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TANGLEWEED - JUST A SPOONFUL [April 2006 Issue]

Squatney Records

45000

The rest of the title of this collection of oldtime tunes is "...And Other Folksongs Of Rural Cook County." Cook County surrounds the metropolis of Chicago where this live jam took place. And, although the band recorded this in the heart of the big city, an authentic approach was what the members of Tangleweed sought after with this project. The band consists of Billy Oh on fiddle and vocals, Kenneth P.W. Rainey on mandolin and vocals, Paul Wargaski on bass, Timothy Ryan Fisher on banjo and vocals, and Scott Judd on guitar.

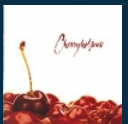


As the liner notes tell us, this CD was recorded "in the style of an old field recording." The band found an empty apartment where they set up a twotrack analog recorder and used two microphones to capture these tunes that were recorded on a single afternoon. Every song was recorded live with no overdubs added in later. As Rainey says in the liner notes about this flybytheseatofyourpants approach, "You can hear floorboards creak between takes. You can hear feet stomping...it is a flawed record, but also a very human one."

The CD starts off with a rollicking version of "Train 45." That is followed by a swinging string band version of Duke Ellington's "CJam Blues." Both of these songs feature what oldtime usually doesn't-improvisation. So, in a sense, this music is bluegrass, yet with a distinctive oldtime feel to it. One of the songs that fall squarely into the bluegrass category is hightempo version of Doug and Rodney Dillard's



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"Banjo In The Holler." Other highlights include some fine fiddle work on "Blackberry Blossom," along with a nice version of "Old Joe Clark." There are times when the sound of this CD is a little muddled due to microphone placement. But the spontaneous nature of this fun jam session comes through loud and clear. (Tangleweed, 2649 N. Albany, Chicago, IL 60647, www.tangleweed.org.)DH

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