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Black 47

Last Call

Review by G. W. Hill

This is really a bittersweet moment. It's the last album from Black 47, who are calling it quits at the end of the year. The thing is, this is a great album. It really is the perfect parting shot from the band. It feels so much like a classic Black 47 album. It has the multiple vocals, Celtic stylings and instrumentation and hard rock we expect from them. It's got political songs, slice of life tunes and just plain fun music. I can't imagine a better swan song from this band. I've loved these guys for year and appreciative that we've gotten such a great disc to send them off with style.



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Track by Track Review

Salsa O'Keefe

The title might give this away, but the cut seems to combine both Irish and Latin elements. It's a catchy little pop rocker. It's instantly recognizable as Black 47, but it's a new twist on the sound. It's a great way to start things off, too.

Culchie Prince

A rocking backdrop is combined with a real Irish jig as this starts. This is very much a new classic Black 47 tune. It's not anything surprising. It is very entertaining.

Dublin Days

I love the rocking sound of this. It's got catchy hooks and plenty of Black 47 trademarks. This is another that feels like it could have come from the early days of this band.

US of A 2014

This is the latest in the long tradition of Black 47 political cuts. It's topical and really hits the issues. The thing is, issue based music can be boring and preachy. That never happens when it's Black 47, though. This is a lot of fun despite the heavy lyrical concepts.

The Night the Showbands Died

I love the contrast between the hard edged, classic rock ascending riff on this and the horn section. This is a pretty typical Black 47 rocker, but it's got some fresh sounds, too. It's really quite classic and quite strong. It's one of my favorite pieces of the disc. There is a weird little, rather chaotic sounding jam later in the track that's cool.

Johnny Comes a'Courtin

This song is about the lesser known Irish slave trade that occurred in the 1600 and 1700s. It also seems to have a cloud with a silver lining element to it. It's a bittersweet tale. There is some reggae added to the classic Black 47 sound. I love the back and forth verses between the Father and daughter.

Let the People In

This pro-immigration tune has jazz, funk and more built into it. It's bouncy and fun. It's not one of my favorites, but it stands pretty tall.

Lament for John Kuhlman

Just a short instrumental introduction, this is Celtic and cool.

St. Patrick's Day

High energy and punky, this is fun. It's got the Celtic Black 47 vibe to it, but there seems to be a bit of The Clash here, too. It's great stuff.

Queen of Coney Island



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A tale about some folks caught up in a mobster scene, this is fun and classic in terms of the Black 47 sound. It's catchy, too.

Shanty Irish Baby

This Celtic rocker has a great bouncy groove to it. It's fun and kind of down home in a way. It has a bit of blues meets jazz element, too.

Ballad of Brendan Behan

Another new Black 47 classic, I love the swaying tempo on this one. It's another classy number.

Hard Times

While I like the catchy hook on the chorus, this doesn't do all that much for me. Additionally, it seems to go on a little long.



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