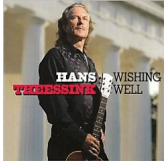


Hans Theessink - Wishing Well (2013)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 24 May 2013 16:27 - Last Updated Thursday, 04 February 2021 11:23

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1. *New Home Upon The Hill* 2. *Wishing Well* 3. *Wayfaring Stranger* 4. *Take Your Picture*
5. *Snowin' On Raton* 6. *Make Me Down A Pallet On Your Floor* 7. *Alberta Let Your Hair Hang*
Down Low 8. *Living With The Blues* 9. *Hellbound* 10. *Kathmandu* 11. *Delia* 12. *Ballad Of*
Hollis Brown 13. *Didn't We Try* 14. *Early This Morning Blues* Hans Theessink - 5-string
Banjo, Composer, Guitar, Guitar (12 String), Harmonica, Mando-Guitar, Mandocello, Mandola,
Mandolin, Six String Banjo, Terz Guitar, Vocals

Although Hans Theessink has made a name for himself with his acoustic blues guitar proficiency, he's the closest thing to Ry Cooder other than Cooder himself. On his last outing on Blue Groove, Theessink collaborated with long time Cooder vocalist Terry Evans for 2012's Delta Time, a soulful, gospel drenched electric blues excursion. This time out its all Theesink, acoustic and more folky, but with plenty of soul.

Theessink is most Cooderish on "Take Your Picture," a low key, tongue in cheek romp that epitomizes Cooder's innate playfulness, with Theessink scat singing Betty Boop style, then dropping into a Clarence Frogman Henry croak for some basso, burping scat underlined by some smooth fingerpicking. Ironically, in the liner notes Theessink says that although he made the song up during a live show a while back, he can't help but think that he'd heard it somewhere else. Yep- its an amalgamation of Cooder-isims. But that's OK. Wherever he channeled it from, it's helping to keep that Cooder spirit alive.

But Theesink is not a Cooder clone. For Townes Van Zandt's "Snowin' On Raton," he's very Leonard Cohen-ish, rumbling along quietly in low gear but still pulling plenty of weight along with him.

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He tries on some other personas, cloaking himself in Brownie McGhee's skin for "Living With the Blues." Theesink's version is softer, vocally and instrumentally, than McGhee's choppy, chugging original, but his is just as intense, just at a lower volume.

Theessink's take on Bob Dylan's "Ballad of Hollis Brown" is just as creepy and sinister as the original, with Dave Perlman's pedal steel guitar snippets snaking around his feet as Theessink mumbles the lyrics as so as not to get them riled up enough to strike.

The title cut is Theessink's, but it sounds like Eric Bibb vocally and instrumentally. The guitarist gets a chiming tone playing the mando-guitar, which once again leads back to Cooder, who favored the instrument on tunes like "Jesus On the Mainline."

Although Hans Theessink can be very much his own man, on this outing, he's deep in Cooder's shadow. Done this well, there's certainly nothing wrong with that. Keep it coming. ---Grant Britt, nodepression.com

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