

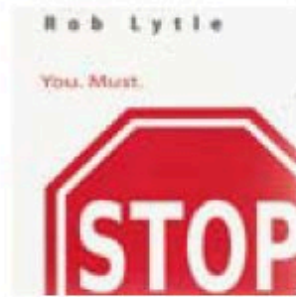
Rob Lytle**YOU.MUST.STOP**

Heart And Hope Music

HHM001

★★★★☆

A well-blended and well-produced album of superb country-folk music



This album arrived some time ago, completely out of the blue and I readily admit I put it to one side without giving it a second look and without having even a cursory listen. A big mistake on my part, but in my defence how was I to know that I'd more or less discarded the musical equivalent of an unknown Gainsborough? Eventually I dug it out of an expanding pile of CDs waiting to be reviewed, slipped it into the player and continued ploughing through even more emails and was stopped in my tracks by the opening song *Why They Play The Games*. The lively song beams with a folk-country style as the melodic lyric gives an in depth look into the lives of young players overcoming physical challenges to succeed in playing the game and also features some great harmonies by Karyn Oliver. I tried to return to those emails, but it was totally impossible as one superb song followed another. But it wasn't just the quality of the songwriting that impressed, there was Rob's warm and emotional voice, a cross between the late Steve Goodman and James Taylor. And then the final ingredient, inventive musical

arrangements to die for with understated playing by the likes of producer Thomm Jutz (various guitars), Fats Kaplin (pedal steel, fiddle) Barry Walsh (piano, keyboards, accordion) and the solid rhythm of Mark Fain (bass) and John Gardner (drums, percussion). This is one of those all-too-rare albums where every track is a standout and also quite different to each other.

The lyrics are fun and creative on *Daddy Knows What Boys Want* and will have you singing along to this inviting tune and smiling broadly and knowingly at the well-observed warnings to a teenage daughter. Love songs don't come much finer than *Caitlyn* with Rob and Karyn sharing superb vocals as their expressions and delivery of the thoughtful, well-written lyrics blend in wonderful uniformity with the ever-reliable Barry Walsh providing just-so piano notes unobtrusively in the background—pure magic. Rob steps sure-footedly into a traditional country style with *Love You As You Break My Heart* with fiddle, steel, electric lead and accordion blending perfectly over the neatly formed country-rock rhythm. Wow! And it just goes on and on. So much so that I never know from one minute to the next which is the best track or my personal favourite—suffice to say there's just a hue of fun and entertaining country songs on this terrific album.

Alan Cackettwww.roblytle.com