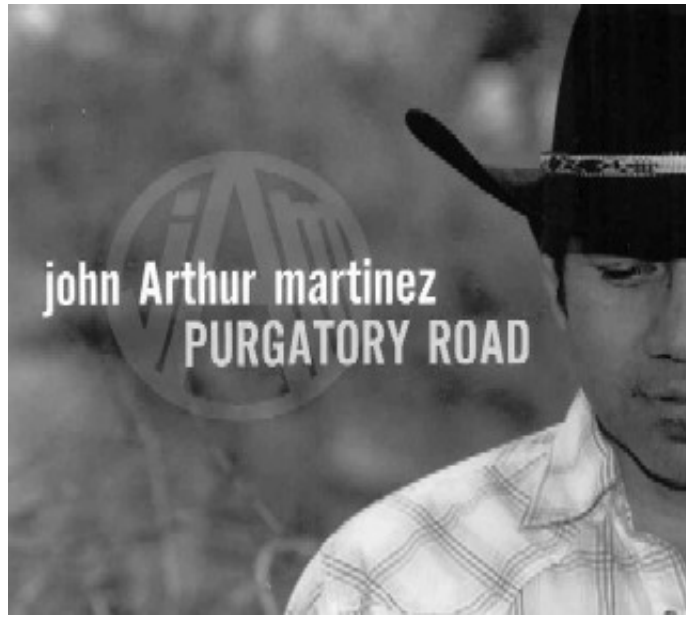


John Arthur Martinez : Purgatory Road - CD; ARR-1748
Album Kindly Submitted by Jenni Finlay Promotions.



Style : Country

Rate (1-5) : ★★★★★

John Arthur Martinez is one of those singer songwriters from the hill country that keeps making music in the old tradition of Hank Williams and assorted acts. Surely the sound has evolved but in heart the style and craftsmanship is the same. Lyrics and melody melt together into a complex and unique symbiosis that is called good music. Purgatory road will hit the shelves one of the next days but even weeks before the release the buzz was already big.

And in all honestly I can understand! Having Purgatory road on my player for a couple of days now, this country album is surely worth your hard earned money. Martinez seeks out his Mexican Roots and makes country music in the Texan manner. Less commercial then Nashville but much more interesting for sure! From leading track "Utopia" on it becomes clear that the rich heritage of his home state is very influential on his sound. As he says in a press release. "I'm like the menu at a Texas diner". "There's chicken fried steak; there's chili con carne-smothered enchiladas; there's the spinach veggie omelet; there's fresh pecan pie. It all comes out of the same kitchen, just like my folk stuff, my country songs, my Latin tunes, my ballads, my rockers". On "Que No Puede Ver", Martinez truly includes his Mexican roots in the music! Lyrics are alternated in Spanish and English and the addition of an accordion makes the atmosphere complete! "Closer to my Dreams" clearly says it what it is all about : "When I'm closer to Austin I'm closer to my dreams". This track is the heart of the album and without doubt the stand-out tune of this album. Combining mandolin, great melodies and nice guitar licks it can't be hard to imagine the quality of this tune. "On the run" is a good country Rocker while "What Good Is I Love you" combines once more both of his heritages! Title track "Purgatory Road" is filled with pain and anger and therefore makes another interesting tune to hang on to.

Once hailed as the first runner up to Nashville's Star, ending above the much more successful Miranda Lambert, **Purgatory Road** might be the album Martinez was waiting for. In the six years past since his stint on Nashville's Star, John Arthur Martinez has build a steady fan base and made some interesting albums, but he stayed away from the easy way of fame and success! And although Purgatory road is again not the big commercial album he might find the recognition he really deserves.

Mr Blue Boogie.

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