

Cowboy Junkies - One Soul Now (2004)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 21 April 2010 13:21 - Last Updated Monday, 08 January 2018 13:49

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1 *One Soul Now* 4:54 2 *Why This One* 3:47 3 *My Wild Child* 3:52 4 *From Hunting Ground To City* 4:41 5 *The Stars Of Our Stars* 4:20 6 *Notes Falling Slow* 5:56 7 *No Long Journey Home* 4:17 8 *He Will Call You Baby* 5:47 9 *Simon Keeper* 5:52 10 *The Slide* 3:49

Margo Timmins – vocals Michael Timmins – guitar Alan Anton – bass Peter Timmins – drums + Jeff Bird – percussion, electronic mandolin (track 9), melodica (track 5) Jaro Czerwinec – accordion (track 9) Linford Detweiler – organ (track 9) Richard Bell - organ, piano

While it seems more common in the '80s, '90s, and beyond for a good band to remain intact for ten-plus years, they all face the same challenge: how does one continue to keep the music fresh and remain relevant? The Cowboy Junkies faced an uphill battle from the get-go, always living in the shadow of The Trinity Session (1988), and moving from the mainstream (including major labels, radio play, and a gig on Saturday Night Live) to just under the radar. Despite these changes, the Junkies have still been able to make great albums, like 1992's *Black Eyed Man* and 2001's *Open*. Both of these albums also showed a band willing to delve into new sounds (country and classic rock, respectively) and come up winners. *One Soul Now* seems to pick up where *Open* left off, retaining the tougher sound highlighted by edgy guitar work and a more rhythmic pulse. The title cut opens with acoustic guitar before transforming into a sleepy rocker that manages to be seductive and sinister at the same time. Margo Timmins' vocals are hypnotically lovely as usual, merging with bluesy guitar riffs and emerging above the morass as the chorus kicks in. Here, and on the following cut, "Why This One," it's easy to believe that the Junkies are going to pull off another coup. The arrangements and production of both cuts seem to bring a perfect balance to these songs, and the execution is handled with confidence. On second listen, however, Michael Timmins' songs tend to float more than move, and by the time the listener reaches the third cut, "My Wild Child," a familiar complaint against the Junkies emerges: the songs begin to fade into one another, more somnolent than hypnotic. Perhaps that's why a number of the later cuts choose different approaches by adding everything from organ to accordion to handclaps. Unfortunately, the guitar work on "Hunting Grounds" sounds like an outtake from "Dark Hole Again" on *Open*, while "Stars of Our Stars" seems cheerfully dissident from the surrounding material. Similar complaints can be made against the remainder

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of the album, with the Junkies veering between lethargic rockers like "Call You Baby" to atypically upbeat pieces like "No Long Journey Home." Longtime fans, wondering what the Cowboy Junkies have been up to for the last three years, will probably find several songs to like on One Soul Now. Newcomers will be much happier by picking up Open. ---Ronnie D. Lankford, Jr., AllMusic Review

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