

February 19, 2008

John Wort Hannam

Two-Bit Suit

Black Hen Music

Canada is a nation full of mighty talented singers/songwriters/performers and John Wort Hannam is one of them. Lucky for us, this full-time public school teacher decided to leave teaching behind to pursue his long-time dream of being a working musician. He released his debut CD, *Pocket full of Holes*, in 2002. *Two-Bit Suit* is this Alberta native's third.

From up-tempo tunes like 'Digger's Lament' to beautiful ballads like 'Sweet Sweet Rose', it's easy to get lost in his smooth sultry vocals and storytelling lyrics. There's an interesting story behind the title track 'Two-Bit Suit': the title was inspired by the town drunk he saw outside a local shop, dressed in dirty old clothes, doing a jig under a full moon. This explains the dance directions in the lyrics, "A little bit left / a little bit right / We'll dance until the morning light".

Each song tells a story of simple day-to-day dramas – heartbreak, protests, welcoming a soldier home, destruction of the old to make room for the new, etc. The sweetness of the banjo, guitar, piano and drums add to the beauty of the tunes. This is one really enjoyable CD. It can be listened to time and time again.

John won first prize for Best Song at the 2007 Calgary Folk Music Festival Song Writing Competition. Recently, he was nominated for the 2008 North American Folk Alliance Award for Best Traditional Artist. Awards are handed out February 20 in Memphis. Good Luck John. You deserve to win.

- Anna Stitski