fact the strings are remarkably good throughout and often threaten to upstage Andrew in some of the blander moments of the album.

The pacing is something of problem too; there are too many slow or medium slow cuts, especially at the beginning, indeed it is only at track seven that things slightly pick up tempo-wise with the spiffing *No Mystery*. This features busy percussion and a great call and response chorus that for some reason brought to mind the Spice Girls whom one could hear cutting this during their heyday. The lyric is still rather vague and woolly - more of a collection of random phrases joined together than a thought-through lyric (rather like Gibbs Brothers songs) - but whatever, it moves along at a lively pace, tracks well, sounds great and lifts the album when it really needs it.

Where Would I Be Without You has a surprisingly bluesy edge with Andrew singing out with a little more aggression than on most of the other tracks and there are some fine downhome guitar licks and soulful strings. The lyric is one of those that could be addressed to a either a lover or a higher power - I suspect the latter.

The album goes out with the biggest of finishes; *Lord Bless Me* is an unequivocal open prayer to the almighty complete with a grand and stately church choir. Very earnestly done.

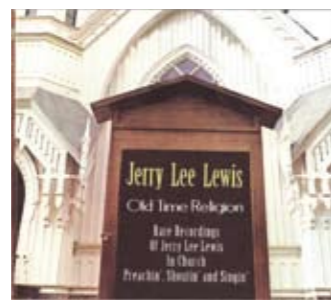
Child Of The Universal is an odd one really. For one thing, it is too long but then new artists who are also producing themselves are traditionally loathe to cut down on songs. Also, if Andrew is aiming at the country market, she really needs to rethink her

material. Country songs have a little more grit and dirt than the somewhat ethereal lyrics on offer here; there's very little - well, nothing actually - about real life stuff: the daily grind of paying the bills, kids, small towns, cheating lovers and whooping it up on Saturday night at a local honky tonk, the very essence of country. That said the production is very smooth and always interesting and Andrew's idiosyncratic vocals are sheer ear candy, at times extremely seductive and sexy. I'm sure we will hear more from Debra Andrew though it will be very interesting to see - and hear - what her next move will be.

Jon Philbert

**JERRY LEE LEWIS
Old Time Religion**

★★★★★



Looking For A City / I'm Longing For Home / Life's Railway To Heaven / Someone Who Cares For You / If We Never Meet Again / I'm Gonna Meet You In The Morning / On The Sawdust Trail / There'll Be Peace In The Valley / Precious Memories / The Old Rugged Cross / It Will Be Worth It All / I Know That Jesus Will Be There / I'm In The Gloryland Way / Tomorrow May Mean Goodbye / Amazing Grace / On The Jericho Road / I'll Fly Away / My God Is Real / When Jesus Beckons Me Home / I Won't Have To Cross Jordan Alone / Keep On The Firing Line
Producer: Jerry Lee Lewis
Bear Family
65:16

In 1970, Jerry Lee Lewis was at the height of his country music comeback. His stock in trade was hardcore ballads of booze, cheatin' and regret. So his record company must have gone into shock when the Killer renounced worldly music and decided he would from here

on only sing Gospel (the market for Christian music being tiny compared to that for country).

Nevertheless, Smash gamely sent a recording crew down to Brother E. J. Davis' Church on Highway 61 South, in Memphis, to capture Jerry Lee singing and preaching his way through a heartfelt - if rather surreal - service-cum-show.

To the label's doubtless relief, Lewis' salvation didn't last long. He was back cutting secular chart toppers like *Chantilly Lace* before his fans realised he'd been away. As a result, this 20-track album remained in the vaults until Bear Family included it on a Jerry Lee box set in the 1980s.

Finally now emerging as a stand alone CD it remains a remarkable piece of the Lewis jigsaw puzzle and well worth a listen even if you're the sort of non-believer for whom an hour in church sounds a lot less fun than 40 minutes of Jerry Lee tearing up the Star Club, Hamburg.

For one thing, there's a lot of fun in the realisation that while you can take the Killer out of the nightclubs you can't take the nightclubs out of the Killer. With constant echoes of his rock'n'roll patter he quips, "I might preach a little, you can't never tell about Jerry Lee!" As if barstools and pews are all the same to him, he points out that he has some albums for sale "after the show, I mean the service!"

There's no doubting his sincerity, though, or the charisma with which he testifies "Christ is number one to Jerry Lee Lewis!" Had his career taken a different course it quickly becomes clear that he could have given his cousin Jimmy Swaggart a run for his money as a big star TV evangelist.

As a singer, Lewis was at the top of his game and he approaches the Gospel repertoire with all the larger than life verve and nerve that has always distinguished his rock'n'roll and country songs.

Spoken lines are slipped in for dramatic effect followed by sung syllables stretched soaring into the stratosphere. Occasionally, he lets loose his right hand on some fiery piano licks and when he ramps up the pace for *I'll Fly Away* he's a hair's breadth from segueing into *Whole Lotta Shakin'*

Goin' On. He even kicks his heel up on the high keys, "Just to show you I could still do it!"

On one hand, then, this a rare glimpse of another side of Jerry Lee. On the other hand, it's proof that to the Killer there's only ever been one kind of music: Jerry Lee Lewis music.

Douglas McPherson

**THE KINGMAKERS
Last Night In Nashville**

★★★★★



Well Well Michelle (feat. The Jordanaires) / High Roller / Saturday Night / Annabelle (feat. The Jordanaires) / (False start) / Eight-Ton Jack / Water And Wine / Women and Weather / Memphis in '55 (feat. JM Van Eaton) / Prom Night Car Crash / Johnny Green / Beale St. Memphis TN Morning-After Blues / Annabelle (alt. take feat. JM Van Eaton & The Jordanaires) / Well Well Michelle (alt. take feat. JM Van Eaton & The Jordanaires)
Producer: not listed
Self release
28:05

The Kingmakers are from Ottawa, and are described as the city's "premier rockabilly, swing, jive, country rock and roll combo". The band are Clark Lawlor (vocals), John Cormier (guitar), Stephen K. Donnelly (upright bass), and Ian Cook (drums) but it is Stephen K. Donnelly who appears to be the lynchpin holding it all together. Donnelly is the primary songwriter in the band and can also be found of late on quite a few notable releases such as Uncle Sean & The Shifty Drifters, Ninety Pounds Of Ugly, and the stunning Ray Harris, all of which implies that Ottawa could well be a hotbed of hardcore honky tonk. It is also Donnelly who is responsible for

the retro-tastic artwork on the album.

This is The Kingmaker's third release and they have gone to Cowboy Jack Clement's studio in Nashville and enlisted the services of The Jordanaires and Rockabilly Hall of Famer JM Van Eaton who was the in-house drummer at Sun studios. The album is recorded "mostly live off the floor" which is nearly always a good thing, but does mean that some tracks finish rather abruptly or have false starts. Personally, I find it quite endearing but it's not always to everybody's taste.

The variety of styles they include certainly makes for a varied album. From the straight ahead rockabilly of the opening cut to the almost Blues Brothers-ish *High Roller*, the rock and roll of *Saturday Night*, the country of *Annabelle*, the Cajun flavoured *Women And Weather*, it's all here, but the band are at their best on the more rockin' cuts,

and in particular *Johnny Green*, *Well, Well Michelle* and the JM Van Eaton track *Memphis In '55*.

However, it is the variety which sets this album apart from straight rockabilly albums. Much as I love rockabilly, it can sometimes be hard to listen to a dozen or so tracks at the same, usually pretty frantic tempo, and whilst die-hard rockabilly fans are less likely to welcome the many styles of The Kingmakers, it is the very thing which makes this release stand out from the crowd. I'd like to bet they'd be pretty darn good live as well.

Duncan Warwick

**DUE WEST
Forget The Miles**

★★★1/2

22 Hours A Day / Country Music Made A Man Out Of Me / When The Smoke Clears / Bible And The Belt / Try Living In A Small Town / I Get That All The Time
Producer: Jason Deere & Jimmy

Nichols
Black River
22:22



Yet another of these promo six-packs again courtesy of Black River Records; *Forget The Miles* introduces us to Due West, the label's new signing. Not quite a debut since there was a self financed album in 2009, *Bigger Than Me*. Almost signed to RCA, the group was lost in the shuffle with the merger of Sony with BMG, one of those perennial hazards that effect artists in these corporate

days. Either way, the group comprise a trio of guys, Tim Gates, Brad Hull and Matt Lopez, all with pretty fair track records as writers chalking up cuts on such diverse acts as Lady Antebellum, Bucky Covington and the Gaither Brothers. The group's sound is young and fresh and aimed solely at a younger demo and very firmly targeted at current country radio.

The debut single, *I Get That All The Time* has been and gone, peaking at 17 on Music Row's chart, apparently the highest charting independent single of 2009. It's a slow, thoughtful piece on the subject of temptations being offered to the singer. He is approached first by a drug dealer on the street (wearing "a backwards baseball hat") who offers him narcotics while, later on, another temptation is provided by a sexy woman in a cotton dress. Our man valiantly and

In warm and loving memory of three dear friends
Al Moir (journalist) 3 December 2010
Bill Clarke (musician) 10 December 2010
Ed Pearson (entertainer) 25 February 2011

“Ask how a man’s glory begins and ends and say that my glory was that I had such friends!”

W.B. Yeats (Irish poet)

and - in the words of a George V song
“We will meet again!”

GEORGE HAMILTON IV

May 13, 14, 15 - 'Whitby Gospel Music Convention' Whitby, Yorkshire

May 16 - 'St Mark's Church' Marske-By-Sea (nr. Redcar), North Yorkshire - with Tony Goodacre

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