

Devil Music

Randall Bramblett

Produced by Gerry Hansen

New West Records

Review by Greg Forest

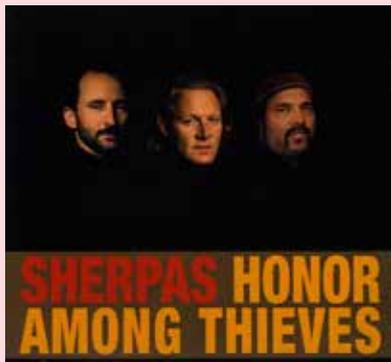
Randall Bramblett started his career as a session player and touring musician in the 1970s contributing his chops to some of the best known artists of our time, putting down tracks with the likes of Gregg Allman and Elvin Bishop. On the road he continued to grow his reputation touring with Gregg Allman, Sea Level, Widespread Panic and Traffic. His mixture

of funk, jazz and blues has colored many a release and show. His latest and fifth CD release is “Devil Music,” a titled culled from an old legend that when Howlin’ Wolf tried to reconnect with his mother, she accused him of “playing the Devil’s music.”

When people like Mark Knopfler of Dire Straights and Derek Trucks are contributing to a CD, it demonstrates the respect given to Bramblett who is indeed a musician’s musician. From the 1st track, “Dead in the Water,” Bramblett imbibes his music with a southern Who Do mojo that pulls the listener into a murky musical world. The title track, “Devil Music,” is up next and is all over the sonic map with a rocking back beat blues.

Great musicianship and journey man songwriting make this release a sonic pearl. If you are a fan of southern rock & blues, this should be in your CD library. Randall Bramblett will be performing at the Kerrville Folk Festival on May Friday May 27th.





Honor Among Thieves **Sherpas**

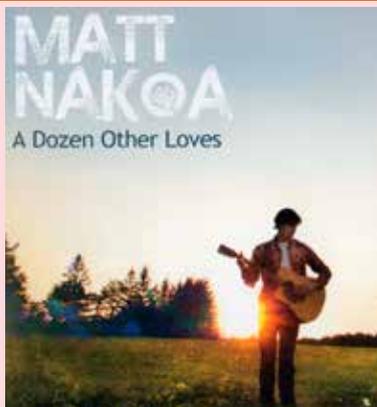
Produced by Tom Prasada Rao

Clear Point Records

Review by Jack Armstrong

What do you get when you combine three of the best voices and songwriters out there and put them together? Sherpas. None of the artists on this release have, "Greatest Hits" CDs out - until now. The songs are culled from the best of the catalog of all three artists.

The song that stands out most for me this election year is "Jesus, Chicks & Politics" which accurately displays our sometimes dysfunctional election system in a humorous manner. The CD also has some other songs you may recognize from their solo careers, my favorites being, "Lefty's Boys," "See Myself in You," and "Can't Get You Out of My System." The title track, "Honor Among Thieves" starts the ball rolling by reminding us that things aren't always what they seem and the things we sometimes strive for aren't really worth the effort. The Sherpa make it through the Hill Country frequently so keep your eyes out for this, better than the sum of its parts, trio.



A Dozen Other Loves

Matt Nakoa

Produced - Matt Nakoa

& Neale Eckstein

Independent Release

Review by Greg Forest

I was talking to some of my favorite songwriter buddies at the Music at the Mansion series before the show and they were all full of praise for a new writer/performer that they were all blown away by - Matt Kaa. Matt made a true believer of me too.

Nakoa's musicianship is first rate - playing both the guitar and piano. His early classical training weaves its way through more contemporary original songs. He will be helping The Hill Country Orchestra and David Amram, renowned musician and conductor, in a full orchestra performance at the close of the Kerrville Folk Festival June 12th.

The songs on the CD are strong with Nakoa penning or co-writing the entire release. The song styles run a wide gamut - from ballads like, "You Are My Moonshine" to the straight ahead in your face pop-rock "If You're Tryin' To Break My Heart." There is a wink and nod to both the spiritual and high tech with the lyrical "Where On Earth is Heaven?"

The studio production features an A-Team of session partners and clear as a bell mixing and mastering.

Visit Matt on the web at mattnakoa.com and don't miss him at the Kerrville Folk Festival.