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music BY ADRIENNE VAN DER VALK

Mysterious Process

Unkle Nancy leaves some Lovely clues

I've been trying to track down the artist known as Unkle Nancy since hearing his debut album, *Lovely*. To be honest, I'm not always terribly motivated to talk to songwriters about their "process," but something about this collection of songs — a folk-rock opera of sorts chronicling the love story of a poet named Lonesome and the object of his affections, *Lovely* — has piqued my curiosity. Is Unkle Nancy really Lonesome? Who is the mysterious *Lovely*? Why does everyone in his band only have a first name? I do some mild stalking via Google. I find an outdated blog that Unkle Nancy kept until 2005, but then nothing after that ... a clue perhaps? OK, this is getting a little creepy.

Of course, this being Eugene, the mystery is really more an indulgence than a reality, but regardless of the backstory, *Lovely* is a melodically enjoyable and lyrically interesting album with a few notably catchy and moving tracks. "Play it Cool" is a jaunty little ditty about biding time, waiting for heart-break. "Beautiful You" and "She Said" are the album's official book-

ends, the first sad in a hopeful, naïve, poetic way and the second more introspective and painfully wizened. The "hidden" 10th track gives you some insight into the fate of Lonesome and *Lovely*, but I won't spoil the story.

For an album composed entirely around one side of a relationship, there's a commendable amount of musical variety on *Lovely*. "Perfect" experiments with some trippy, new-agey distortion, several tracks feature haunting cello courtesy of artist Yoko Silk and there's a good old-fashioned hippie jam-out (but just a little one!) on "Closer to You." Nancy's vocal range is also remarkably broad, and he takes some breathy, gravelly risks that pay off by marking each track as a unique and personal experience. My favorite was the audible drunken wounded bitterness in the vocals on "Stay Away."

Indulge your audio voyeur at Unkle Nancy's CD release party, which is also a benefit for the Alzheimer's Association (with brochures, staff on hand and a brief presentation on Alzheimer's). **EW**



UNKLE NANCY CD RELEASE PARTY
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