

(ref: 35a/SYD/2)

Review of:

SYD KITCHEN - OOPS...WARTS 'N ALL (3rd EAR MUSIC/3EZ 8002)

Here's another independent South African record cassette production.....simple to the point, with not a whisper of the usual over-produced computerised synth-sounds that we are becoming accustomed too.

Here is a loose collection of original songs, with the clean open sound of acoustic guitars, recorded digitally at the le PLAZA hotel and the PLAYHOUSE CELLAR in Durban.

SYD KITCHEN, some say, is as much part of Durban's music scene as the North Beach is for the local wave warriors.

This is SYD's 3rd album in more than 20 years as a professional, and his first non-studio production. He has also published books, produced records and written songs for a number of other singers.

Readers may recal THE KITCHEN BROTHERS, Syd and Pete, during the 'folk' revival of the late 60's and 70's, and later in the 80's as SYD KITCHEN & THE UTENSILS. These were the beginnings of SYD's Jazz and Folk mix, which has become his trademark today.

The music on this live offering is hard to classify....sometimes swinging from folk with a country feel to Jazz with his vibrant 1930's rag-time style that LEON REDBONE revived in the 70's. SYD personalises rag-time-boogie with WHEN THE BOOGIE DIES and PERSONALITY SHUFFLE - two great guitar pieces with lyrics and tunes to match.

Some of the songs depict down-home personal experiences and stories, and the two that stand out are the beautiful MAYA and CROSSROADS both featuring STEVE NEWMAN.

Side two is SYD solo with audience! And what a show that turns out to be.... WARTS 'N ALL....his infectious sense of humour (and timing) comes thru' his wizardary on the guitar and his infectious lyrics makes you smile.

WHERE THE CHILDREN PLAY is a masterpiece of some serious guitar work, poetry and rock 'n roll. Hard to believe that there's just one guitar there.....turn it up and feel the power of an acoustic guitarist at work.

This 60 minute collection of original songs has some excellent guitar playing and poetic lyrics for the serious listener, and the live ambience makes for pleasing sounds when the dancing is over or the dinner is done.

Here's hoping that independent productions such as this will make South Africans realise that we do have singersongwriters and guitarists of international calibre.....it makes one proud of our local 'troubadours'.

OOPS...WARTS 'N ALL (3EZ 8002) is available thru MAIL ORDER from 3rd Ear Music. Call (031)29-5415.

EVAD SKRAM.