

Monday Magazine Aug 23, 2007

John Wort Hannam

Two Bit Suit (Black Hen Music)

Fans of "alt-Americana" take note: 11 great songs about the hard-working man-better times, lost loves, driving big rigs and working in the fields, the mines and the army-are contained in Two Bit Suit, the latest release from John Wort Hannam of Fort Macleod, Alberta.

Labelled "blue collar roots music" by Hannam, every song on this CD features clever, heartfelt lyrics and tunes with great hooks that stick with you long after listening. The title track, for instance, is about a couple too poor to go to a bar or dance hall so they go down to Main Street and "dance under the moon", while "rat traps in the cooler, fly paper on the wall, bare bulbs flickered on a wire or didn't work at all" describe the closing of the condemned "National Hotel". (The booklet containing all the lyrics is a recommended read.)

Sung in a strong tenor voice and beautifully accompanied by Steve Dawson, Chris Gestrin, Geoff Hicks, Keith lowe, Jeanne Tolmie, Tyler Bird and John Reischman, this album (also produced by Dawson) should get-and well deserves-a lot of attention.

-Rod McCrimmon