

HANS THEESSINK Slow Train

Blue Groove

"Slow Train" is not only the title of this album but also the message that, "We'll get there without having to rush, gonna pull along real easy and have time to get into each song in depth." Recorded at Hans' friend Pinky Wall's house back home in Austria. The house was chosen not only for its surroundings but for "the natural acoustics, creating natural ambient sounds." Hans took with him not only his guitars, plus three of Austria's top sidemen on bass drums and keyboards, but also three of Zimbabwe's top singers as well. It all works well with Hans' varying set list. The songs are certainly thought provoking. 'Katrina', "The hurricane hit hard / Our friends ran for their lives and nobody felt responsible" is as thoughtful a statement as I've heard. The music is based on 'Li'l Liza Jane' the well known New Orleans chant. 'God Created The World' is for the aftermath of 9/11. 'Thula Mama-Oh Mother Don't You Weep' gives the Zimbabwean trio chance to voice upon their own country's state where "today chaos and man hunters rule the place." The tone and mood are lifted for a couple of nice easy acoustic Blues shuffles in the best JJ Cale mould. Hans' baritone voice certainly helping the process. Both sets of voices work in unison on 'May The Road', a modern day negro spiritual with a simple message and fine guitar picking for accompaniment. Finishes with superb acoustic Blues called 'When Luther Played The Blues'. Just a little piece for Luther Allison who came to Hans in a dream and left this song within him. Roland Guggenbichler cuts in with a sharp Hammond solo then stays around to add his own ambience to the proceedings. The hopes and dreams that Hans set out with certainly came true on this album. (Al Tait)