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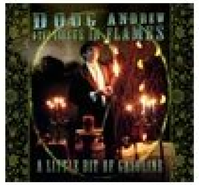
Doug Andrew & The Circus In Flames "A Little Bit Of Gasoline" (Independent 2006)



Tremendous, ferocious slice of twisted country blues from Canada

Snapping at you from the off with acoustic guitars thrust out front, Doug Andrew snarls throughout the opening song (Come Down the Canyon) like some country cousin of Pere Ubu's David Thomas. Instead of Ubu's synths we get sinewy slide guitar snaking throughout. The lyrics are tough (He lit out with a vengeance/Like a comet down a sewer hole/Black eyed and bruised with a half broke/Smirk on his face/They hung a pretty good number on him) and are spat out with feeling. In similar vein the title song is another bruiser, thrashing around looking for trouble while Hearin' My Footsteps is a mean dirty blues with gutbucket guitar.Sitting in a Darkened Room evokes memories of the late Kevin Coyne in his prime. Things slow down for a couple of tracks. When Christ Was a Cowboy is an epic ballad (nine minutes, all good) one could imagine several Nashville rebels wishing they had written. Henry William could be a traditional lament lifted from Harry Smith but as with all the songs, it was written by Andrew. Best of all is The Cucko' which lifts its opening from the traditional song but goes on in a Dylanesque vein with a tremendous guitar solo that sobs and trembles until the band eventually coalesce into that rare "mercury sound" that few achieve these days. Brilliant.

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Reviewer: Paul Kerr
Reviewers Rating: 9 out of 10
Related web link: Artist website

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