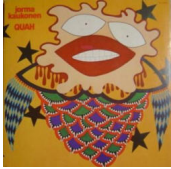


Jorma Kaukonen – Quah (1974)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 04 October 2011 08:31 - Last Updated Wednesday, 17 March 2021 21:04

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1) *Genesis* 2) *I'll Be All Right* 3) *Song For The North Star* 4) *I'll Let You Know Before I Leave* 5) *Flying Clouds* 6) *Another Man Done Gone* 7) *I Am The Light of this World* 8) *Police Dog Blues* 9) *Blue Prelude* 10) *Sweet Hawaiian Sunshine* [play](#) 11) *Hamar Promenade* 12) *Lord Have Mercy* 13) *No Mail Today* 14) *Midnight In Milpitas* [play](#) 15) *Barrier*

Jorma Kaukonen - vocals & guitar Tom Hobson - vocals & acoustic guitar Gene Tortora - dobro Mischa Myers - violin Arthur Krebiel - french horn Melinda Ross - cello Thomas Heimberg – viola

By 1974, Jefferson Airplane guitarist Jorma Kaukonen had already started on his own path with his blues-rock side project, Hot Tuna, but with the Airplane's final flight behind him, he moved definitively beyond electrified psychedelic rock with his first solo album, *QUAH*. Most of the album is just Jorma and his acoustic guitar, and while this sparse format is ostensibly similar to some of the later Hot Tuna releases, it focuses much more on folk-tinged singer-songwriter balladry than on the country blues favored by Tuna. Those familiar with Jorma's Airplane ballads, such as "Good Shepherd," will recognize the sensibility at work here. Of course, there are some tracks where Jorma showcases his mastery of blues fingerpicking, and even some of the most overtly folkie tracks bear a bluesy tinge, but on the whole, *QUAH* is of a piece with the troubadour movement that was still all the rage in the mid-'70s. ---cduniverse

Jorma Kaukonen's first solo album remains one of the crowning achievements in his distinguished musical career. First released in 1974, *Quah* drew on the same folk and blues influences that powered his Hot Tuna project, but did so with a gentler, more delicate touch.

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Produced by his Hot Tuna partner Jack Casady, the album mostly features just Jorma and his deft fingerpicking, although three songs feature tasteful string-section overdubs. The opening "Genesis," a poignant ode to his failing marriage (recorded on Valentine's Day), is perhaps his most touching original composition, while another original, "Flying Clouds," is a graceful melody as far from acid rock as one can imagine. There are also two uplifting covers of his biggest influence, Rev. Gary Davis. Originally, Quah was supposed to be a full collaboration with Tom Hobson, whom Jorma describes as a "quirky roots performer." Hobson was apparently too quirky for the suits at RCA, since only two of his contributions survived the original cut; though always considered a bit odd by Jorma fans, Hobson's songs have over time acquired a certain charm. The 2003 reissue adds four unreleased bonus cuts: two Hobson vocals, an instrumental duet, and a solo instrumental by Kaukonen. Those who associate Jorma Kaukonen with more jam-oriented projects may be surprised by just how lovely and enchanting Quah is. ---Marc Greilsamer

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