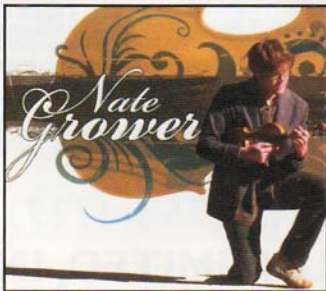


NATE GROWER

Patuxent Music
CD-193



The first thing you hear is the clean guitar run from Jordan Tice, setting a progressive bluegrass tone to this recording. Then Grower's fiddle comes in and you realize that Tom Mindte of Patuxent Music has found yet

another stellar young talent. Grower grew up in Western New York where he became engrossed in learning the fiddle. He picked up enough classical training to give him great tone and intonation. His grasp of the fiddle is obvious from the first track, an original tune.

The settings are very progressive. Tice's arrangement of the traditional West Virginia tune, "Big Sciota" starts out a tad sweet, but takes on a life of its own so that it comes to life as the players explore the depth that's inherent in the tune. Grower goes on to explore bluegrass classics such as "Fire On The Mountain," which features a killer mandolin/fiddle duet with Danny Knicely, and a powerhouse break by the best-kept banjo secret in the nation's capital, Mike Munford. Another great old West Virginia favorite via Jenes Cottrell, is "The Cherry River Line," featuring an overdubbed Mark Schatz on clawhammer banjo and bass. The arrangement is old-time on overdrive, but is not Grower's best work.

Perhaps the most impressive cut is "Kansas City Kitty," where Grower struts his swinging improvisational skills with aplomb. Throughout the project, Grower shows himself to be one of the younger folks to keep your eye on. His chops are real, and his tone and timing nearly impeccable. His reading of "Leon Kennington Waltz" is a thing of wonder. He acquits himself well, playing lead

as well as backup. He has strong original material and is surrounded by talented, experienced players. The end result is one of the most satisfying fiddle projects in some time. While he dabbles in old-time and swing, Grower is first and foremost a bluegrass fiddler and, as that, is one to watch. (Patuxent Music, P.O. Box 572, Rockville, MD 20848, www.pxrec.com.)RCB

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