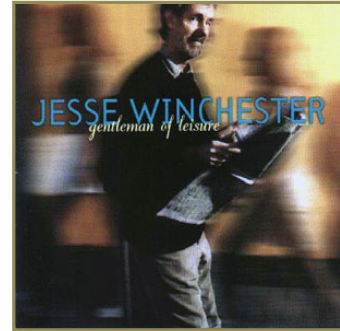


Gentleman Of Leisure

Jesse Winchester

Sugarhill Records 1999



From the opening vocals of the almost rockabilly "Club Manhattan," the undeniably excellent songwriting of Jesse Winchester makes its way back into our collective psyche. Backed by an unparalleled group of musicians, and with guest appearances from such musical dignitaries as the Fairfield Four, Jerry Douglas, Steve "The Colonel" Cropper, and Vince Gill, Winchester has assembled a highly enjoyable album, filled with the same magic his past releases all possessed. The kind of musical and lyrical genius that has caused dozens of artists to record his music gets into some funky blues territory with "Sweet Little Shoe," and downright beautiful with "That's What Makes You Strong," featuring the lap steel guitar work of Jerry Douglas, who also acts as producer for the album. The title track is a rocking blues number with some out-in-front drums from John Gardner and more of Jerry Douglas' excellent lap steel. "Wander My Way Back Home," a gospel tune, backed by the fabulous Fairfield Four, is one of the album's best tracks, and is reprised at the very end of the record. "Just Because I'm in Love With You" brings some Roy Orbison feeling, with flawless harmonies from country superstar Vince Gill. "Sweet Loving Daddy" features some fine dobro picking from Douglas, but the absolute finest track on the album has to be the final cut, "I Wave Bye Bye." Gentleman of Leisure is an album 11 years on coming, and it was well worth the wait.

by Michael B. Smith

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