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By:Patrick Noichols

After more than two decades working the music scenes in Nashville, Los Angeles, and places in between, Radney Foster has seen and experienced just about everything. From love to loss, hits to heartbreaks, Foster reflects on the human condition in *This World We Live In*, his seventh solo album and third on Dualtone.

Foster rocks with a hand-picked studio ensemble featuring Waddy Wachtel (Warren Zevon, Keith Richards & the X-pensive Winos) on guitar, Bob Glaub (Jackson Browne, Linda Ronstadt) on bass, Charlie Drayton (The Cult) on drums, and Rami Jaffe (The Wallflowers) on the organ and keyboards.

With producer Darrell Brown (1999's *See What You Want to See*) back at the helm, the LA-based recording sessions yielded an exquisitely professional sound that serves as the perfect backdrop to Foster's winsome vocals.

"Prove Me Right" (listen) is the first single working its way up the Texas Music Chart. It's a conventional, radio-friendly country-pop song that's nice enough, but it's really not representative of *This World We Live In*.

The album's soul is better represented by the opening "Drunk on Love" (listen), a bluesy take on the intoxicating power of infatuation, and "Sweet and Wild" (listen), a reflection on a mature relationship's beginnings. Both those songs also benefit from Sarah Buxton's gorgeous backing vocals.

The most complete story is "The Kindness of Strangers" (listen), in which a hooker with a heart of gold saves a man at his wit's end. That summary makes the song seem trite, but it's really a nice piece about finding redemption in even the most unlikely places, and it includes the gorgeous line "letting go even though / the heartache's all you trust."

Foster never worries about sticking within any defined genre, and instead gives himself and his all-star supporting cast room to explore the sounds of country, roots rock, pop, soul, and the blues.

*This World We Live In* showcases an artist in his prime.