

Mark Geary The Fool

Stil: Singer/Songwriter | Kat.-Nr.: TOURB00 | Label: TOURB0music
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Track Listing:

1. Frostbite
2. Lesson Learned
3. Dandelion
4. Down In Front
5. Rosebud
6. Battle Of Troy
7. Rose
8. Don't Break
9. The Fool
10. Happy
11. Holding Fire

One of Ireland's finest and unassuming song-smiths

Much-awaited is somewhat of an over-used term in the world of album releases, but it's hard to avoid it when describing the forthcoming album from Mark Geary, one of the Ireland's finest and unassuming song-smiths. It's five years since his last studio album and in that time, Geary has been frequently on the road, building his fan-base throughout Europe and the US where he lived for many years. It's often whilst touring that he forms ideas for songs, trying them out in front of new audiences, and indeed many of the albums' songs were born and shaped this way. Finely tuned to his public's response, he can intuitively sense how a verse or an idea can move and be crafted in a new direction.

Born in Dublin, he moved to New York at an early age where he cut his teeth on the music circuit, playing alongside the likes of Jeff Buckley at the renowned Sin-e café and where he garnered respect and attention from both audiences and fellow artists. Of Mark's time in New York, Time Out NY magazine said "His delicate songs about love and defiance...recall Richard Thompson and John Lennon....one of the East Village's favorite adopted sons."

His early albums "33 1/2 Grand Street" and "Ghosts", which featured vocals from Oscar winner Glen Hansard and Josh Ritter, were chart successes and won him several awards including the Best Album of the year by Irish Voice. Since then he had a top ten hit with "Christmas Biscuits" his

charity single with Glen Hansard in 2013, has released two live albums (“Live, Love Lost it NYC” in 2009 and “Songs Vienna” in 2014) as well as two further studio albums (“Opium” in 2008 and “Songs about Love, Songs about Leaving” in 2012). His music has been featured in television series (notably One Tree Hill (the WB), Bones (FOX), Ghost Whisperer (CBS) and Windfall (NBC)) and in films such as 2014 comedy “2nd Serve”. He also composed original sound tracks for Sundance premiering films “Loggerheads” and “Steel City” and for award-winning Tribeca Film Festival documentary selection “Sons of Perdition” (2010).

For this latest album entitled “The Fool”, Geary has created a collection of well-honed lyrical songs with catchy hooks which often belie the deep emotions at play. He handles themes such as parting, hurt, desperation and yearning with an artistry that few songwriters achieve. The first single, “Battle of Troy” is a song about the recklessness of desire, as he explains “pulling the pin- knowing there's a whole heap of heavy that's to follow but being desperate enough, needing it more and facing the firestorm”. The recording of Troy was, he recalls, a laborious one “a heartache from the start”, with idea after idea thrown at it. The result, however, is an impressive polished track with an evocative melody and memorable hook.

“Battle of Troy” is one of several songs on the album which have been “gig-bashed” into shape on his touring circuit. Although some like “Rosebud” with its JJ Cale easy groove, he says almost wrote themselves “almost formed- almost ready to sing - almost with the butterflies as you write it”, and “Down in Front” which was written in the quiet of one night after reading a book called “A Winter’s Tale” and thinking about New York, other songs are worked and reworked. The Van Morrison-influenced “Dandelion” which features the piano playing of The Frames’ Justin Carroll, even changed key during its process. In it Geary employs his signature method of capturing an image in each verse, resulting in a kind of musical story-boarding.

“Happy” delivers an easy toe-tapping rhythm with smooth harmonies from Grainne Hunt, whose honeyed vocals feature on several of the tracks, including another flower- inspired tune “Rose”. One of the first songs written for this record, its endearing melody soars with Hunt’s layered harmonies against a strummed guitar countered with Geary’s soft finger picking. “A song of acceptance - and Grainne singing a kinda answer reply thing that I always adored the Beatles for, I nod my hat always to these songs” he explains.

Now in his forties, Geary brings to his music a delicate sense of compassion and acceptance, a reflection of where he now is in his own life. “Break” is a gentle tune with a tender message, one of understanding - a song using an old Irish guitar tuning which he stumbled on and allowed to lead him to the melody.

No stranger to including the odd rockier track in his works, this album has two electronic-infused tracks “The Fool” and “Frostbite”. Coming late in the recording process, in “Frostbite” Geary captures an intense image of calamity “I woke up half- alive..:” and its after-shock with haunting chords and bigger production. The album’s title track “The Fool” hints at Geary’s love of Radiohead, with a plethora of drums and synths. “Sometimes you just throw the kitchen sink at a song, it’ll take it all” he explains.

The album closes with a more melancholic, poignant ballad “Holding Fire”. Always aiming to capture the vibe of an album to end a record, this song was the inevitable choice. It’s a song about dignity and compassion in the face of hurt and separation.