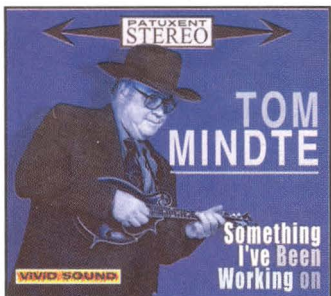


TOM MINDTE

SOMETHING I'VE BEEN WORKING ON

Patuxent Music

CD-242



Given his admiration for the honky-tonk bluegrass artists of the '50s and '60s, it should be no surprise that Tom Mindte opens his 13-song, all-instrumental, solo debut with a cover of Buzz Busby's "Flat Creek." Mindte spent a great deal of time with Busby and absorbed much of his somewhat raw, devil-may-care approach. That comes through on "Flat Creek," an amalgamation of tune fragments, including hints of "The Battle Hymn Of The Republic." It comes through even more plainly on Mindte's cover of "Buzzin' With Buzz" seven tracks later. "Buzzin'..." is a whirlwind, and Mindte captures that energy.

Mindte does not, however, stay in that style for long, though it is never far away. The rest of the recording is a varied mix. There is a nod to Monroe with "Lonesome Moonlight Waltz," a nod that is echoed in Mindte's "Dark Romance," a tune full of classic Monroe triplets and downstrokes. "Dark Romance" is one of four Mindte originals, the most interesting of which is "Bipolar," a quirky, lilting tune that has a pizzicato, music-box quality in the A section, then shifts to country swing in the B part. That shift makes for a nice tension release. Also here are no less than five waltzes. Everyone likes a waltz, and Mindte has chosen some good ones, including "Lonesome Moonlight Waltz" and "Queen Of The Delta Waltz," but five overdoes it a bit. Any two of the five, possibly three, would have been better. The album rounds out with the fiddle tune "Dusty Miller," the jazz standard "Avalon," the pop classic "El Cumbanchero," and closes on a chorded solo version of "Nearer My God To Thee." Each of them gets an appropriate airing and a good twist arrangement-wise.

Joining Mindte on this lively and entertaining debut are a host of talented musicians, many of them associated with the Patuxent label. (Patuxent Music, P.O. Box 572, Rockville, MD 20848, www.pxrec.com.)BW