Gary Hoey - Money (1999)

Written by bluesever
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01. Money 02. Peahi 03. Da Kine 04. Buta Brain 05. Drop In 06. Quack 07. Zen Dep 08. Facedown 09. Smokin' Up Sunshine 10. Budhaville 11. Hail To Dale 12. Gone Surf   Bass – Ray Riendeau Drums – Glen Sobel Guitar – Gary Hoey

There's little question that Gary Hoey is a talented guitarist, capable of spinning out dizzying solos at the drop of the hat. He has a problem making compelling records, though. His fourth proper studio album, Money -- not counting no less than three holiday records and a live album -- starts off on the wrong note with a horridly misguided reworking of Pink Floyd's "Money" as a post-Surfing With the Alien instrumental, complete with a wah-wah melody line. Hoey never quite abandons Joe Satriani throughout the album -- he really hasn't left him behind once in his career, actually -- and the combination of Satch's fluid, rounded technique with a surfer aesthetic is often quite jarring, whether it's on rockers, lite-funk numbers, or melodic album rock cuts that sound a bit like the Satriani number used in the Maxell Tape commercial. It's weird to hear such a technically proficient guitarist with such a laid-back vibe -- after all, most guitar virtuosos go out of their way to show off their chops. To his credit, Hoey never does that. If only he could find stronger material and be more adventurous in his arrangements. At times, it works, but it's all surfer cool and guitar gloss, which means it can be so slick and unassuming that it's hard to hear Hoey's musicianship. And his songwriting doesn't really draw a listener in, either, leaving Money as weird background music -- impeccably played and produced, but never engaging. It will likely please Hoey fanatics, but it's hard not to think that he's capable of more. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, AllMusic Review

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