

Cold Chisel - The Perfect Crime (Deluxe Edition) (2015)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 27 July 2019 13:34 -

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1 *Alone For You* 3:11 2 *The Backroom* 3:36 3 *All Hell Broke Lucy* 4:06 4 *The Perfect Crime* 2:41 5 *Long Dark Road* 4:34 6 *Four In The Morning* 5:23 7 *The Mansions* 3:13 8 *The Toast Of Paris* 4:43 9 *Shoot The Moon* 3:30 10 *Mexican Wedding* 3:35 11 *Get Lucky* 3:03 12 *Bus Station* 5:13 13 *Lost* 4:06 14 *Romantic Lies* 3:30 15 *Blue Flame* 4:17
Backing Vocals – Gary Pinto, Jade MacRae), Juanita Tippins, Mahalia Barnes (tracks: 13)
Bass, Vocals – Phil Small Drums, Percussion, Vocals – Charley Drayton Guitar, Vocals – Ian Moss
Orchestrated By – Jeff Bova (tracks: 13) Piano, Keyboards, Vocals – Don Walker
Rhythm Guitar – Ben Rodgers (tracks: 15) Saxophone – Paulie Cerra (tracks: 3) Trumpet, Trombone, Arranged By [Horns] – Lee Thornburg (tracks: 3) Vocals – Jimmy Barnes

It must have been tempting for Cold Chisel in its second iteration to trade solely on past glories: a greatest hits tour every couple of years to please the fans and earn some coin courtesy of the nostalgia band wagon. Instead, staying true to the hard working, pub-rock ethos that made them, Chisel have committed to putting out new music. This is not without risk: the band's considerable legacy and iconic status would be seriously undermined if the fresh material just didn't stack up.

Thankfully the songs on *The Perfect Crime* work a treat. And considering the musical and song-writing talent here, we shouldn't really be surprised – that is why they were so loved in the first place!

This is a full tilt rock'n'roll album; it's loud, fast and dirty, barely allowing the listener to pause for breath. But there's also the subtly sophisticated song-writing that we've come to expect from Don Walker and co, making this a consistently satisfying listen.

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With precision and clarity in the sound production, the record has a real freshness and energy about it. And, while the band have matured, evolving in small ways, they stay true to who they were from the beginning: no cringe-inducing moments following the fashion of the day here, no crises of identity – just an outfit who are supremely relaxed and confident in who they are and executing this very well.

‘Alone For You’ opens the album with Jimmy Barnes growling the line “I wake up in the morning, feel like shit”; it’s an arresting gambit that sets the gritty, honest tone of the album: this is not going to be some sanitised, radio-friendly outing.

For the most part, we get dirty, bar-room blues rock, telling stories that offer warts-and-all observations. Emanating from the pen of Don Walker, ‘Four in the Morning’, ‘The Toast of Paris’ and the title track are the highlights of this particular vein.

But Chisel are adept enough in their craft to change it up occasionally, adding a pleasing variety to the record. The Walker/Moss/Small collaboration, ‘Mexican Wedding’ is the big counterpoint of the album, with the band hitting a fun, Latin groove. ‘All Hell Broke Loose’, written by Barnes and his son-in-law Ben Rodger, could have been the band’s standard narrative fare, but throw in a meaty horn section and suddenly Chisel is sounding like the E Street Band.

Meanwhile, ‘Long Dark Road’ is a slow burner, a rare moment on the album where the frenetic pace is pulled back, building to some fantastic guitar work from Ian Moss at the end.

The album closes out with ‘Lost’ (also the lead single). It’s the only attempt here at a rock ballad and makes for an apt ending: simple construction, big build-up and a massive Barnesy vocal, it’s an anthem deserving of a stadium sing-a-long on the band’s current tour.

Cold Chisel are a national treasure and we should be grateful that they are still making music. The LP finds them in excellent form, with Barnes, Walker, Small and Moss at the top of the game and Charlie Drayton doing a fine job in place of the late Steve Prestwich behind the drum kit.

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FM radio may be awash with 'Flame Trees', 'Cheap Wine' and 'Khe Sanh' but, as great as those established numbers are, listeners deserve hear the material on The Perfect Crime: the songs stack up very well against the older material, but have the advantage of freshness and variety.

The Perfect Crime is out now. Cold Chisel play the Adelaide Entertainment Centre on Tuesday 17 November, with Grinspoon in support. ---Matthew Trainor, theupsidenews.com

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