

Glenn Coggin - A TASTE OF HAPPINESS (Own Label GGIN. 01CD)



Glenn Coggin is a singer/songwriter based in Scarborough. For many years he has been well known and highly regarded on the area's local music scene, and he's currently receiving more widespread recognition and travelling further afield. Including the mighty Acoustic Rotherham concert series, where he played to a receptive and appreciative audience at the end of January this year.

It can be inferred that *A Taste Of Happiness*, although not actually Glenn's debut CD, is his first recording in a while, for it's an inspired collection of original songs which catches the ear and holds attention throughout. Part of the reason for this is that Glenn deliberately stretches the boundaries of perceived singer-songwriterdom in presenting his own compositions in arrangements that vary between straight-ahead guitar- or keyboard-based contemporary acoustic and fuller or more ambitious settings then on through to more fully-fledged rock-band-style treatments.

The songs themselves are a mixed bunch, although many will make their simple and effective mark straight away. Glenn's stay at one of the now-legendary songwriters' workshop weeks at La Jeusselinière (France) back in 2004 clearly provided a catalyst and key inspiration, definitely informing Glenn's future direction as an artist, and his own material is now (on the evidence of this CD) proving both more confident and more intrinsically memorable as a result.

Glowing testimonials from Vin Garbutt and fellow-songwriters Harvey Andrews and Stan Graham are included in the CD booklet, and while I wouldn't go quite as far in purple prose, Glenn's writing - and accessible, direct performing style - are both genuinely enviable and increasingly accomplished. Glenn has a melodic facility that can be favourably compared with the likes of (his own mentor) Harvey Andrews, Reg Meuross and Anthony John Clarke, while the economy and overall truthfulness of his word-painting can also be reminiscent of the aforementioned Mr Andrews especially (no bad thing!).

The powerfully wistful quality of songs like *Memories Of A 6am Train* and *Bonsoir Jolie Fille* provide the disc with two of its highlights, while *Flying High Tonight* contains some equally evocative imagery. At least part of the special charm of *Dancing In Your Arms* is its featuring of a guest lead vocal by Suzanne Othick, while several tracks make good use of the instrumental skills of Phil Harty (double bass, mandolin, fiddle).

The disc closes on a high with a pair of particularly fine compositions, *Remember Caledonia* and *Goodnight My Boys*, that best recall the golden age of folk-troubadour creativity. Glenn's own guitar work is competent without perhaps being specifically exciting, although his approach to fills can be quite imaginative (I was reminded of George Papavgeris on the companionable *Drifting Along*). To help him realise his world-view, Glenn is fortunate here in commanding the production skills of multi-instrumentalist Paul Tilley to flesh out his songs; Paul certainly allows Glenn to make a convincing case for the rock idiom (aided also by Tom

Townsend's signature lead guitar) on *Set Me Free* - although *Shocking Pink* seems merely vapid in content (even considering its resolutely uncomplex musical setting).

But the set contains no serious reservations for this listener, and all in all I feel sure that Glenn will succeed in spreading more than a taste of happiness into your homes with this thoughtful CD.

www.glenncoggin.co.uk

David Kidman