Danko Jones - Rock And Roll Is Black And Blue (2012)



1 Terrified 3:26 2 Get Up 3:09 3 Legs 3:37 4 Just A Beautiful Day 3:14 5 I Don't Care 3:19 6 You Wear Me Down 3:54 7 Type Of Girl 3:45 8 Always Away 4:11 9 Conceited 3:46 10 Don't Do This 3:42 11 The Masochist 2:53 12 I Believed In God 3:58 13 I Believed In God (Reprise) 0:46 14 In Your Arms 4:25 Danko Jones - vocals and guitar John 'JC' Calabrese - bass Atom Willard – drums

There's something really appealing about the simplicity of Danko Jones' style. Conventional song structures, minor chord progressions, sing-along choruses and hilarious lyrics about sex, love and break-ups are the trio's signature features that have been omnipresent on their subsequent albums since the onset of the last decade. Unlike many retro rockers, Danko Jones have always proven capable of maintaining top form throughout their career delivering one remarkably consistent record after another. Rock and Roll Is Black and Blue continues the streak of excellent LPs that nevertheless fail to match the amazing songwriting of 2003's audacious We Sweat Blood.

Danko Jones' sixth album marks another line-up change: drummer Dan Cornelius has been replaced by Atom Willard of The Offspring fame. In normal circumstances this would bring some major alternations to any outfit's sound, but here it changes virtually nothing. The fixed style of the trio still revolves around lean, no-holds-barred party rockers that bear a close resemblance equally to fast-paced punk and sleazy classic rock. Thus, the album feels totally in line with the vast majority of the material Danko and his collaborators have recorded so far. It's a downright appeasing conclusion given the group's aptitude for crafting captivating robust rock tunes is in a class by itself.

Similarly to the previous releases of the band, Rock and Roll Is Black and Blue feels like a one-man-show type of record due to the dominant presence of the charismatic frontman. Danko

(aka Mango Kid) delivers his most assuredly melodic vocal performance which abounds with infectious harmonies and hooks. His lyrics remain wonderfully irreverent exploring perhaps all-too-familiar topics with unabashed swagger. Another distinguishing aspect of the record is slick guitar play that ranges from crunchy chugging riffs to filthy soloing that's reminiscent of blues. The rhythm section is also as audible as ever with corpulent bass lines and dynamic drum fills making the sound of the trio complete.

Even though Danko Jones are evidently on top of their game, Rock and Roll Is Black and Blue is basically a rehash of their last two albums combining playfulness of Never Too Loud with a heavier approach of Below The Belt. The sole slightly surprising moments come with classy Led Zeppelinesque hard rock of "You Wear Me Down" and blasphemous "I Believed In God" which features a gospel choir. This is still a routinely ferocious and enormously fun spin on punk-infused vintage rock. However, it's somewhat underwhelming that the group as experienced as this refuses to progress beyond their safety zone. No matter how well performed, their style may become obsolete in next to no time. ---Greg Fisher, sputnik.com

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