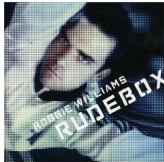


Robbie Williams - Rudebox (2006)

Written by bluelover

Tuesday, 13 October 2009 20:47 - Last Updated Wednesday, 14 June 2017 16:04

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1.Rudebox 2.Viva Life On Mars 3.Lovelight 4.Bongo Bong/Je Ne T'Aime Plus / Bongo Bong / Je Ne T'aime Plus 5.She's Madonna 6.Keep On 7.Good Doctor 8.The Actor 9.Never Touch That Switch 10.Louise 11.We're The Pet Shop Boys 12.Burslem Normals 13.Kiss Me 14.The 80's 15.The 90's 16.Summertime (Including Hidden Track "Dickhead") / Silence / Dickhead / Summertime

This is not what Mr. Williams was expected to release. Previously Robbie has shown us his soul in his songs together with excellent lyrics, sometimes soulful, sometimes hooligan music. But it is quite difficult to imagine Robbie Williams going so deep in electronic music. Not simply into electronic music. But into a sore, somewhere outdated and even ear-aggravating electronic music followed by rap and hip-hop soundings which are simply incoherent with music. What I'm trying to say is that it is a very heavy, eclectic album for a pop musician and thus, there is no doubt why the album was received negatively by many music critics. It's far not what the public wants to hear. And what the public does not want to hear often receives a bad mark. This is not really good sometimes. In the same way Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment" received appalling reviews from the critics when it was just published. In the similar way, "Rudebox" is extremely monotonic, "over-rap-ped", heavy, and, in some places, is extremely annoying. But this is it what makes the CD worth listening.

At first, the CD sounds like being over-americanized with hip-hop, rap and electronic music dominating the album. The first set starts with the single "Rudebox", followed by a cowboy-styled "Viva Life on Mars", which is in turn substituted by a single "Lovelight", a cover on "Bongo Bong" and retro-type "She's Madonna" and it finishes with "Keep On" and "Good Doctor". These songs have one thing in common: absolutely nonsense lyrics ("She's Madonna" may be an exception). If the first three songs are at least listenable, other four are simply unlistenable even though Williams reads rap far not bad. These four, starting from "Bongo Bong" and finishing with "Good Doctor" can be called as completely chaotic and unstructured, being backed by aggravatingly monophonic music. After that a simple question may come up to

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the head: two what Robbie Williams has fallen?

However, the second part of the CD shows us that he hasn't even. Here, step-by-step, the songs become more and more meaningful, understandable and structured. Moreover, music appears to be significantly juicier, however, the upper section being still like a super-heavy metal element from the Mendeleev's Periodic Table. Nevertheless, such a feeling goes away after Robbie reluctantly declares "good bye to the normals" in "Burslem Normals" song with the "normals" representing this annoying old-fashioned monotonicity. Furthermore, here Robbie Williams sings warmer and more honestly than the cold and monophonic Robbie Williams in the first part.

The album, finally, finishes with much lighter compositions which are the cover "Kiss Me", "The 80s", "The 90s" and, finally, "Summertime" which depicts the lyrical hero of Robbie finally out of his infinite shell of depression and despair.

So, what have we experienced? First, we felt arrogance, boredom and complete uncertainty about the future, the latter being swayed off by the following songs what makes us believe in something happier again. Robbie Williams, in this album, invited us to stand in his shoes, to feel his depression, mental chaos and his mood changes. That is why, maybe, the album is called "Rudebox". It is rude; its music is in a box of non-originality and over-monotonicity. At the same time, we may feel how the lyrical hero was trapped in this rudebox and how he got out of it in the end. The album may look fancy and cheap by its cover and the first single but in reality it is a very deep and psychological set of songs, which actually tests the listener whether he/she is capable of taking the role of a pop-rock star. ---Choi Korie Bextor, sputnikmusic.com

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