

REVIEWS of "TALKING with the DEAD"

Politically toned pop rock that casts aside notions of simple themes for bigger, better, and gratuitous lyrics that are not just well sung but extraordinarily cerebral. But getting people talking about the issues and stories and tales that are weaved in and around "Talking with the Dead" isn't the only subject worthy; the music itself is very compelling. The bouncing between female and male vocals is nifty and offers more transcendental reflections. It's not often that independent music by a duo gets you thinking about all sorts of things so when it comes around you've got to really hang on and pay full attention. – **Editor**, Smother.net, Virginia, USA

And now, for something completely different. The Rusticators are a duo (Abbey Linfert and Chris Amsler) out of Virginia who play brilliant post-Indigo Girls modern American folk-rock with perfect harmonies, great instrumentation, and catchy arrangements. "Talking With The Dead", their latest, is a damned impressive collection of original songs, and shows us that songwriting is NOT dead in this country. This CD is a treasure for those who enjoy folky-rock. All others may think they'll be bored with it. If you're of the latter, however, then I'm sorry for you, because this is truly great music. This is stirring, melodic music that's a great soundtrack for a summer day, and I recommend this to anyone who likes good music of any genre. Open your minds, you damn metal-punk-alternative-whatever heads, and give this a shot. The Heathen Hippy gives it four and a half acoustic strums. - **Taliesin Govannon**, Utter Trash, Ohio, USA

Based in Virginia, The Rusticators are a male and female duo that play original Folk music. Regularly gigging throughout the United States, Abbey Linfert and Chris Amsler met four years ago and have been creating music as a team ever since. The pair's latest release "Talking With The Dead" is a collection of acoustic based music played with passion and charm. The Rusticators have a dual harmonic sound that is warm and sincere, lending their music a sense of honesty rarely found in today's music world. Most tracks on "Talking With The Dead" tell a story using descriptive lyrics and emotion. The subject matter ranges from the loss of a friend (Silver Toes), to special memories (Jersey Street) and love (I'm With You) and will have you reaching for the lyric sheet. The variety of tones and subject matter on "Talking With The Dead" changes from track to track and creates worthwhile listening from start to finish. The combination of beautiful harmonies, intelligent lyrics and peaceful grooves makes "Talking With The Dead" a winner.  - **Jeff Lease**, The Buzz, Australia

The Rusticators are an acoustic duo based in Virginia made up of vocalist Abbey Linfert and vocalist and instrumentalist Chris Amsler. Their newest release *Talking with the Dead* I would describe as acoustic folk-pop. It reminded me of some of the slower Monkees tunes. I loved it! It was a nice change from all the mainstream pop we hear lately. The instrumentation was great. The harmonies were perfect, and the lyrics were some of the most poetic I've ever heard. You can tell these two are truly artists. There really wasn't a bad song on the album, but my favorite was Wicked Ways. I was caught by the rhythm of the song, but after reading the lyrics I liked it even more. "Take what you want, feast with great greed; Beautiful bitch, you just wait and see". Every song had lyrics of this magnificence and beautiful acoustic folk to back them up. This one's for the artists. Get yourself a copy and find out more about The Rusticators at www.isart.com. - **Gin-E**, Dallasmusic.com, Texas, USA

The sound of the Rusticators is an eclectic combination of many genres from pop to traditional, but the result can best be described as "great." The lyrics are well written and on most tracks are messages to anyone living in the modern world. This CD of 13 tracks -- it's amazing how many albums have that superstitious number of songs -- is a brilliant showcase of this talented duo of Chris Amsler and Abbey Linfert, with all the numbers coming from the performers, jointly or as solo writers. One of my favourite songs, "Journey to War," is an beautiful evocation of how the wars we see so blandly on TV impact the participants. It reminds us that the casualty, physical or emotional, from either side is a human being just like you or me. "Wicked Ways" is a fascinating song about unfaithfulness and betrayal. The power of words is evident on "Jersey Street." You can visualise the scene, feel the heat and tension of meeting and the joy of companionship. The title track, "Talking with the Dead," is a strangely upbeat song. On first hearing I thought it was a modern take on "The Lover's Ghost," but then I wondered if the person is dead or just gone. It certainly bears close attention and is a very melodious track. The ambiguity continues into "Son of Mine." It sounds like a letter from the afterlife to a child from departed parents, but it is far from maudlin. Then again, is it a father who simply deserted the child? The magic is that you do not know. On the final track, "Silver Toes," we are not in such doubt. This song is dedicated to Paul Olsen and, with lines like "We miss you down here, wisecracks and the kindest heart, you still make us smile," it certainly sounds like a tribute to a lost friend who has gone to better things. The entire album is a joy to hear. The lyrics, production and performances are top class and deserve to be heard by a wide audience." - **Nicky Rossiter**, Rambles.net, Ireland

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