

FOLKWAX

Well-Produced With A Cool Feel - Just A Songwriter

"Apologies to the artist and my publisher, but this CD has been in my truck for a month and will probably end up back there. This is the first Kenny Butterill disc that this reviewer has heard so I went back and checked out his debut release, the aptly titled No One You Know from 2000. Butterill had shopped his songs with little luck until he self-released that album which caught attention, particularly in his native Canada and in Europe where his song "How Far Can We Go?" was the first Americana release to hit #1 on the Country charts. With his new album, Just A Songwriter, Butterill has clearly expanded his range of the Americana/Country base with influences of Blues, Jazz, Rock and even Caribbean music. There is also clearly an influence of his current home in California.

This well-produced CD (by Butterill) has the cool feel of a J.J. Cale album and a couple of the cuts clearly bring Cale to mind ("Felton's Place" for one). Along with Butterill and his songwriting, two of the several guest artists really make this album work. The first is one of the best Canadian Bluesmen, Ray Bonneville. Bonneville's guitar playing stands out and he blows some nice harp on "Canadian Road Trip." The second is the great harp playing of Norton Buffalo. Buffalo is one the best in the business and does some fine studio work here on four of the fourteen regular tracks. Butterill is no slacker in the strings either and there are some other fine studio players here and the personnel rotate with each song.

Butterill crafts interesting songs with lyrics that keep you interested and melodies that stay with you. There is nothing complex going on here, just solid songwriting and a well organized production, there is enough diversity of styles and musicians and wit to keep things fun throughout.

The album opens with the title song, a sort of mission statement from Butterill about how he sees himself in the music business. "I don't fit the Showbiz scene, I don't deal well with the road (and) I'd die in the Nashville machine." Buffalo and Bonneville help to define this song. There is also an extended bonus version of this song at the end of the disc.

One of my favorites on the disc is "The Email Song" which offers a unique look at the reblooming of an old romance via the Internet. The guitars are credited to Butterill, Joe Weed and Steve Palazzo. Whoever takes the acoustic solo (I am guessing the latter) does a fine job and I admit publicly to stealing one of his licks.

I also like the haunting Blues of "Gotta Find A Woman" which features some more fine guitar from Peter Morrison and interesting background vocals from the John Lee Sanders 4.1 Choir. Sanders also painted the great album cover which is one of my favorites of recent times.

The regular album ends with fine tribute to the late Townes Van Zandt entitled "The Townes You Left Behind." Backed by two acoustic guitars and his own, Butterill sings, "A life of soul searching, of pain and hurting filled with danger and surprise. He let us inside, his stormy ride with no pity or alibis.."

There are bonus tracks of extended versions of two of the albums songs, the title song and "Are You Surprised?," both featuring Bonneville and Buffalo adding a little to the originals in a bit of a jam.

Kenny Butterill has put together a good sophomore album that shows what he learned from his debut. It deserves a good rating of an "8." Most listeners will find something here that they like. I suspect that this guy has a "10" in him somewhere and I plan to keep watching for it."

— **Jason Wesley**, a founding editor of FolkWax
(please visit Folkwax on the web - you'll be glad you did!)

No Bull Songs is actively seeking placement of Kenny Butterill's catalog with Record Producers, Bands/Artists, Film/TV Supervisors, Ad Agencies, and others seeking smooth bluesy, folksy, alt-country material with chart proven appeal. *Most songs are also available as instrumental versions.* If there is someone you think we should get in touch with regarding Kenny's catalog, please let us know at Catalog@NoBullSongs.com . Thanks !!

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Kenny Butterill visit
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