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Music - May 2009

Boris McCutcheon and The Saltlicks, *Bad Road, Good People*

Genre: Southwestern Roots Rock

Story by *Emily Drabanski*

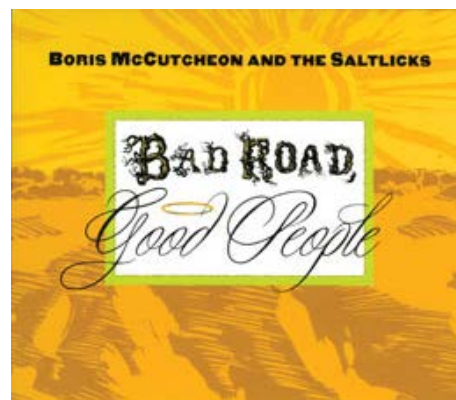
He may be based in the village of Ojo Sarco, but Boris McCutcheon's clever, quirky lyrics backed by lively rock and blues melodies have gained a near-cult following around the world. This recent CD went to No. 2 on the Euro-American music charts in the Netherlands.

McCutcheon has a commanding bluesy voice with a country edge that weaves in and out of free-spirited arrangements. Recorded at Santa Fe's Frogville Records, the musicianship on this CD is superb. Lots of talented friends sit in, including popular bluesman Taj Mahal, who offers killer harmonica riffs on "I Long (Then I'm Gone)."

Others adding to the tasty brew are members of the Hundred Year Flood band—Bill and Jim Palmer (playing percussion and tambourines), and backing vocalist Felecia Ford—as well as keyboardist Kevin Zoernig, upright bassist and vocalist Susan Hyde Holmes, and mandolin player Sharon Gilchrist. Brett Davis particularly shines on "Molasses Soul (The Ballad of Rusty Strange)," contributing tenor banjo, lap steel guitar, and vocals.

"Small Town Blues" is a fun, honky-tonk song in which McCutcheon reflects on rural life where "The gossip mill is alive and well / Where they pave the streets in oyster shells / Round about March they're throwing food / That's when they get them small town blues."

He's also capable of delivering a heart-stopping romantic ballad, such as "Big Old World," which he sings in a gentle, almost lullaby style. He also includes a few songs that are somewhat sinister: In "The Wicked Things," Zoernig plays the eerie-sounding theremin (think 1950s sci-fi movie soundtracks or the opening riff of the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations").

For info: www.frogvilleplanet.com.Play "Small Town Blues" from
Bad Road, Good People:

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