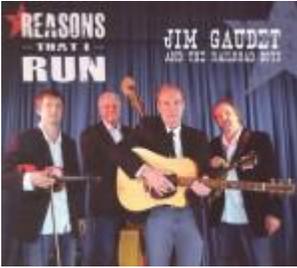


Bluegrass Unlimited Review: 8/1/13

JIM GAUDET AND THE RAILROAD BOYS, REASONS THAT I RUN



JIM GAUDET AND THE RAILROAD BOYS *REASONS THAT I RUN*

MH-804

“You Don’t Know What I Know,” the opener to Jim Gaudet and the Railroad Boys’ fourth recording, is an apt title for the song. He wrote it and he knows what it’s about. For the rest of us, we’re left to wonder. There’s a bit of “take life easy” about it, but that’s just a guess. Still, with its propulsive rhythm and sing-a-long melody, it’s a good tune, and the use of a series of phrases in the second verse, such as “second wind” and “second chance,” is a nice touch.

After that, the tunes settle down a bit thematically, and we have at least a clue as to what’s happening. Murder is at the core of the rambling country ballad “The Reasons That I Run” and the bluesy “Justify My Soul.” Troubled lives are explored in the Steve Earle-like “Johnny Was An Outlaw” as well as in “Darkside Of Lonesome” and “Help Me.” Cheating lovers appear in “In Some Other’s Arms.” But before you think this is all gloom and doom, there is a lighter side, as with the guy who proclaims *I ain’t getting up to dance unless there’s some Cajun music on the radio*, or in the band’s cover of the old pop tune “Peanut Butter,” or in their brilliant choice to cover Mark Knopfler’s rock hit “Walk Of Life.” And, of course, there’s the aforementioned opener.

Gaudet, who plays guitar and sings lead, wrote ten of the thirteen tracks and, along with the solid talents of fiddler Mat Kane, mandolinist Sten Isachsen, and bassist Bobby Ristau, has cast them in settings that range from bluegrass to country to rock to folk and Americana. That latter term might be the best way to describe Gaudet’s music, though another way might be to just call it good music. (Jim Gaudet, 101 Kakely St., Albany NY 12208, www.jimgaudet.com.)BW