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Radney Foster
This World We Live In

Review by Ames Arnold

Foster's latest is another solid effort full of introspective tunes and full of hopes, expectations and dreams. The Texas songwriter doesn't pull any startling surprises here and some of the 10 tunes strike me as going through the motions. But fans of Radney and a good modern country song will find notions here to dwell on.

There's a rocked-up tempo to much of this and the opening tune "Drunk on Love" sets this tempo. Like most of the following tunes, there are good lines and good singing but the song doesn't really light any fires. Likewise, "Kindness of Strangers" is a well-intentioned tune about the good hearted whore but it tails off without much insight into the situation. It's not until Foster gives us "Half of My Mistakes" that we get to the heart of the matter and it's by far the best tune in the set. Foster takes an honest look back here, making no judgments and understanding frailty. It succeeds in its honesty and succeeds in making a poetic statement where some of the other tunes don't.

Waddy Wachtel's searing guitar adds additional punch to the tune. Other pluses include the Everly Brothers vibe of "I Won't Lie to You" – a tune with real feeling - and "Prove Me Right" with its mid-tempo observations about love's intricacies. WORLD is a hit and miss affair like most of Foster's catalogue. When he's on, he's really on. When he's not at the top of his game, he leaves you wanting a little more.