

John Reischman

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CD Review

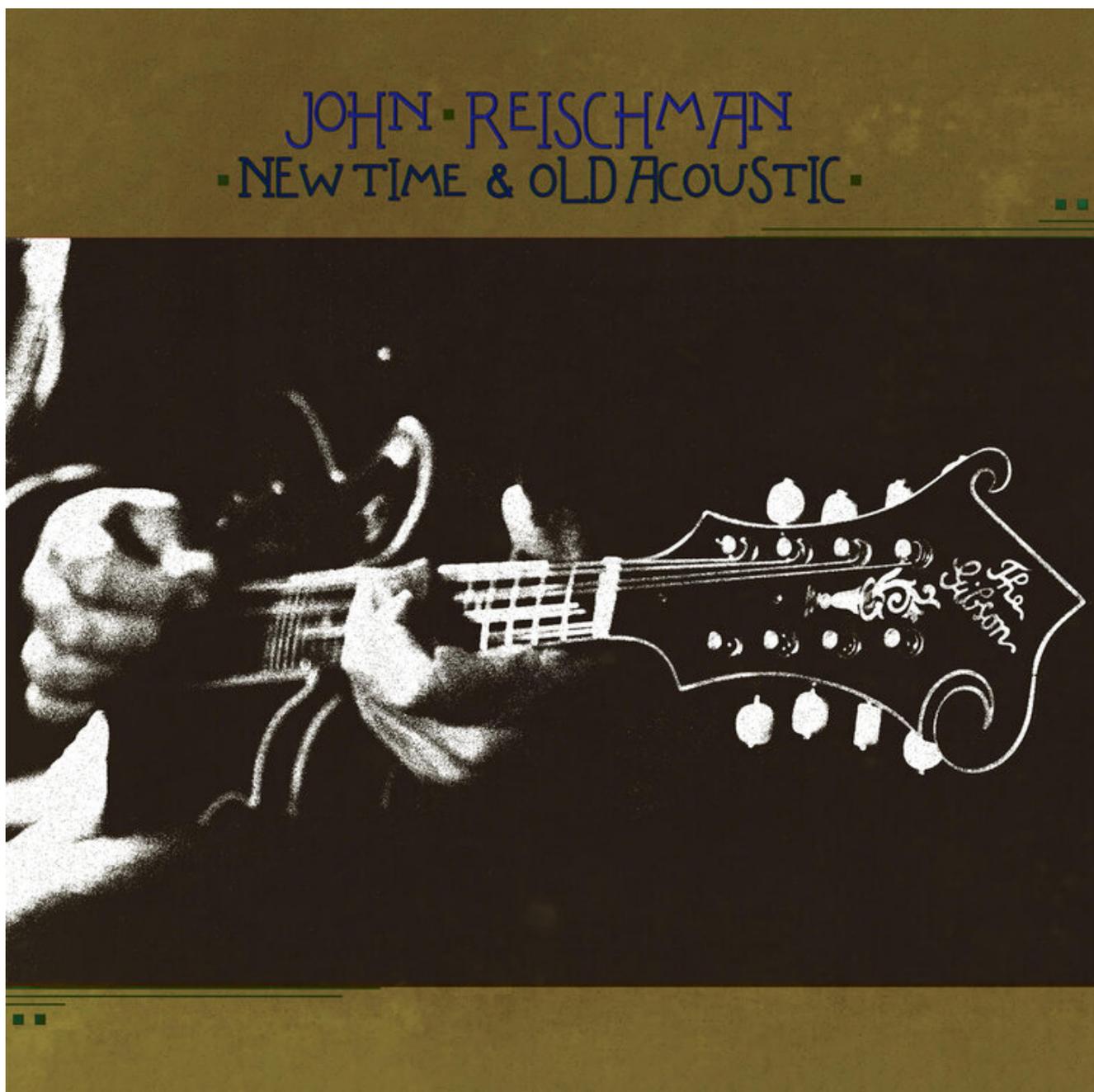
CD: **New Time & Old Acoustic**

Artist: John Reischman

Artist Website: johnreischman.com

Label: Corvus Records CR206

Label Website: corvusbg.com



The more I listen to John Reischman's all instrumental **New**

Time & Old Acoustic CD, the more I like it. I liked it at first listen, but it has grown on me. Reischman assembled an all-star cast of West Coast musicians to give it that West Coast style, not rushed even with speed. I like that sound. The players are many and several: John Reischman, of course, on his mandolin and occasionally the octave mandolin; Alex Hargreaves of fiddle; Molly Tuttle on guitar; Max Schwartz on Bass; Allison DeGroot on banjo; Mike Witcher, Dobro; Sharon Gilchrist, mandolin and bass; Sullivan Tuttle, guitar; Trent Freeman, fiddle; Chris Jones, guitar; Nick Hornbuckle, banjo; Chris Eldridge, guitar; Todd Phillips, bass; Jim Nunally, guitar; Patrick Sauber, banjo and guitar; Greg Spatz, fiddle; Jason Romero, banjo; Pharis Romero, guitar; Patrick Metzger, bass; Karrnel Sawitsky on violin; Ben Plotnik, viola; Eric Wright, cello; Quinn Bachand, guitar; and Trisha Gagnon on bass. These musicians are all over the CD, not all playing at once, but I can't say I would mind it if I heard the tune with them all. They all did a fine job, but a few caught my ear.

Reischman's mandolin is impeccable all the way through, giving us the percussiveness of the mandolin even on the soft and slow tunes. On *New Time & Old Acoustic*, he gives us twelve original tunes and two traditional ones. If one likes new music, this has got plenty.

I usually list the names of tunes on a review, but names on original instrumentals may not help the reader very much, so I will list my favorites, and there are several.

"Suzanne's Journey" is the tune that kicks things off. Firmly entrenched in the old-time tradition, it is a peppy song, skipping along like a child on a soft spring day. I particularly enjoyed Hargreaves and DeGroot on the fiddle and banjo.

"The Coyote Trail," a soft ballad type instrumental. The name lends itself to visions that seem to materialize with the music. The tone of Trent Freeman's fiddle is sweet, sweet, and

the dobro of Mike Witcher is soft and wistful. Reischman's mando solo at the end is truly a solo, a capella, one might say. You can hear the responsiveness of the mandolin and imagine the shape of its tone chamber.

"Horses of Dorrigo," another old-time tune, old-time yet composed by Reischman, an instrumental trio. A trio can sound like a much larger ensemble when they get in the pocket. This starts in the pocket and stays there all the way through. Reischman is working out the octave mandolin on this tune, and it serves as rhythm and solo. This tune is one of those with understated power, seeming like the horse is going to sprout wings and fly like Pegasus at any moment. It ends with me wanting still more, which is the perfect ending.

"Sarafina," a lullaby, has some beautiful dobro work by Mike Witcher. I love to hear pretty music on dobro, and this is it.

"Roscoe's Ramble" is a peppy breakdown. Patrick Sauber plays the perfect banjo solo; tone, timber, touch, timing, taste ...they are all present right here. On this tune, Greg Spatz works out the fiddle. The West Coasters have a way of playing fast without seeming rushed. I admire that.

"Salt Spring" is a mid-tempo old-time reel, a celebration of music, the ability to play it, and the joy of hearing it. I enjoyed DeGroot's banjo, Hargreaves fiddle, and my ears perked up at the guitar. I grabbed the CD and saw that it was Molly Tuttle. That explains a lot.

"Ballyhoo/Uncle John Nyhan," a Celtic medley; a traditional tune, "Sugar in the Gourd"; and another traditional tune, "Happy Hollow," round out my favorites list. "Happy Hollow" is another one of the three trio instrumentals on this CD. It is smokin' in intensity while still sounding like it's not in a hurry. Quinn Bachand's rhythm guitar is the glue that holds it all together. At the "everyone play" last time through, it sounds like a half-dozen musicians, not three.

If one likes instrumental CDs, this is it. I've picked eight favorites out of fourteen tunes. I could likely pick out some more with each listen, as our current mood affects what our ears want to hear.

Hats off to John Reischman and the excellent cast and crew assembled for ***New Time & Old Acoustic***. It is one that is gonna take a long, long time to grow old.

Mississippi Chris Sharp