

**john Arthur martinez**  
**and The Media**  
**www.johnarthurmartinez.net**

“PURGATORY ROAD [is] a dark, well-written and -performed 11-song CD with a bit of sunlight, filled with personal-sounding stories and good music. Martinez has a nice, expressive voice with pretty good range that adds a level of drama ... The CD’s best songs ... might be ... ‘Utopia,’ the story of a man’s battles with adversity, or ‘Thunder & Lightning’ that doesn’t bring the rain that would wash the sadness from his eyes, or the sad love song ‘Que No Puede Ver’ that manages to avoid most of the Latin clichés. ...”

— Buddy

“Cowboy imagery is prevalent on [PURGATORY ROAD]: horses, being ‘on the run,’ Colorado eagles, sleepy border towns, et cetera. Such imagery is hardly new, but between martinez’s skillful use of the language and the relative lack of cowboy themes in modern music, it feels fresh and intriguing. Minor chords, lonesome fiddles and loud electric guitars are prevalent, maintaining a deep, dark, dusky tone on even the up-tempo songs. All of the songs rely on sharp, detailed lyrics, not once forcing the messages or relying on a trite line for the sake of catchiness. ... [He’s] made one impressive piece of work.”

— Roughstock.com

“Sure, [john Arthur martinez] is considered a country musician, but PURGATORY ROAD is more a collection of short stories than an album ... Close attention to the lyrics yields thoughtful tales of loss and hope, like the title track and album highlight, ‘Closer to My Dreams’.”

— Austin Monthly

“Nashville Star’s first-season runner-up john Arthur martinez (the eccentric capitalization scheme is a nod to poetry hero e.e. cummings) didn’t immediately parlay his TV notoriety into mainstream success, but he has spent the ensuing six years building both a solid catalog and a loyal following centered in his native Texas. PURGATORY ROAD finds john sounding a little moodier than usual, as signaled by the keening steel guitar that kicks off opening cut ‘Utopia.’ Hopefully this will be the moment that the national audience john briefly held six years ago comes back around to a remarkably consistent talent.”

— Country Weekly

“[PURGATORY ROAD’s] title tune is a bluesy, downbeat look at these rough economic times. It swirls with drama that climaxes in murder. Gripping, to say the least. The production textures are superb throughout the set, from the Latin groove of ‘Que No Puede Ver’ to the rolling country-rock of ‘On the Run’ and the rumbling, accusatory ‘You Can’t Outdrink the Truth.’ Hearty recommendation.”

— Robert K. Oermann, Music Row

“Like his college roommate Todd Snider, john Arthur martinez tends toward the folky side of country-flavored story-songs. PURGATORY ROAD finds an even keel with the rough highway tales of self-incrimination and loss (‘Can’t Outdrink the Truth,’ ‘Utopia’) that are thoughtful without wallowing in hopelessness and despair (‘Cobalt Blue,’ ‘Thunder & Lightning’). ‘Que No Puede Ver’ puts him square in the Americano camp, too.”

— The Austin Chronicle

(more)

“Kent Finlay and the Cheatham Street Warehouse are world-famous for incubating and nurturing fledgling songwriters. John Arthur Martinez is a graduate of both Texas State and Kent Finlay’s ‘school’ of songwriting. Martinez is a Texas poet who writes gorgeous lyrics. His voice, which is not always the case with songwriters, matches almost flawlessly with his music. His long-awaited CD, PURGATORY ROAD, is finally out.”

— Today In San Marcos

“This should easily make the top album list for 2009 for every Americana radio programmer. Fantastic, diverse and just amazing.” — Shayne Hollinger, Mandatory FM

“Soft rain on a tin roof on a lazy Sunday morning ... a gentle breeze through the trees ... That’s the sense of pleasant calm one experiences as John Arthur Martinez’s pure, melodic voice expertly delivers some of the finest songwriting examples available on the Americana music scene in his latest project, PURGATORY ROAD. Texas Rebel Radio has enjoyed jAm’s incredible projects for years. He was my first on-air interview nearly 14 years ago. And, it is a distinct honor to support this incredible effort. John Arthur, my friend, you have truly outdone yourself with this graceful music creation. Thank you for allowing us all to listen in!” — Dawn Dale, P.D., The Texas Rebel Radio Network

“John Arthur Martinez is one of the great Texas singer-songwriters. Having seen him perform as a solo artist and with his band, it’s evident that this guy is the real thing.”

— Ray Benson, GRAMMY Award-winning Asleep at the Wheel front man

“PURGATORY ROAD does indeed include a variety of musical styles. It begins strongly with ‘Utopia,’ a thought-provoking Americana-esque number. ... The rockier title track continues in this darker vein and was apparently inspired by a harrowing experience the singer’s daughter had with a dodgy loan shark who went to extreme lengths to ensure payment was made. ‘I made a deal with the Devil to pay what I owe, now I’m driving like hell down Purgatory Road,’ sings Martinez menacingly. On ‘Que No Puede Ver (Can’t She See),’ the verses alternate between English and Spanish, with the Spanish words, as well as an accordion, adding a real Mexican flavor to the proceedings. The sense of yearning in the song was inspired by a girl with whom Martinez fell in love at college, but who, unfortunately, did not share his feelings. ‘Closer to my Dreams,’ a song about following the heart, is the real stand-out track of the album, with its utterly gorgeous melody, sublime mandolin, emotive guitar licks and positive, upbeat lyrics: ‘I’ll be closer to Austin and closer to my dreams.’ Other high points include: ‘The Ride,’ a tune that wouldn’t sound out of place in a Western; ‘Cobalt Blues,’ with its slow-burning groove; and the romantic Spanish guitar that lights up ‘What Good is I Love You.’” — suite101.com