

Rhythms

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SOUL, COUNTRY, JAZZ, WORLD

NIGEL WEARNE

THE RECKONING

nigelwearne.bandcamp.com



The Reckoning is the third album for Victorian guitarist and multi-instrumentalist Nigel Wearne. With the 11 songs ranging from blues, jazz and soul styles, the record is tailor made for fans of Tom Waits as it utilises a similar sonic pallet that incorporates Hammond organ, reeds, horns and Wearne's own smoky barroom croon.

Opener 'Choir of the Done Wrong' is one of the albums more up-tempo moments, complete with fire and brimstone lyrics that recall Nick Cave at his most religiously fervent. First single 'Black Behind the Blue' is a blues shuffle with a New Orleans jazz feel.

The Tom Waits similarities comes through most strongly on 'A Moment Too Soon', a drunken rumba with hints of jazz and mariachi, and the title track. 'The Reckoning' features sneering vocals and surf guitar that sounds like its being played underwater very much in the style of long-time Waits associate Marc Ribot. The album is produced by Wearne with assistance from composer, arranger and musician Aurélien Tomasi.

For me the highlight of the album is 'To the Edge', a duet with Yorkshire singer-songwriter Lauren Housley. An ominous torch song with Morricone-esque horns than reminds me of The Delines at their more soulful.

Nigel has had a busy year – apart from releasing this new album he's toured the US three times, the UK twice and played a bunch of festivals including MerleFest in North Carolina, the Cambridge Folk Festival in the UK and the Old Settler's Music Festival near Austin, Texas. Australian fans can get a chance to experience *The Reckoning* live when he plays The Port Fairy Folk Festival 2024.

NICK CORR