

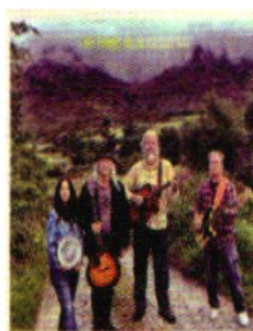


I SEE HAWKS IN LA On Our Way

WESTERN SEEDS

7/10

*Tenth album from cosmic
Californian roots-rockers*



Since their self-titled 2001 debut, I See Hawks' felicitous take on classic canyon-rock has both soared majestically and

flown largely beneath the radar. Along with soulmates Beachwood Sparks, few bands distil the West Coast psych legacy with quite such authentic conviction. The opener "Might've Been Me" with its pedal steel and mandolins evokes the New Riders Of The Purple Sage. "Know Just What To Do" channels The Byrds' Rickenbacker jangle, while heavier and more adventurous territory is charted on "Mississippi Gas Station Blues" and the eight-minute epic "How You Gonna Know?", both of which make nods in the direction of The Doors. Glorious.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON



Bentley's Bandstand: September 2021

[Bentley's Bandstand](#)[Columns](#)[Reviews](#)

<https://americanahighways.org/2021/09/09/bentleys-bandstand-september-2021/>

I See Hawks in L.A., *On Our Way*. There were the Byrds, then the Flying Burritos and a few other notable music excursions emanating from Los Angeles in the 1960s into the '70s that really paved the road for those who followed in that Southern California realm, but no other band has found the thread like I See Hawks in L.A. Their sound might be embedded in the Hollywood Freeway, but underneath it's really torqued by the Mojave Desert. There is something just hallucinatory enough on new songs like "Might've Been Me," "Know Just What to Do" and, really, everything on this ear-opening new album that it feels like a new day of music is rising.

Band members Rob Waller and brothers Paul and Anthony Lacques formed the group going on 20 years ago, of course on a desert trek, and haven't looked back. Now featuring Paul Marshall and Victoria Jacobs as the rhythm section, there is really no one like them, still, as they mix in visions and musical veracity into a style which opens a door full of surprises right below the surface.

As each album has become more and more assured, I See Hawks in L.A. has now hit that point where they've cut the cord on influences and are spinning out in an orbit all their own. The quartet is all breathing as one, and the clear night sky full of stars is the limit. Listen and hear not only what has come before, but what is also right around the next bend. See the Hawks.

-- Bill Bentley

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I SEE HAWKS IN L.A. – ON OUR WAY

by Seuras Og | 19 August, 2021

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<https://www.folkradio.co.uk/2021/08/i-see-hawks-in-la-on-our-way/>

It feels like **I See Hawks in L.A.** have been around forever, so it comes as quite a shock to discover they are almost entirely of this century, coming together in 1999. With an intrinsic feel for the ‘cosmic Americana’ that defined and delighted Gram Parsons. Their music, especially with the latest offering, ‘**On Our Way**’, occupies a timeless space where ideas and influences jostle freely, unrestrained by fashion or fortune, contributing together a potent message for the moment.

Still featuring original members **Rob Waller** and **Paul Lacques**, who together write the bulk of the material with big contributions from **Victoria Jacobs**, now on drums, alongside longtime member **Paul Marshall**. All four sing, with Waller and Lacques playing a wealth of stringed instruments, handling guitars, dobro, lap steel, autoharp and mandolin between them. Oh, and jaw harp, which features memorably on one track. With Waller nominally the lead vocalist, all contribute to the backing without being averse to taking the occasional lead. As with most of their work, a host of friends and associates are also present, fleshing out the sound with fiddle, keyboards, accordion, pedal steel, and lots more guitars.

Like many 2020/1 releases, the unmistakable shadow of covid hangs over its gestation, and astonishingly, this entire ensemble piece was put together remotely. Waller and Lacques regularly got together online to flesh out and form the songs; the contributions and backing came in from all sources, iPhone included. The sleeve notes denote the recording credit to 'Hawks in houses'. That it sounds so tight, in a homespun 'live in the studio' way, is no small miracle and is a credit to the skills of the performers and the production, which is also by the band.

When opener, 'Might've Been Me', starts with the lyric, 'If you're walking thru Sonoma', you know already where you are likely to be heading. A mandolin led jangle, with swoops of steel shooting about Waller's comfortable buckskin baritone, this is prime country-rock of a style before Americana was a word. It's glorious, evocative of the latterday Byrds. This leads swiftly into the title track, which continues this mood, the melodicism, a dreamy summoning of times gone by, with electric 12-string making an appearance for good measure. Marshall's bass is integral here, as it is throughout, never flashy, a steady, reassuring hand on the tiller that sounds simple yet is anything but.

A freeform wail of electric fiddle beckons in 'Just Know What To Do', demonstrating these are no one-trick ponies, then some backward electric guitar, ahead of a gentle ballad breaking through, over a strummed acoustic. But the background threat implied by the opening remains implicit, building gradually in the hinterland, the controlled vocal battling out the fiddle, a whirlwind just out of eyeshot. I don't know if a pandemic theme is being invoked, especially within the raga-like middle section before the calm prevails, but that's the sense it gave me.

I didn't expect to find the spirit of Jim Morrison in this record, but 'Mississippi Gas Station Blues' certainly has his flavour, the song, a strange bastard cousin of the Beach Boys' 'Student Demonstration Time'. But Mike Love could never snarl like this. Scuzzy guitars and organ swagger around to put a faded leather jacket on the song. By complete contrast follows 'Kensington Market', which, yes, is that London one. With Victoria Jacobs on lead vocal, this is a delightful piece of 60s whimsy, with burbles of synth sneaking through in the background, paired with a baritone guitar. 'Check out all the crazy people', she sings, and you can bet there would be flowers in their hair.

'Kentucky Jesus' occupies a more old-timey feel, a story song, in waltz time, an oblique tale that asks more questions than it answers. At a faster lick, 'Geronimo' is another in the procession of songs about the prominent leader and medicine man from the Bedonkohe band of the Apache people, who, following his arrest, was pitifully paraded around by the authorities, and it is a worthy companion, with a very western feel and twang to it.

'Stealing', like 'Kentucky Jesus', channels the vocal ambience and songwriting of Canada's Gordon Lightfoot and is a further sturdy construct of a song about living in

the present, with a tune and message that lingers long after the closing bars. In the same vein is 'If I Move', which is full of classic two-part harmonies in the chorus, and steel counterpoints, on top of a gentle canter that is all Arizona and campfires.

I guess radio songs are thin on the ground these days, so it is the spirit of the truckers that are being kept alive with 'Radio Keeps Me On the Ground (Slight Return)', and the sort of station we are more familiar with from films and boxsets than our own UK experience. It always used to be a sure-fire way of getting your song played, but I am less sure that still applies. Perhaps the weakest song here, it risks an overall sense of comfiness that is, thankfully, totally dispelled by the final track, 'How You Gonna Know'. Entering with the aforesaid jaw harp and some decidedly solid and soulful drumming, before a hypnotically chanted harmony vocal, and spiky guitar: 'And there's no-one here to tell us what to do, we're all on our own". At his most Horse Latitudes, it is Jim Morrison again, but funkier and with more of a tune. Growing onward and upward, at over eight minutes, it is a transformational show-stopper. The drums have a hypnotic presence throughout, with the feel of a primaeval forest ceremony. Immaculate, fading into keyboard reverie.

Even ahead of the final track, this is a special record, crafted carefully and with love. Little surprise that no less than Dave Alvin has called the band 'one of California's hidden treasures'. But, with the eyes-wide and open-mouthed climax of 'How You Gonna Know', and the effect it leaves on you, a good and special record has become great and especial.

-- Seuras Og



I See Hawks In LA "On Our Way"

August 3, 2021

<https://americana-uk.com/i-see-hawks-in-la-on-our-way>

At turns familiar, jocular, thoughtful and experimental – another great album from one of Americana's greatest bands.

What can one say about I See Hawks in LA? It's customary to reference their indebtedness to Grateful Dead circa 'American Beauty' / 'Working Man's Dead' – which is a great debt to have. And it has been noticed before that for a band who enshrine the hippy ideal in song they have a rugged consistency to them – and when that consistency is to be consistently at the top of their musical game then that is no bad thing either. So, here we are with the band's tenth album and despite it all – lockdowns, Covid, facetime sessions for songwriting and recording musical parts separately then stitching the together into a glorious whole – it can be safely said that, yes, I See Hawks in LA have done it again and delivered an album destined for best of the year lists. It's that dream of an album – where there are song-writing contributions from most of the band and the combination of writing talents complements rather than jars.



Opener 'Might've been Me' takes all those best influences for a song that falls somewhere between bluegrass and folk for a tale of dandelion tea and mysticism, who has entranced another "apprentice" for her magic: there's surely devotion to be detected in "She's the fair and barefoot maiden / In the corner of your eye/ And she gathers stray vibrations from the dead / She says I'm her apprentice / And yesterday she sent me / To gather bitter greens from your backyard", but it's not completely clear who for.

A complete change around can be found on 'Kensington Market' which finds drummer Victoria Jacobs wandering in a psychedelic haze through Kensington Market, where she plans to "Get lost in the winding passages / Check out all the crazy people / And take a look around." There's something of a Byrdsian feel to

this exploration of a Strange New World, there's a nod to the Buffalo Springfield too and a huge portion of adopted British Sixties Psychedelia.

Paul Marshall takes co-lead vocals for 'Radio Keeps Me on the Ground', a co-write with James Combs of Great Willow, a fine chunking growler of a song, which shuffles around deliciously as it delivers its simple message – listen to your radio, an instruction as old as rock and roll itself. In these days of pre-programmed DJs it's maybe harder to find those voices who'll bring one something more magic than the pre-packaged, but when you find it then it's something to cling to. 'Stealing' is a double pedal steel dreamy country-rock ballad – with maybe a wider undertone to the softly whispered 'We gotta learn together now', because, as the song describes, the world's going slightly crazy and needs some healing.

The closer is also the longest song on the album, 'How You Gonna Know?' is a hypnotic drone of a song – the reminder that I See Hawks In LA can also go on long and winding excursions to destinations not clearly known. Each Paul Lacques guitar line, or a drum pattern change can lead the listener off down a different path – and Rob Waller's vocals don't provide an easy to read map as he sings that "Love is a dirty glacier / From which all rivers flow / Flow like silver / Sink into the inevitable / Darkening as it flows / How you gonna know?" In its unapologetically experimental way it is quite marvellous – one to play over and over in order to divine the deeper meaning. And man, maybe backwards would help, you know, maybe?

-- Jonathan Aird

9/10

On Our Way is I See Hawks In LA's 10th release in 20 years and as a Hawk-watcher from the beginning, I'm amazed and delighted they always deliver the goods. As the House Band for the Hippie Diaspora, they mix country-rock rich with soaring harmonies, literate lyrics and inevitable curveballs, such as scorching blues-rocker "Mississippi Gas Station Blues." (Who else namedrops electronic music composer Morton Subotnick in this context — or any?) Drummer Victoria Jacobs is a welcome addition, bringing female vocals and perspective into the mix — and she can pound them tom-toms!

— Michael Simmons, *MOJO* (review preview)

FATEA

<https://www.fatea-records.co.uk/magazine/reviews/ISeeHawksInLA/>

Recorded as individual parts and then woven together during lockdown, the Hawks return with their tenth album, one that takes their established social and eco commentaries and ups the ante in the wake of global crises of a pandemic and a political nature.

With Dave Zirbel on pedal steel, it kicks off in jangly mandolin-led cosmic country style with 'Might've Been Me', about a fair and barefoot Sonoma wicca practitioner working her magic on the narrator ("She says I'm her apprentice/And yesterday she sent me/To gather bitter greens from your backyard"), keeping a Byrdsian 12-string feel for the title track, a song keening to rebirth and hope ("I don't know/If the spring is coming/All I know is I'm on my way").

One of the longest tracks at over six-minutes, coloured with backward guitar, caterwauling fiddle and accordion, 'Know Just What To Do' takes a psychedelic path for its intro before transmuting into an acoustic strummed waltztime ballad (albeit with diversion into raga midway) that, a kind of love song, again seems to be about finding direction again after feeling lost ("I walked outside, started to drive/Never wondering where I'd go/Let my hands fall off of the wheel") by essentially surrendering to whatever forces are guiding ("When I saw your window felled up with light/I knew what I was doing had to be right").

Things get musically dirtier with 'Mississippi Gas Station Blues', a lurching swamp rocker that channels Jim Morrison with its semi-spoken delivery and Dylan in the lyrics

("You give me the Oxford Mississippi secondary gas station blues/You don't have to love me/ But you're gonna have to choose") backed by hollow drums, organ and a scuzzy guitar. Musicologists will also note a reference to Morton Subotnick, the 60s pioneer of electronic music who composed 'Silver Apples of the Moon'.

Drummer Victoria Jacobs steps up the microphone to sing lead on her self-penned 'Kensington Market' as they take off for 80s London, "the city of tea and scones" where "People stare/At your blue black plaited hair", to "Get lost in the winding passages/ Check out all the crazy people/And take a look around", the lyrics referencing mods and dub while the music and its dreamy vocals evoke the sound of British paisley 60s psychedelia by way of the Mamas and Papas.

Back home, tapping into political protest, the largely acoustic picked countrified and, Ron Waller's drawl recalling Steppenwolf's John Kay, 'Kentucky Jesus'

recalls Muhammed Ali's 1967 defiance of the Vietnam War draft when he refused to be inducted into the army ("He's going to take us to the promised land/And that's why you don't have to go to war"), keeping country and history on the table for the loping two beat acoustic twangy and pedal steel-laced 'Geronimo' which has the Apache chief pondering his next move against the US Army ("I'm not retreating, I'm considering direction/Crows to the south are flying scared/Hawks rises straight, and they don't like to do that/I see the tall stone in the sand/I'm not running, I'm not crying/I'm only bending to space and time").

Returning to present times, again big on lap steel, another love song, 'Stealing' recalls Gordon Lightfoot with its folksy acoustic country rock as, contemplating the divisions wrought by politics and the pandemic, Waller sings how "Down in the city we're all getting played" and that "We gotta learn to live together".

Heading into the final stretch, it spreads its Byrdsian 12-string wings again with the steel-stained cosmic country of 'If I Move', the town's landmarks serving a reminder of the narrator's lost love ("Drove by the McDonalds where we decided not to get married/And the Denny's where we said what the hell/There's the parking lot where you told me you were pregnant") now that she's moved on and in with some guy in the Marina and he's sitting in the diner and his "dreams are in the municipal garbage can".

The strummed chug of 'Radio Keeps Me On The Ground (Slight Return)' is a co-write with Great Willow's James Combs that pays tribute to those increasingly rare radio stations and presenters ("A stranger's voice/An invisible wind") that buck the homogenised trend and give you something to hold on to in uncertain times.

Opening to the sound of jews harp and Jacobs desert night drums, Waller again conjuring the peyote-fuelled Jim Morrison, it ends with the eight minute drone 'How You Gonna Know?' a song capturing the sense of dislocation (underscored by its drum patterns, wah wah and guitar lines) as, to a tribal rhythm, Waller says "It's a fine line/Between transitional and occluded/Between drought and beauty/Compassion and duty/Comfort and betrayal" and how "there's no one here to tell us what to do/We're all on our own/And we run the ridge of juniper and snow/Just to see our tomorrows" with a prayer to "Comfort me/Comfort the children/Comfort the night/Comfort the not reconciled". It ends, though, with a note of optimism and that, while "Love is a dirty glacier/From which all rivers flow/Flow like silver/

Sink into the inevitable/Darkening as it slows", "Singing you just might survive/Singing you might do just fine/Singing someday you'll drink wine".

An album to uncork and drink deep.

-- Mike Davies



<http://www.rock-n-reel.co.uk/>

I SEE HAWKS IN L.A.



On Our Way

(WESTERN SEEDS) www.iseehawks.com



I See Hawks In L.A. have spent the last two decades making superlative California-tinged country-rock and their new album shows

that their artistic well is in no danger of running dry. The title track lopes along gently, spiritually even, towards a quietly anthemic chorus that speaks of acceptance and joy. Elsewhere there are lots of acoustic guitars, delicate electric melody picking, and subtle harmonies.

Apart from the title track, highlights include 'Might've Been Me', as pure a country-rocker as you could wish for; the quietly heartbreaking 'If I Move'; the dirty rocker 'Mississippi Gas Station Blues'; the 60s revival meets The Bangles vibes of 'Kensington Market'; the... actually with one exception this is an album that has only highlights.

The slight misstep is in the closing 'How You Gonna Know?', eight minutes of musical experimentation based on desert blues that doesn't quite come off. But that's it; apart from that it's a joyous and uplifting album that has everything in it that makes the Hawks so good, including some oblique, thoughtful and understated social comment. Long may they fly.

Jeremy Searle



<https://rockingmagpie.wordpress.com/2021/08/02/i-see-hawks-in-la-on-our-way/>

Country Music As If It Inhabits the Very Marrow in Their Bones

The Hawks are one of those true rarities of a band: really gifted songwriting, great harmonies, especially tight arrangements and they play Country Music as if it inhabits the very marrow in their bones. They're also chock full of that special blend of facile honesty and smart naivety that you can only get with truly great Rock 'n' Roll outfits.

Their folk songs aren't overburdened with worries about keeping the faith, or playing it up old-school, just keeping it damn real. The photo of the band on the cover is of an unassuming group of individuals: humble, thoughtful, unassuming, probably best of friends—dare I say: 'real'.

Are they Country, Folk, or Rock? Weird, cryptic, or truly out there? Doesn't matter. What they are is fearless, honest, and reaching, and that, dear reader, is plenty enough to be pleased about nowadays. Take the song "Mississippi Gas Station Blues" which is kind of like a psychedelic Doors/John Lee Hooker/X mashup with a touch of Tom Waits thrown in for good measure. This is dark Blues with Faulkner's ghost making an appearance.

Or "Kentucky Jesus" which makes you sit up and take note once the song's main character reveals himself. Larger than life heroes deserve larger than life songs, and this one delivers. Or the final song "How You Gonna Know?" which is a dark bass and drum groove with stabbing tremolo guitars and percussion weirdness with offset vocals. What's it about?

I have no idea and would most likely be wrong if I tried, but it Rocks. This is true trippy music, succeeding mostly because it doesn't try too hard, simply makes its case and leaves you in another state of mindfulness. If it hits you a day or two later, then it did its job. These songs are the anchors with which they set sail with, ready to throw overboard when the time is just right, when the listener has been comfortably sated with syrupy harmonies and a Country two-step.

“Pay attention now!” they seem to be saying, *“Opening your ears is akin to opening your mind,”* and they hit you with another great song that comes from somewhere you’d never expect. “Geronimo” is an imagining of the self-same Native Americans’ thoughts about what to do with an invading army that won’t go away.

“Know Just What To Do” is psychedelic folk with dreamy harmonies, and the Hawks spin us gleefully around with the swinging sixties pastiche “Kensington Market,” written and sung by drummer Victoria Jacobs, and hit us again with “Radio Keeps Me On the Ground (Slight Return)” which is ear-worm, radio-friendly, understated Country Pop that the world needs more of; and it’s a great starting point.

That all of these songs were written and recorded during the 2020 Pandemic is quite the achievement. That the Hawks recorded these songs by themselves on their personal computers through trial and error while the world at large was quarantined is gold medal worthy.

Buy this album! Well worth it. After ten albums, I See Hawks in L.A. are truly on their way.

-- Roy Peak esq.

LONESOME HIGHWAY

HARDCORE COUNTRY, AMERICANA AND ROOTS MUSIC

<https://www.lonesomehighway.com/music-reviews/2021/7/29/new-album-reviews>

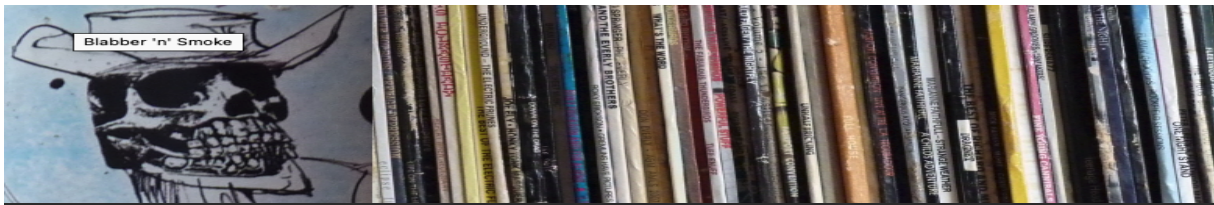
Looks like we’re on our way to another addition to the band’s already lauded musical canon with this, their 10th album release. This well established California band have been building on their country rock background for quite some time now and exploring elements of that state’s varied musical heritage. As with pretty much everyone who was placed in a lockdown situation, the band had to write and record under all the limitations and opportunities that situation presented. But, happily, this set of new songs sounds no less impressive for all that and is very much in line with their previous albums.

The core members of Rob Waller, Paul Lacques, Paul Marshall and Victoria Jacobs worked on the eleven songs individually, or in various combinations. The next step, after getting the initial recordings down, was to bring in some appropriate guests to enhance the songs. Two notable collaborations are *Radio Keeps Me On The Ground* that features James and Ed from fellow California combo Great Willow (the latter also adding organ to another track), and then Double Naught Spy Car join them for the extended closing eight minute plus *How You Gonna Know?* The former is a harmony-laden sing along that offers a thumbs up to the way that radio was something of a lifeline for many. The other song takes an extended groove that collages voices and sounds to ask that in these strange times what and who can be trusted and how you gonna know the truth? The use of synth and wah-wahed guitar over the bass and drum bedrock all add to a slightly unsettling psychedelic sense of displacement and distorted vision. The end result is a band moving forward and delivering something different than might be expected, but something that offers an open door for the band and its next steps without abandoning those alt-country elements for which they are noted.

The humour and insight that I See Hawks In L.A. are known for is readily apparent throughout the album, as are their vocal and musical skills. *Might Have Been Me* features Dave Zirbel's uplifting pedal steel which sets the tone for the song as he does on two other tracks that he's featured on. There is a distinct 60's feel to the title track with its Rickenbacker guitar motif and it also highlights the band's melodic and poppier side. *Know Just What To Do* opens with Brantley Kearns abrasive fiddle over some ambient noise before letting the softer side of the song surface. *Mississippi Gas Station Blues* is one of those gritty blues workouts with a semi-talking vocal from Waller than has similarities in approach to Dave Alvin.

Waller handles most of the lead vocals here with a weathered voice, while Jacobs takes the lead on two tracks. Her song *Kensington Market* I think is about the famed much-missed London multi-shop emporium. Appropriately it has, again, a 60's rock feel with 12-string guitar and folky harmonies as well as what sounds like some squiggly keyboards interludes. The second track she features on is the aforementioned recent single *Radio Keeps Me On The Ground (Slight Return)*, joining Waller and Great Willow to give the songs its strong vocal presence. In *Geronimo*, which is about the famed Native American leader, there is again a more apparent alt-country feel. *Stealing* and *If I Move* round out this album with thoughtful lyrics and solid affirmations of the fact that I See Hawks In L.A. are a highly visible presence who ably continue the rich history of California's rock, country and psychedelic influences. It should also keep them on the way to more fulfilling trips.

-- Stephen Rapid



Blabber 'n' Smoke

A Glasgow view of Americana and related music and writings.

<https://paulkerr.wordpress.com/2021/08/20/i-see-hawks-in-l-a-on-our-way/>

Stuck in pandemic land, I See Hawks In L.A. essentially underwent a crash course in remote recording for their latest album, On Our Way. As the band say, they “began the studio game. ProTools, trial by error, error in abundance...Can we use an iPhone recording?” Well, it’s graduation day today as they unveil the album and we can safely say that, were we marking it, it would get an A+.

On Our Way maintains the high standard set on previous releases by these wayward California hippies with their signature notes of high tide lines left behind by the likes of The Dead remaining intact. There is cosmic country, as on the pedal steel infused Geronimo, laid back musings on Stealing (which recalls classic Laurel Canyon days) and even some grungy junkyard ramblings on Mississippi Gas Station Blues which sounds like a mash up of Los Lobos and The Doors.

They set their stall out quite firmly on the flighty country rock of the opening song, Might have Been Me, which ripples along quite excellently and which is followed by the title track which has a slight touch of The Byrds to it in its chime. There’s a lengthy and somewhat freaky fiddle intro to Know Just What To Do which eventually subsides as the song sweetly flows into a fireside like homily. Warm and comforting for sure, but that fiddle buzz eventually returns as the song wavers between comfort and sonic malevolence. It’s as if John Cale had happened upon a David Crosby recording session. This sense of adventure is highlighted on How You Gonna Know, an elongated eight minute trip dominated by intricate drum patterns accompanied with antipodean interruptions which eventually erupts into a tribal whelp.

Much more straightforward is the impressive Kentucky Jesus, a song which celebrates Muhammed Ali’s anti draft stance, and drummer Victoria Jacobs offers us the paisley patterned psychedelia of Kensington Market, revisiting territory she explored on the Hawks last album. If it’s Americana then there has to be a travelogue song and the band deliver another excellent slice of cosmic country rock on If I Move which swoops along quite excellently name checking fast food joints chock-full of memories of a lost love, the narrator lost in an endless highway, fuelled by despair. Quite wonderful.

-- Paul Kerr



Glide is premiering the special director's cut music video for the band's new tune *Mississippi Gas Station Blues*. Awash in feedback and slinking organs, the song is a slow crawling blues number that finds every band member laying down supreme instrumentals to come together in one down and dirty number. There are elements of Dylan to be savored, but there are also more avant-garde influences that come through in the strange instrumentation and vocal stylings, all of which culminates in an eerie violin solo that makes the choice of archival footage even more intriguing.

https://glidemagazine.com/258560/video-premiere-la-alt-country-outfit-i-see-hawks-in-l-a-share-directors-cut-of-mississippi-gas-station-blues-announce-new-lp-on-our-way/?fbclid=IwAR1y5UazvG_wPlr2B9rtnepxmWc1djvAoGlFBXzuK7XcAErFF8_jSdaIGA



THE SPIRIT OF PROGRESSIVE ROCK

<https://spirit.rocks/2021/07/30/roots-in-august-3/>

With a “he who dares wins” attitude, the band went at it, digitally. Without ever playing music together. Rob Waller and Paul Lacques ‘facetimed’ to write songs, quite a challenge it would appear (you can’t play guitars at the same time), with contributions from drummer Victoria Jacobs. Then came the studio game, ProTools trial by error, iphone recording, cuts and recuts. Guest performances from Danny McGough, Brantley Kearns, Dave Zirbel, Richie Lawrence, Rich Dembowski and Woody Aplanalp (Old Californio), Joe Berardi, Marcus Watkins

and Marc Doten (Double Naught Spy Car), and James Combs and Ed Barguiarena (Great Willow).

Sounds like a breeze – not! And this album is the result. Social and eco commentary during a period of genuine global and American crises, stating views without exploiting genuine suffering? Historic and oblique, featuring Geronimo, Muhammad Ali, Marin wiccans, London markets, and the [un]certainties of love and broken hearts. Diverse music but classic Hawks two-beats and country rockers. Psychedelic country-rock with a backbone and gritty realism. Solid.

-- David Pearson



<https://rootstime.be/index.html?https://rootstime.be/CD%20REVIEUW/2021/SEPT1/CD7.html>

Anyone who reads these columns often knows that we have a (more than) warm heart for this band from southern California. This is partly because the foursome, which is now well into its third decade of working together, is like few others capable of coming up with the most beautiful melodies. When Rob Waller, Paul Lacques, Paul Marshall and Victoria Jacobs bring their talents together, they invariably come up with songs that you quickly recognize and can hum along with. This shows an organic collaboration, a

quality that we can really appreciate here, because the four of them never allow themselves to be caught in artificiality.

If someone like grandmaster Dave Alvin describes the band as "one of California's unique treasures", then of course he knows what he is talking about, because "it takes one to know one." A second reason for our admiration for the four is that they are already on their tenth record and that one of the recurring topics is the concern for our planet and the people who inhabit it and that can be heard on this album.

"On Our Way" is their Covid record, made completely in lockdown times in a way they never experienced themselves. Coming together was taboo and, whereas with musicians it is precisely that togetherness that tends to stir creativity, this time the four were forced to find a new way to shape the eleven songs of this record. That meant for them: although in their previous work they sometimes talked about "disruption" and even fed off its impetus, there was suddenly this worldwide event, which forced them to ride the waves of the necessary innovation in a world that, as it turned out, would consist almost exclusively of disruption for over a year and a half. That forced the four to work independently with things like FaceTime, where songwriters Lacques and Waller logged in every Friday at four o'clock in the afternoon to let each other hear the creations of the past week.

They immediately recognized the risk in this approach: as a band, which is known for writing and singing about what is happening in society around you, you are forced to virtualize a bit and tell what could possibly have happened. This is solved by making songs about characters from the past (Geronimo, Muhammed Ali) or getting started with the so-called Faulknerian dilemma: in very beautiful, long sentences, trying to figure out or write - and by extension, being creative. Being is an extremely individual activity, or a task that can only take shape because you as an artist live in an environment, a society, which influences you in any way. All very fascinating, but not immediately accessible, and it is precisely at that consideration that this new Hawks has become such a special record. The basis remains the Alt Country, although there are also straightforward blues ("Mississippi Gas Station Blues") and sounds of 60s pop, like the spirit of The Doors throughout the eight minutes long funky closing track "How You Gonna Know."

That results in an admittedly somewhat strange album, on which I can't find a weak song anywhere, even though I tried very hard. Admittedly, this record takes a bit of acclimation, but once you're familiar with the approach, you discover pearl after pearl and you're left with an album that you already know you'll be picking up regularly for years to come.

-- Dani Heyvaert

A “Left Coast” indie outfit, **I See Hawks in L.A.** follows in the tradition of such fabled roots rock pioneers as the Byrd, the Flying Burrito Brothers, the Dillards, the Youngbloods, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, and the other California combos that breached the divide between rock and country in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s. Led by original founders Rob Waller and Paul Lacques with the additional participation of current mainstays Paul Marshall and Victoria Jacobs, the band still shows the same dedication to their rustic roots some 20 years on. Naturally then, their new album, *On Our Way*, becomes a perfect mesh of roots and reverence, sturdiness and sentiment as evolved out of the music made by their forebears. They’ve become an Americana institution in their own right, with fiddles, pedal steel and high harmonies evoking images of high desert plateaus, scenic mountain vistas and dusty rural outposts that occupy those sunbaked environs. This time around, elements of psychedelia and surreal intent are infused in the mix, making the new album their most diverse set yet and indeed, a real revelation as well.

-- Lee Zimmerman

Rock 'n' Roll Truth

You've reached the home of The MUSIC WORTH BUYING Channel and Robert Kinsler's Rock 'n' Roll Truth Blog

http://rockwrite.blogspot.com/2021/08/new-music-los-lobos-cruzados-divine.html?utm_source=feedburner

While the world has changed in monumental and challenging ways since **I See Hawks in L.A.** released their previous album *Hawks with Good Intentions* in September 2019, the Los Angeles troupe's forthcoming album *On Our Way* offers the perfect chance to reconnect with the beauty around us. On the alt country quartet's *On Our Way* the efforts of singer-guitarist **Rob Waller**, multi-instrumentalist/backing vocalist **Paul Lacques**, bassist-vocalist **Paul Marshall** and percussionist-vocalist **Victoria Jacobs** to stay connected by songwriting via FaceTime and completing recording remotely during the pandemic astound.

This is a beautiful and soul-stirring set of songs that defies the angry shouting heard on 24-hour cable news in favor of songs about "Geronimo, Muhammad Ali, the Faulknerian dilemma, in language sometimes more abstract and mirroring than narration" (according to press notes) as well as "...classic Hawks train beats and country rockers about Marin Wiccans, London mod dub hippie markets and the [un]certainties of love and broken hearts."

Indeed, the range of topics is equaled by the musical depth displayed on the collection. From the lovely mandolin and pedal steel guitar-adorned Americana opening gem "Might've Been Me" and authentic countrified "On Our Way" to the spoken word neo-trance blues of "Mississippi Gas Station Blues" and psychedelia-laced "Kensington Market" and poignant "Geronimo," I See Hawks in L.A. creates songs that tap into authentic country, roots, bluegrass and folk stylings with amazing warmth and might. A number of guest performers help further bring the rich tapestry of songs to life.

-- Robert Kinsler



I See Hawks In L.A. – On Our Way

By Shawn Underwood

<https://twangville.com/38153/i-see-hawks-in-l-a-on-our-way/>

There's an otherworldliness that inhabits the deserts of California. It's not just the inhospitable environment, it's also a sense of realness that comes to the improbable. From the conspiracy theorists outside China Lake to the mystics in Joshua Tree, some of the inhabitants embrace that difference in life. With their

roots in the high desert of the Mojave, I See Hawks In L.A. always manage to inject a little of that spirituality into their tales of ordinary Californians. Those are set to a musical style with equal parts Oildale and Topanga, and makes the Hawks sound instantly recognizable. With a fresh stack of songs written against the backdrop of the pandemic, they're releasing a new album, *On Our Way*.

Might've Been Me leads off with a touch of mysticism and the sense of spirits in the air, or, you know, might've just been me. *On Our Way* gets a little Byrds style jangly guitar amid an admission that life is all about the journey, not the destination. The Hawks signature galloping rhythm and vocal harmonies are also front and center on *If I Move*. It's a tale of disappointment and realization that you're so anchored in a place that every store and parking lot has a memory, and now those memories are more haunting than joyous.

Stepping a little bit away from the country rock genre is *Mississippi Gas Station Blues*, delving into the Faulknerian choices one sometimes has to make. It has Texas roadhouse beat that would make ZZ Top proud. *Kensington Market* is a 60's Brit-pop number featuring drummer Victoria Jacobs on vocals with a trip through the alternative lifestyle of another generation. Also coming with a little whimsy is *Kentucky Jesus*, an ode to Muhammad Ali. *Know Just What To Do* features squeaky fiddle and synthesizer parts in a trippy look at a free spirit.

Spanning a 20+ year period, this is the 10th album for I See Hawks In L.A. During that time the band has built a loyal following and achieved critical acclaim while playing mostly in their home state. I highly recommend seeing them live if you get a chance. Their harmonies and melodic guitar parts are just as brilliant in person as on a record. But if a trip to SoCal isn't in your future, *On Our Way* is a worthy substitute whether you're new or a diehard fan.

SHIREFOLK

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<http://www.shirefolk.org.uk>

The finest rock band on the planet is back with that most contemporary of things: an album written and recorded in lockdown. It doesn't seem to have affected them much -- *On Our Way* is a triumph. Many of the usual concerns are there -- social and eco concerns, lightly psychedelised with a whole heap of country twang. Opener "Might Have Been Me," title track "On Our Way," "Stealing," and the superb "Radio Keeps Me On The Ground" all roll by in classic Hawks style.

Look closer though and change is afoot. "Know Just What To Do" has a Velvetsy feel with a suitably discordant fiddle courtesy of Brantley Kearns. "Mississippi Gas Station Blues" is a bluesy stomper by way of the Doors' "Roadhouse Blues," that Tom Waits wouldn't disown. "Kensington Market," sung by drummer Victoria Jacobs, is a late-sixties, Carnaby Street imbued masterpiece. Then there's sprawling eight-minute closer, the positively funky "How You Gonna Know?" with Jacobs getting all Clude Stubblefield on the backbeat. Despite the challenges of writing on facetime and the trial of recording on an iPhone (you can, apparently) *On Our Way* hangs together perfectly.

If music is a way out of the pandemic (and it probably is) then *On Our Way* is a life raft and I See Hawks In L.A. have got the coordinates for the distant shores of normality.

-- Jonathan Roscoe



<https://americanahighways.org/2021/08/25/review-i-see-hawks-in-l-a-on-our-way/>

If you crossed the DNA of Gram Parsons, Pure Prairie League, Quicksilver Messenger Service, & Goose Creek Symphony with The Band – you’d have **I See Hawks in L.A.** This unit of eccentric fashion-plates can’t help but sound – entertaining. The band isn’t a group of newbies & it’s not that they’re retro. They’re not. They just have a familiar, intriguing sound. Their melody-fix brings ears back to another era in the coolest manner imagined.

I was buying the Holy Modal Rounders, Seatrain, & Mason Proffitt. Though those names may escape some readers – these bands had their day. I See Hawks In L.A. is filled with that richness, originality & excellence.

“Know Just What To Do” is exceptional. A beautifully melodic tune. No controversy, no angst, no anger, no showboating. Just good music. The 11 cut *On Our Way* (Independent-Drops Aug 27) is their 10th CD of innocent quicksilver moments with textured continuity. It possesses impressive clarity & the songs are striking. I’ve listened 3 times to this set – there’s always something I missed.

This Southern California alt-country/Americana/folk-rock band is precise. On “Mississippi Gas Station Blues,” they indeed come impressively close to The Band if Garth Hudson were the lead singer. But their own signature sound is potent & strikingly good.

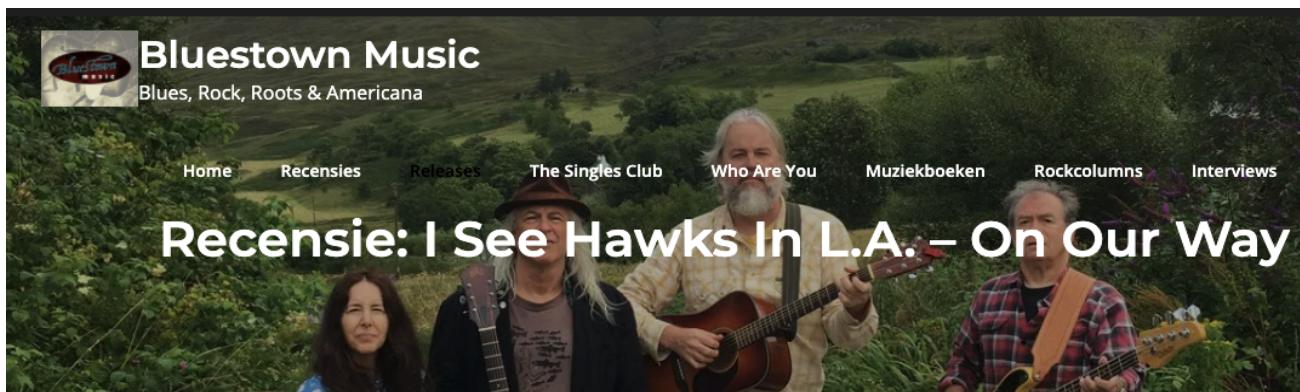
“Kensington Market,” features the 60s Cowsills/Spanky & Our Gang – like vocals of drummer Victoria Jacobs. Mindful of the melodic richness of all the incredible 60s melodic pop hits of the era.

“Stealing,” has tints of The Band/Little Feat.

The songwriting is exceptional throughout & the varied voices make for an interesting listen, unincumbered with sameness. “If I Move,” is where the Goose Creek Symphony connection is strongest. The presentation is like a 70s Charlie Gearheart song. That’s a compliment because his tunes were always distinctive & often played unflinchingly. (The medley of “Saturday Night at the Grange/Little Liza Jane”). I See Hawks in L.A. has that cohesion.

The closing quirky tune “How You Gonna Know,” is a classic waiting to happen. If Frank Zappa dabbled in alt-country this 8-minute country-noir could possibly be his contribution. A jambalaya of sound. “Love is a dirty glacier...” Indeed.

-- John Apice



<https://www.bluestownmusic.nl/recensie-i-see-hawks-in-l-a-on-our-way/>

(google translation from Dutch) On album number nine, the American band I See Hawks In L.A. once again delivers their trusted high quality. You will soon come to that conclusion when you have listened to the new album of this Americana band. The band consists of Rob Walles (vocals, guitar, synthesix), Paul Lacques (guitar, lap steel, auto harp, jaw harp, mandolin), Victoria Jacobs (drums, vocals) and Paul Marshall (bass, vocals).

The album opens with the sparkling Might've Been Me in which a fresh bluegrass sound can be heard. In the intimate and warm ballad On Our Way you will find references to the sound of Poco's Rose Of Cimarron. Victoria Jacobs sings the warm and vibrant Kensington Market and her dreamy vocals create a Bangles-like sound.

Stealing is modest, fragile song with bluesy guitar work and an intimate atmosphere. The shuffling Radio Keeps Me On The Ground (Slight Return) also has a bluesy feel with beautiful Eagles-like vocals.

In a number of songs the band shows its adventurous face, like in the dark Know Just What To Do, which opens with the exuberant jubilant fiddle of Brantley Kearns and then continues with a glowing vibration. The band Double Naught Spy Car, an experimental indie rock band, appears in How You Gonna Know?, a dark artfully grooving song with Indian influences.

An intriguing end to another formidable album by I See Hawks In L.A.

-- Peter Marinus



MusicRiot.co.uk

<http://musicriot.co.uk/album/on-our-way-i-see-hawks-in-la/>

On Our Way” – I See Hawks in LA



Where do I start with this one? The obvious I suppose; this is I See Hawks in LA's lockdown album. This is the one where they discovered all of the ways of working that didn't involve being in a room together, courtesy of Tim Berners-Lee.

Rob Waller, Paul Lacques, Paul Marshall and Victoria Jacobs jumped in at the deep end and explored all the possibilities and opportunities on offer. The change in working methods and the broad church of Americana in the twenty-first century make "On Our Way" a very eclectic album indeed, incorporating elements of psychedelia, sixties pop and Southern swamp rock alongside the more usual country rock and string band arrangements.

There's a strong Byrds influence running through the whole album with twelve-string guitar featuring heavily and some gorgeous harmonies.

The album even has a pandemic song, the incredibly catchy and hook-filled "Radio Keeps Me on the Ground" which builds from an acoustic guitar intro, goes through the gears and finishes with the full band including Hammond B3. It's an uplifting and optimistic look back at a particularly difficult year.

The songs that move away from I See Hawks in LA mainstream are what gives the album its originality and depth. "Mississippi Gas Station Blues" is a grungy lo-fi, Canned Heat-inflected lope with a growling vocal, while "How You Gonna Know", at over eight minutes long, is a constantly evolving take on a Tuareg chant with ambient sounds and general weirdness. "Know Just What to Do" is a heavily Byrds-influenced piece in triple time with chiming twelve-string and reversed guitar phrases. I'm not saying I'm endorsing this, folks, but these songs probably work better accompanied by some weed.

Victoria Jacobs gets her own song, as a writer and singer, on the album and it's a little gem with a feel of sixties pop filtered by St Etienne. "Kensington Market" is about a visit to London in the eighties and has a dreamlike quality that works perfectly with Victoria's vocal. There are a couple of interesting songs about historical figures; "Geronimo" tries to get inside the head of the Native American leader in later life, while "Kentucky Jesus" praises Muhammad Ali for his political and spiritual achievements rather than his boxing. Both are thought-provoking pieces.

"On Our Way" is a fascinating mix of mainstream Americana with psychedelia and a bit of grunge for good measure, topped off with Rob Waller's mellow lead vocal and some lovely smooth harmonies. You certainly won't be bored by this album.

-- MCKAYA