

The Montecristos - Born To Rock 'n' Roll (2015)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Atlantic Surf* 02. *Born To Rock 'n' Roll* 03. *Hotel Pelirocco* 04. *Jayne Mansfield* 05. *Brand New Cadillac* 06. *Badfinger Twang* 07. *Good Lovin'* 08. *Love Missile F1-11* 09. *Dirty* 10. *A Little Bit Of Your Sweet Sweet Love* 11. *Pussywhipper* 12. *Dirty Little Low Life* 13. *#Selfie* 14. *I'm Going Home* Neal X - Guitar, Vocals Emma Goss - Double Bass Gemma B - Trumpet Sophie Freeman - Saxophone Hugh Wilkinson – Drums

The Montecristos is a rockabilly inspired band formed by Sigue Sigue Sputnik stun-guitarist Neal X also known by his surname Whitmore and as guitar slinger for Marc Almond. The Montecristos play a mix of rockabilly, surf, glam and rock'n'roll with lots of great guitar by Neal X and with lots of horns and double bass played by the 3 girls in the band. I'm actually not a big fan of horns since Prince overdid it for me at some point, but it works just perfect on this Montecristos album.

The project was funded by fans thru Kickstarter and we've had a download version of the album since January but it sounds much better now on CD. Soon it will be available on limited vinyl too and I have no doubt that the vinyl format and sound will suit it perfectly. The CD comes with a very nice little booklet (a rare thing in these digital days) complete with all lyrics and liner notes to each song by Neal X. Well done.

Of great interest to us old Sputnik fans the 14 tracks include 3 old Sputnik tracks: "Love Missile F1-11", "Jayne Mansfield", "Pussywhipper". The first 2 of those are simply brilliant. Sigue Sigue Sputnik with horns is indeed a brand new invention, but let me assure you, it rocks like fuckin' hell! The US bombs are cruisin' overhead while your love rocket goes red. As a cool thing for those of us also being fans of Westworld, the song "Love Missile F1-11" features Elizabeth Westwood on backing vocals. Liz was the singer in Westworld back in the days.

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But it's certainly not only about former Sputnik glory. All the other tracks, many of them penned by Neal Whitmore himself, are pure class. From first surf track "Atlantic Surf" via the first radio single and album title track "Born to Rock 'n' Roll" and all the way to the last rocker "I'm Going Home", the album floats and rocks it's way forward and makes you stomp your foot on the ground. My favorite track? Apart from the obvious Sputnik stuff that would be "Dirty Little Low Life". It's a kick ass song with angry lyrics and a vibrating rhythm that once again casts shadows back to the mighty Sputnik.

For many boring and annoying reasons, I have yet to experience this band live, but I really sincerely hope I will get to do so before too long. If they are half as great live as they are on record, they are gonna blow me away. If we can't ever have a Sigue Sigue Sputnik reunion (I still hope and wish though) then this band and album are certainly great things spawning out of a bad situation.

A single on red vinyl has just been released for Record Store Day 2015, supposedly limited to some 500 copies (good luck finding one! No chance for me here in Denmark, so eBay helped me out.) It features the album tracks "Love Missile F1-11" and "Badfinger Twang". That last song is an instrumental that Neal X wrote as the first song after he'd broken his finger in December 2013. Luckily for him (and for us!) the finger still works and this album should be more than enough to prove it! --- klavs.net

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