

Steve Ludwig and the Casual Hobos

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CD: Deepest Shade of Blue

Artist: Steve Ludwig and the Casual Hobos

Label: n/a

Artist Website: none listed.

It's 3:30 in the morning and there is no one to call even if I had a phone number. I'm not one who makes a call when reviewing a CD, but in this case, I'd make an exception. Even if I had a phone number, no one wants to chat at 3:30AM, and a looming deadline tables the motion to call later because by the time later gets here, I'll be through with this review. Google reveals no web site. There is no label information on the CD jacket. I don't know anything about Steve Ludwig and the Casual Hobos other than what is revealed on the CD jacket, which is little other than the names and duties of the participants. Is it me? Am I missing something? There is something to be said for making things easy for the reviewer.

Here's what was revealed on the CD Jacket. There are eight original songs penned by Steve Ludwig, who is a BMI affiliated artist. The musicians are Steve Ludwig, lead vocals and guitar; Trish Imbragno, bass on all tracks but one; Jason Ericsson, banjo; Marina Pendleton, fiddle, and mandolin on songs 1, 5, and 6; Stephanie Green, fiddle on songs 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8; and Sam Stuckey, tenor vocals and bass on song 6. Stuckey also recorded, mixed, and mastered this CD; the CD photos are attributed to one Kristinite, and a train logo on the back cover is attributed to one Kel-Kel.

The songs are:

Good Thing I Like Falling Too

Down in the Deepest Shade of Blue

The Old Place

When Your Love Triangle Turns to Square

Again in My Dreams

Don't Leave Early from the Party

I'm So Dumb That I'm Happy

Just a Friend

I was able to discern quite a bit more by listening to the CD four times straight through, three on a trip to town yesterday, which was easy enough because it is a thirty-minute drive to town and I took a rambling, circuitous route home (a COVID side effect: a ramble through the countryside just because I can), and one more time this morning. The CD is cued up and playing as I write this. By the time I'm finished writing, it'll be five times through. That really says more than the sparse writing, since most CDs that pass my way can't make it through five listens.

My favorite songs are The Old Place, which had me smiling and recalling the sound of The Whitstein Brothers, which is a powerfully good thing; the country ballad When Your Love Triangle Turns to Square which features Ludwig's voice-breaking, yodel-esque tenor, reminiscent of Hank Senior, or Emmett Miller, depending on how far one's musical tastes venture back; Again in My Dreams; Don't Leave Early from the Party; and I'm So Dumb That I'm Happy, another love gone wrong country ballad.

In a hand-written note to the publisher, Ludwig stated that

they “drew inspiration from Reno and Smiley, Flatt & Scruggs, and many, many more.” I hear those influences, including the many, many more. More than one song on this CD had me recalling the Flatt & Scruggs song Why Did You Wander, which is testimony to their influence. I particularly enjoyed Jason Ericsson’s outstanding banjo playing: tone, timbre, attack, timing, and taste; the banjo break on Just a Friend thumped from start to finish. I found Marina Pendleton’s fiddle work particularly enjoyable.

I completely understand budget constraints of the recording and manufacturing of a CD, but I think the overall CD would have benefited from an unconnected mastering step. By the time one gets to the mastering phase, the recording and mixing engineer can become too close to the music to objectively hear the overall sound. This is the exact place where the ears of the mastering engineer are the most beneficial. It was enjoyable, still, though it had me scrambling for the EQ.

Steve Ludwig is on the right track. I admire original music, which enables one to develop their own sound even through their multiple influences. Original music is risky and so is venturing out to create one’s own sound. The risk is worth the reward. Keep risking, Steve Ludwig. I’m liking what I’m hearing.

Mississippi Chris Sharp

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1/27/21

Bluegrass Duet Starlett and Big John Signs with Turnberry Records

Bluegrass Duet Starlett and Big John Signs with Turnberry Records

February 2, 2021—Rancho Mirage, Calif.—It is with delight that Turnberry Records and Management announces acquisition of new talent to be added to its roster of quality recording artists. Bluegrass duet Starlett and Big John have been signed to a 2-CD deal at the burgeoning label.

The duo is comprised of 38-year music veteran and Virginian, Big John Talley, who has performed with various outfits including New Dominion Bluegrass, and whose performance resume includes many appearances with Bill Monroe and The Bluegrass Boys—including at the Grand Ole Opry—as well as with Jackie Phelps (Hee Haw), Tater Tate and Jodi Rainwater. Guitarist Talley is joined by the talented Starlett Boswell Austin, a singer since childhood recognized as bassist and vocalist with Lawson Creek Grass.

This relatively new pairing of two lifelong musicians to form the duo represents a somewhat new direction, and goes hand-in-hand with their new partnership entered into with Turnberry.

“We’re super excited to be on the Turnberry label,” Big John said. “We think this will be a great relationship between a great label and ourselves.”

“This is definitely a dream come true,” Starlett said. “I’m excited for the music that we’re making.”

That music includes the record "Till the End of the Road," the duo's initial release via Turnberry. The first single from the record is expected to drop on February 8. When released, the full 12-track album will include three originals penned solo by Starlett; two co-written by her and Big John; and a song each by experienced songwriters Keith Driver and Barney Rogers. Also included are Starlett and Big John renditions of older tunes by Earl Taylor, Bill Monroe and more.

"We're excited about the album, which is already recorded," Big John said. "We've got some heavy hitters. The guys we played with are our dream band."

Those "dream band" musicians also appearing on the upcoming record include: Jonathan Dillion (mandolin), David Carroll (banjo) and Ron Stewart (fiddle).

Stewart—bluegrass multi-instrumentalist and winner of IBMA "Player of the Year" awards for both fiddle and banjo—created the liner notes for the record and wrote of the CD: "Great original material, a couple of deep catalogue classics, some newer gems, great singing, great picking, good production, it's all there." He said he was "thrilled" to be asked to provide fiddle for the record.

Turnberry Records and Management looks forward to bringing new music to the world. Located in Rancho Mirage, Calif., the label is a division of The Bluegrass Standard Magazine, which provides in-depth interviews with both the stars—and the up-and-coming new artists—in the worlds of bluegrass, country, Americana and folk. For more information about Starlett and Big John, or about the label and magazine, visit www.turnberryrecords.com or www.thebluegrassstandard.com

The Mountain Miner Motion Picture Soundtrack

The Mountain Miner Motion Picture Soundtrack

CD: *The Mountain Miner Motion Picture Soundtrack*

Artist: Various

Label: Alt452 Records

The Bluegrass Standard published an in-depth article about the film *The Mountain Miner*. (See *The Bluegrass Standard Vol. 4 Issue 5 – The Mountain Miner*) I have not seen the film, but I have listened to the soundtrack several times now. *The Mountain Miner Motion Picture Soundtrack* is a significant collection and recording of folk music. There are thirty-nine tracks of closely recorded unadorned Appalachian folk music for one to enjoy. Some tunes are so closely recorded, one can hear the groans and vocalizations of the fiddle box and its uh-uh-uh with every stroke of the bow (as in *Brushy Fork of John's Creek*). At times, one can hear the friction of the bow hair grabbing the fiddle strings in addition to the notes. One can hear the fingernails on the banjo strings and the percussive explosion of the notes from a loose, twelve-inch skinhead (as in *Ever Been to Ohio?*). That is close. It makes for some mighty enjoyable fiddle and banjo music, or so it does to my ears. When these types of sounds are heard, it is an indication of how close one is to the music. Close is good.

The singing is straightforward, durable, timeless. The tunes, mostly traditional with a smattering of new originals, are as timeless as the performance model. "Old-timey," some might shrug and say. Yes, it is old-timey. But it is also

uncomplicated music, music playable on the front porch as indeed some of the soundtrack's tunes are indicated so in the song list. I like porch music. I like funky-tuned fiddles. I like funky-tuned slack-key open-back fretless banjos. I like modal ballads, unconventional modal melodies and harmonies, modal fiddles, mixed modalities, and a good smattering of modal madness. This soundtrack will provide some welcome relief for one who craves a daily Mixolydian fix; maybe there aren't so many of us, but it is a powerful addiction.

The Soundtrack, taken as a whole, is an old-time Appalachian journey in and of itself. While I haven't seen the movie, I am pleased with the journey afforded by the soundtrack. The images evoked by the music are my own, not those suggested by the filmmaker. I am not able to adequately convey the images coaxed forth by *Kingdom Come (part 2)*, with the DDAD fiddle and the slack, fretless banjo's bass notes. It is powerful, joyful, mournful, dark, light, foreboding, forbidding, yielding, and welcoming all at the same time, which is a remarkable achievement. *Across the Ohio* is a beautiful, simple tune, sang in wonderful unadorned harmony. *Coming from the Ball* made Uncle Dave Macon proud; he'd gleefully slice off a slab of his last country ham and pass his final still-house jug around to get to hear that one more time.

Favorites: *Old Jim Sutton (porch)*, *Sugar Baby*, *Short Time Here*, *Long Time Gone*, *Darlin' Corey (porch)*, *Glory in the Meeting House*, *Little Birdie (part 1)*, *Fireflies* (and its haunting funky slack-tuned banjo), *Kingdom Come (part 1)*, *Pay Them No Mind*, *Shakin' Down the Acorns*, *I'm Going to a City (Where the Roses Never Fade)*, *Ever Been to Ohio?*, *Little Birdie (part 2)*, *Rye Straw*, *Brushy Fork of John's Creek*, *The Day Is Past and Gone*, *Kingdom Come (part 2)* [my favorite!!!], *Across the Ohio*, and *Coming from the Ball (Don't Get Weary Children)*.

I salute everyone associated with this soundtrack: The producers, the ones who selected the music, the ones who performed the music, and those who recorded the music. Having

been taken on a journey by the soundtrack, I now need to see how much further I can be carried by hearing the soundtrack as part of the film. I expect it will be much further. We'll see. Based on the soundtrack, alone, everyone should plan on seeing *The Mountain Miner*. The various artists are too many to mention here, but each one I heard gave me a place of joy and respite, which is a thing every artist hopes to achieve.

The Mountain Miner Motion Picture Soundtrack, download, streaming, or CD, is available through all major music outlets.

Mississippi Chris Sharp

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By Your Side

CD: By Your Side

Artist: Brograss

Label: Crozier Farm

Artist Website: <http://www.brograssmusic.com>

Songs:

1. Sunday Morning
2. Fortunate Son
3. Powderfinger
4. Don't Think Twice It's All Right
5. Standing By Your Side
6. Lay Down Your Weary Tune

7. Mockingbird
8. The Cypress Hills
9. Turn Your Radio On
10. Hard Steel Mill
11. Road To Columbus
12. Saint John's Train
13. Don't Give Your Heart To A Rambler

By Your Side, by Brograss (brothers Tashi and Kaj Litch), just kept turning up on top of my CD stack in spite of having set it aside several times. It apparently turned up the right number of times for me to pop it in the CD player. I had to warm up to this CD, but my motor is still running. The more I listened, the more I liked its sibling harmony, fresh interpretations of cover songs, and young voices on the edge of maturity. Beautiful octave mandolin musings from Pacific Northwest old-time powerhouse entertainer Caleb Klauder didn't hurt, either. If this is the way young acoustic musicians sound in the Pacific Northwest, I'm ready for some more.

This is folk/Americana/Bluegrass(y) music. Favorites songs are John Fogerty's *Fortunate Son*; Neil Young's *Powderfinger*; *Lay Down Your Weary Tune*, a Dylan song rarely heard; *Turn Your Radio On*; *Hard Steel Mill*; and a rousing rendition Kenny Baker's *Road to Columbus*. The brothers do an admirable duet cover of Dylan's *Don't Think Twice*, injecting some chutzpah and keeping it away from the assignation of tedious, freshened by their remarkable harmonies. *Don't Think Twice* is a fun song for live, but hard to pull off on an album. Salute!

The songs run from poignant, soulful, reflective, inspirational, and just plain fun. All in all, it enjoyable from start to finish, which leaves me wondering why I had to warm up to it. Sometimes its the albums you have to warm up to that stick with you. I think this one stuck.

The aforementioned Caleb Klauder shared a producer credit along with the Litch brothers. The CD was recorded and mixed by Henri Bredouw. Mastering was done by Nettleingham Audio, all of whom, in my opinion, did a fine job. I mention this because some CDs, unlike this one, are simply not pleasant to listen to.

I'd like to hear the Litch Brothers and the full Brograss lineup live sometime. Until then, I'll keep **By Your Side** by my side. Having warmed up to it, I've been warmed by it.

Mississippi Chris Sharp

Old Road New Again

CD: Old Road New Again

Artist: The Dillards

Label: Pinecastle Recording Company

Artist Website: RodneyDillard.tv

Label Website: pinecastlemusic.com

Songs:

1. ***Earthman***
2. ***Save the Last Dance for Me***
3. ***Common Man***
4. ***Always Gonna Be You***
5. ***Funky Ole Hen***
6. ***Sweet Companion***
7. ***The Whole World Round***

8. *Tearing Our Liberty Down*
9. *My Last Sunset*
10. *Old Road New Again*
11. *Take Me Along for the Ride*

I'm not exactly sure when The Dillard's' **Old Road New Again** arrived in my mailbox, but it languished around my desk for a couple of weeks before I gave it a listen. I'm not sure what I expected, but no doubt I expected something. The Dillard's have been part of the Americana music scene for a long time, first coming to my memory as The Darlins on The Andy Griffith Show. Later on, their collaboration with John Hartford on the Dillard Hartford Dillard album *Glittergrass from the Nashwood Hollyville Strings* (1977) was the first real Dillard experience I had, and to this day is still one of my favorite albums. So, I had some expectations, but not really sure what they might be since the passing of Doug Dillard in 2012. Though Doug had had his own band and solo career, I never thought of Rodney without thinking of Doug and vice versa.

On the first listen, my expectations were exceeded. On the second listen, my now much higher expectations were again exceeded. This is a very enjoyable album, musically and lyrically. It has a depth in communication that is rare and refreshing. An all star cast of guest artists doesn't hurt a thing, either: Don Henley (The Eagles), Ricky Skaggs, Herb Pedersen (Desert Rose Band, among others), Sharon and Cheryl White (The Whites), Bearnie Leadon (The Eagles), and Sam Bush.

Favorite songs are *Earthman*; a surprisingly sporty rendering of The Drifters' *Save The Last Dance For Me*, arranged perfectly as a bluegrass song, featuring some fine slap bass; the soulful *Common Man*, with another nod to the bassist Gary Smith; *Always Gonna Be You*, and Beverly Dillard's beautiful clawhammer banjo, Andy Leftwich's poignant fiddle, Gary Smith's bowed bass, and Don Henley's harmony vocals...it gave me a bad case of chicken skin!!; *Sweet Companion*, a sweet foot-patting duet featuring Rodney and Beverley; *My Last Sunset*,

again with Rodney and Henley teaming up for this powerful folk-rock song; and the title cut, *Old Road New Again*, with Bernie Leadon's banjo work. That's seven favorites out of eleven songs, remarkable considering the other four songs would all make honorable mention.

Salute to veteran producer Bil VornDick, who also engineered and mixed this recording; just perfect!

Mississippi Chris Sharp

Bridges and Backroads

CD: *Bridges and Backroads*

Artist: Jerry Salley

Label: Very Jerry Records

Artist Website: JerrySalley.com

Jerry Salley is a powerful songwriter and performer. On ***Bridges and Backroads***, he gives us twelve of his songs, all penned with a variety of co-writers. He also manages to assemble an impressive band, including everyone's favorite bassist, Mike Bub. The background vocalists are an all-star cast: Carl Jackson, Val Storey, Larry Cordle, Rhonda Vincent, and others.

Jerry is at the top of Nashville's songwriting royalty, and he gives us quite a treat on this CD. The song list is:

- 1. Miss My Miss in Mississippi
- 2. Let Me Be the Bridge
- 3. I Take the Backroads

- 4. Waltz Through the Ages
- 5. You Can't Hear a Heartbreak
- 6. How I Want to Be Remembered
- 7. A Memory Like Mine
- 8. Be Better to Your Neighbor
- 9. Dyin' To Hold Her Again
- 10. Hillbilly Lilly
- 11. Without Forgiveness
- 12. Life To My Days

I listened to this several times (no kidding!), with the CD starting out big and getting bigger with each listen, until I now find myself humming the tunes and bursting out loud in a chorus or two of my favorites. This does not happen to me much, anymore; I am thankful this CD brought it out of me.

My favorites:

Of course, the uptempo *Miss My Miss in Mississippi*, the first song, was destined to be one of my faves. How could I not like it? Every landmark mentioned, every road, every thought of getting home to my own Mississippi Miss might as well have come from my own life. I enjoyed the Osborne Brothers-esque vocal flourish at the end.

I Take The Backroads also tapped into my psyche. Backroads give every bit as much in views and memories as what they cost in travel time. I particularly enjoyed the banjo work of Greg "Papaw" Davis. Davis' banjo had just what I like in syncopated notes and fat tone.

Waltz Through The Ages, a beautiful duet with Rhonda Vincent, will bring a joyful tear to a glass eye.

You Can't Hear A Heartbreak would be a good selection for a single release. It is a medium tempo Bluegrass ballad that should smoothly transition to other genres. Once again, "Papaw" Davis' banjo got my attention, along with some beautiful fiddle work from Jason Roller.

A Memory Like Mine, co-written with my friend Jim McBride, is a dark ballad of pain and hurt. Some memories are painful, but inescapable. The background vocals are beautifully haunting. "The truth never changes and the past never dies, when you've got a memory lie mine." I know a good line when I hear one.

Be Better To Your Neighbor is a straight ahead bluegrass tune, and calls to mind the Louvin's *If You Don't Love Your Neighbor Then You Don't Love God*; that is a good thing. You want better neighbors? Be a better neighbor. The banjo playing of Aaron McDaris got my attention this time; his tone and touch had me thinking Sonny Osborne, which should make any banjo player smile a big smile.

Hillbilly Lilly, had to grow on me, but it grew and grew until I think now it might just be my overall favorite song on the CD. At first, I found it downright disturbing. I don't know what changed other than I acquired a taste for its musical complexity. *Hillbilly Lilly* the person is as complex as the arrangement. There are great instrumental segues on this song. I find myself "Hey", "Ho", and "Yeahing" as I walk up the path from my studio to the house, as I bush-hog through overgrown pastures on hot August days, even as I write this. It is a powerful song. If it seems too in-your-face at first listen, give it another. I did. It won me over.

I first heard *Without Forgiveness* when my niece's husband, Jason Davidson, recorded it for his own remarkable Gospel/Contemporary Christian CD, *He Came Searching For Me*, in 2017. I liked it then, I still like it now. This is a powerful song. When Jason played the song for me prior to the CD release, I asked him who wrote it. When he told me, I said, "That's some powerful songwriting talent." That was not an overstatement.

Life To My Days is the song I most find myself singing, for a variety of reasons. Jerry Salley may have saved the best for last.

Hmmm. That's nine favorites out of twelve songs. I like the other three, too. I reckon the thing to say is that this is a fine piece of work, including the engineering, recording, mixing, and mastering. As is my habit, I put it on to play loud through my studio monitors just to see if I could find audio anomaly I could complain about. There were no complaints from me; none. My wife has her own stained glass studio in the same building as me, separated by a dog run bay in between us. My Mississippi Miss complained that I had the music way too loud.

Spoil Sport.

Mississippi Chris Sharp

8/22/20

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Luke McKnight Signs with Turnberry Records

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Luke McKnight – of “Jim and Jesse” Fame – Signs with Turnberry Records

August 18, 2020—Fast-growing record label Turnberry Records is excited to announce the acquisition of mandolin player and bluegrass artist Luke McKnight, who was recently added to its expanding roster of quality recording artists.

McKnight – talented grandson of mandolin player Jesse McReynolds, of the Grand Ole Opry's “Jim and Jesse” fame – has

himself appeared twice as a solo act at the Opry. He spent approximately 15 years touring and performing with his grandfather, and also performs as a solo artist.

In addition to appearing onstage at the Ryman, McKnight has graced the stages of other world-renowned venues, including at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. McReynolds said he's also "played just about every bluegrass festival there is."

One of the reasons McKnight signed the two-year, two-CD recording deal was due to a rapport with Turnberry Records owner, Keith Barnacastle.

"I'm very excited about the relationship [with Turnberry]," McKnight said. "Keith and I seem to share a lot of the same feelings and opinions."

Between the ages of 14 and 30, McKnight performed with "Jim and Jessie" as a regular member of The Virginia Boys, which he said is a highlight of his career. Over the years since, he's had varied life experiences, including serving as a fireman and as a tour bus driver for top-notch acts in the music world.

McKnight said right now, he's excited to go full-throttle into recording the upcoming Turnberry Records CD, which currently has no announced release date.

"It's something I've wanted to do for a long time," Mc Knight said. "It'll be released as soon as possible."

He's carried down family tradition by playing in the crosspicking style taught him by his notable grandfather.

McKnight hinted there will always be somewhat of an Americana/bluegrass feel to his work, but it's possible the release – expected to contain as many as 12 tracks – might not be straight-down-the-line traditional bluegrass.

"Content-wise, you never know," McKnight hinted. "I don't

consider myself a traditional bluegrass artist per se...you never know what I'm gonna come up with. I'm not a big fan of 'genre.' I just don't like the word. I'm just a fan of good music."

Turnberry is excited to be recording the "good music" of a talent such as McKnight, and welcomes him to the record label family with much positivity about the future of this incredible artist.

Turnberry Records and Management – headquartered in Rancho Mirage, Calif., is a division of The Bluegrass Standard Magazine, which provides in-depth interviews with both the stars – and the up-and-coming – in the worlds of bluegrass, country, Americana and folk. For more information, visit Thebluegrassstandard.com.

Greg Blake Brings His Rich Appalachian Sound to Turnberry Records

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Singer/Songwriter Greg Blake Brings His Rich Appalachian Sound to Turnberry Records

August 19, 2020 – Turnberry Records – a Division of The Bluegrass Standard Magazine, headquartered in Rancho Mirage, Calif. – is excited to announce a new relationship with Greg Blake. The guitarist and singer/songwriter has signed on for a two-record deal with the fast-growing record label primarily representing bluegrass, country and Americana artists.

“I’m really honored and humbled to be invited to join the Turnberry team,” Blake said.

Twice-nominated for SPBGMA’s “Traditional Male Vocalist of the Year” category and a five-time winner as SPBGMA’s “Guitarist of the Year,” Blake – a former minister – is known not only for his solo work, but for his work with Jeff and Tristan Scroggins as a member of Jeff Scroggins and Colorado. Blake also has under his belt a win in the Kansas State Flatpicking Championship.

He is pleased to be working with label owner and publisher Keith Barnacastle and Turnberry Vice-President of Records, Jeff Brown.

“I really like what Keith has done with the Bluegrass Standard,” Blake said, “and I’m excited to be on the ground floor with him and my good friend Jeff Brown in building a record label that will be influential in the bluegrass and roots music community at this present time and for years to come.”

Blake said it means a lot to him that Turnberry has essentially said, “I believe in you and your music, and I want to see you develop to your fullest potential. That’s a good foundation for a successful partnership.”

Blake said the first record he releases with Turnberry will be a solo recording, and the one following, with his new band. As of now, no exact date is set for the first release. This will be Blake’s second album; his debut solo recording was “Songs of Heart and Home,” released in 2015.

“The first will be all-new originals, mostly written or co-written by me, or at the least, never recorded before,” Blake explained. “The other project will feature my new Midwest-based band out of Kansas City, Greg Blake and Hometown.”

“The solo project will be a mixture of traditional and

contemporary bluegrass and traditional country music, whereas the Hometown CD will be straight-ahead, traditional bluegrass," he added.

Turnberry Records is pleased to welcome this talented musician who appeals to bluegrass, folk, country and gospel fans. A true voice of Appalachian music, Blake is expected to be a successful addition to the Turnberry Records growing roster of recording artists. For more information on Greg Blake or on Turnberry Records, visit Thebluegrassstandard.com.

Net Radio Dogs Signs Syndication Agreement with Fishnet

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Net Radio Dogs Road Show Radio Program Signs Syndication Agreement with Fishnet

July 15, 2020 – The Bluegrass Standard Magazine is pleased to announce exciting news for the Net Radio Dogs Road Show. The magazine is a major sponsor of this bluegrass and Americana music show, hosted by radio personality Rick Dollar and currently available via the Bluegrass Country radio network.

The internet radio program will greatly expand its listening audience and enter syndication via a recently-made deal with Fishnet Syndications, through which affiliates across the country will now be able to pick up the program for broadcast on traditional terrestrial radio stations.

This tremendous growth opportunity will put both the music – and intelligent, in-depth interviews with top notch musicians – within reach of a significantly wider audience. The agreement with Fishnet moves the show from being accessible only via internet to also being accessible through terrestrial radio stations. Becoming syndicated is a highly-coveted accomplishment, and involves a significant broadening of both the program's stature and potential audience.

Some might recognize Dollar not just as the voice of the Net Radio Dogs Road Show, but also as the charismatic former executive director of Kingsport, Tennessee's Mountain Music Museum of the Appalachian Cultural Music Association.

Dollar said there are currently six or seven radio affiliates who have already picked up the show, which will go into active syndication broadcast in several weeks. He said the sky's the limit to how many might air the program, as new affiliates "are being added daily." The weekly one-hour program will air on different days on different stations, but Dollar said many are scheduling his program for a time slot on Saturdays.

"We're looking at a great shot of getting in a lot of stations," Dollar said, his enthusiasm apparent.

Net Radio Dogs Road Show has featured interviews with some of the biggest names in bluegrass and other roots genres. In just the past year, Dollar has interviewed artists such as Ricky Skaggs and Doyle Lawson, and said he has an exciting roster of more recognizable names slated to appear on future shows this fall and beyond. Net Radio Dogs Road Show usually features a "Spotlight Artist of the Week" segment, a Top 5 Americana/Bluegrass Countdown, and more.

Dollar cites The Bluegrass Standard magazine's support as a big part of his show's success.

"The Bluegrass Standard has always stood by us," he said. "The magazine is our primary sponsor."

Dollar said the Covid-19 pandemic creates even more reason to be bullish on the future of both terrestrial and internet radio, since it can be enjoyed from home and while socially distancing. The Net Radio Dogs Road Show, he believes, is the perfect accompaniment to keep on top of the bluegrass world while festivals, concerts and other events might be limited.

“Mostly, what we’re seeing now, is that this is a time for radio to flourish,” Dollar said.

The Bluegrass Standard is proud of its sponsorship of this radio show, and looks forward to continuing its support of excellent programming that helps both preserve – and bring forward into the future – the traditions of bluegrass.

The program may be accessed at 88.5 HD-2 / Bluegrasscountry.org and hopefully soon, via a radio station in your listening area.

For more information on The Bluegrass Standard Magazine, visit Thebluegrassstandard.com.

Ordinary Soul

CD: Ordinary Soul

Artist: Stephen Mougín

Label: Dark Shadow Recording

Artist Website: stephenmougin.com

Label Website: darkshadowrecording.com

Songwriter, singer, guitarist, producer, and Sam Bush Band stalwart, Stephen Mougín has released a new CD, Ordinary Soul

through his Dark Shadow Recording label. Ordinary Soul has ten Mougins original songs, ranging from hot bluegrass to poignant country ballads, featuring an all star band. The stellar songwriting and singing of Mougins, and contributions from banjoist Ned Luberecki, fiddlers Laura Orshaw and Becky Buller, and the mandolin and fiddle of the instantly recognizable Sam Bush bring some heavyweight power to this CD.

Twelve well produced songs give one a lot of listening for their money. The song selection is as follows:

- (1) New Beginnings
- (2) Color Me Lonely
- (3) The Song That I call Home
- (4) Railroad Man
- (5) A Place for a Fool
- (6) On the Riverside
- (7) Play Me a Sad Song Again
- (8) Last Time for Everything
- (9) Only You and You Alone
- (10) Handful of Dust
- (11) You Only Like Old Things
- (12) I'm Gonna Ride

Favorites are *New Beginnings*; *Railroad Man*, a real thumper where the overall vibe and the fiddling of Sam Bush put me in mind of the original Newgrass Revival; the country shuffle *A Place for a Fool* with Mike Bub's delightful walking bass, *On the Riverside* with its delightful harmonies; the waltz-time dirge, *Play Me A Sad Song Again*; *Last Time for Everything*, with Ned Luberecki's hot banjo work and a particularly enjoyable mandolin break from Cory Piatt (and if I spelled that wrong, sorry Cory. My ears are better than my eyes and I had to get out the magnifying glass to read the extremely small type); the forbodingly dark *Handful of Dust*, penned by Becky Buller; and perhaps my favorite favorite, *You Only Like Old Things*, featuring just Mougins and his guitar. There's nothing like one voice and one guitar. The line "Will I ever

be part of your sepia tone world” just grabbed this songwriter. I admire a good line when I hear it. This is a good one.

That’s seven favorites out a twelve song selection. That says a lot. I had the opportunity to work the Alabama Folk School with Mougín a few years ago. I enjoyed him and his guitar all alone on the stage. I now enjoy Ordinary Soul, from an extraordinary musician. I listened to this CD all the way through six times. It starts out good and gets better with every listen.

That’s the way it should be.

Mississippi Chris Sharp

8/22/20

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