



Bob Dylan "Fallen Angels"

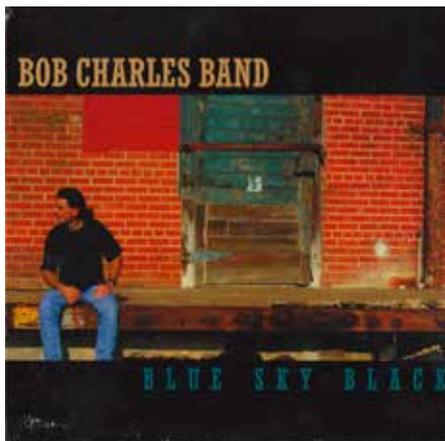
Produced by Jack Frost
Columbia Records
Review by Jack Armstrong

This is Bob Dylan's 37th album on Columbia and it's following his recent trend for releasing cover songs from the 1930s-50s. It's hard to believe that Dylan is a real crooner but this latest release of torch songs from a bygone era underline the rare fact that Bob Dylan has a very good voice.

Plunging into a deep pool of classic songwriters ranging from Johnny Mercer to Hoagy Carmichael and Sammy Cahn, this could almost be tribute album to Frank Sinatra as old "Blue Eyes" recorded every song on this CD at one time of the other except, "Skylark."

A clean but relatively stark production by Dylan's road band sets the foundation for this easy-listening gem. A voice famous for its abrasiveness is now smooth as cream and an intimate addition to your CD collection.

Recorded over a year "Fallen Angels" was nominated for a 2016 Grammy this year in the Best Traditional Pop Vocal category. Great songs from a great artist.



Bob Charles Band "Blue Sky Black"

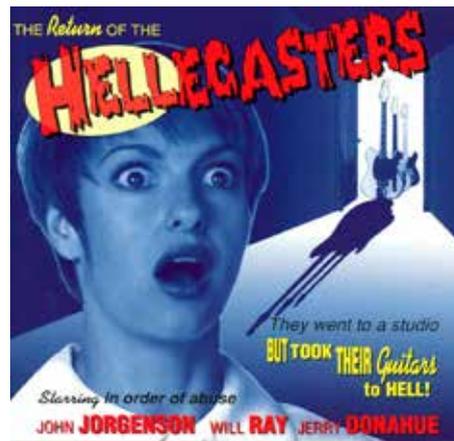
Producers: Brian Evans, Bob Charles & Scott Baker
Independent Release
Review by Greg Forest

I first met Bob Charles fresh out of the Jackie King School of Guitar and he was already making a name for himself as a top-notch Central Texas guitar slinger.

In those days his talent was apparent and Bob was called to many stages as a side-man and now, after a few decades of seasoning, Charles has grown into an artist in his own right playing, singing and composing a tapestry of well crafted tunes. Bob also is displaying something I had overlooked in his early career and that is the fact that he is also a fine singer.

The range of musical genres is painted with a wide palette of sonic colors ranging from tender ballads like, "The Line" to funky down home blues like the slide dobro rendition of, "Trouble My World" and the back-beat funk of "Don't Look Good in Blue."

No collection of top notch Texas guitar slingers would be complete without this gem.



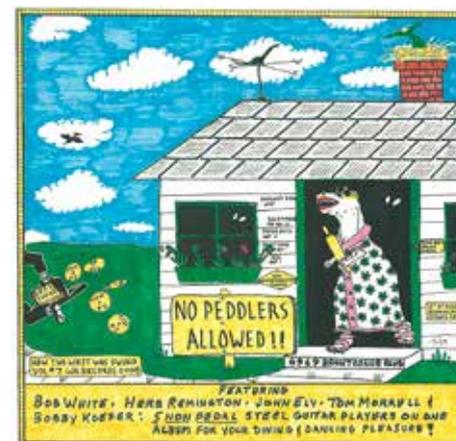
The Hellecasters "The Return of the Hellecasters"

Produced by Dan Fredman
Pacific Arts Audio
Review by Greg Forest

Mike Nesmith (you remember, the Monkey who could actually play an instrument) wrangled three of the world's best guitarists and producer Dan Fredman into this studio to produce this Guitarmageddon of scorching guitar work.

Jerry Donahue, Will Ray and John Jorgenson are three of the recording industry's "1st Call" session players. Each is a master of the instrument and while their styles are remarkably different, they blend together nicely without stepping on each others feet (or frets). Nesmith and Fredman should take pride in having pulled together some of the best blistering guitar licks ever put to tape (or more accurately hard drive).

Although most of the songs on the CD are penned by the Hellecasters, there are a few covers that really stand out "Sweet Dreams (of You)" and a damn-the-torpedoes-full-speed-ahead version of the "Orange Blossom Special" that will have fiddle players dropping their jaws are my favorites.



The Time Warp Cowboys "No Peddlers Allowed"

Produced by Tom Morrell
WR Records
Review by Greg Forest

The pedal steel guitar is one of the base ingredients in country music but to take the instrument a step further and delve into the lap steel guitar's place in music history. Tom Morrell and the Time Warp Tophands have done this bring some of the world's best steel players together on this CD that prohibits knee levers and peddles.

The entire CD is some of the best Western Swing out there played by the A-team of lap steel players including Bob White, Tom Morrell, John Ely, Herb Remington, and Bobby Koefler,

This CD is the 7th in the WR Record Series, "How the West was Swung," adding to an already great collection of swing recordings.

If you are a fan of the lap steel or steel guitar, this CD is for you. There is also a sequel available, "Son of No Peddlers Allowed," the 9th CD in the series that features more of the the same great swing and is available at Amazon.com