

WAHINE  
SARAH CARROLL

Slipping back thirty-something years to borrow half the title of the second Captain Matchbox Whoopee Band release, Wangaratta Wahine, Sarah Carroll delivers her own wonderful second album for Mick Thomas' Croxton Records. Wonderful? Yessiree Bob! In fact, so good is Wahine, such a giant leap on all fronts (songwriting, vocals, musicianship, production), that not overly gushing presents something of a challenge!

From the very first notes of vibrant opening number 'Shantaray', through to the dying strains of the title track which closes the set, Wahine is reminiscent of a favourite album that you owned back in the day, lost for years, and is now freshly returned, full of cherished memories, surprises and delights - including moments when it seems another singer may have stolen the spotlight, Sarah displaying several quite different 'voices' throughout, all perfectly suited to the individual song.

The above-mentioned 'Shantaray' and the lovely, fiddle-powered 'Married Man, Married Lady' - confessional almost to the point of pain, and which only needs covering by a US artist of sufficient stature to make it a modern classic - are both genuine highlights. Steve Teakle's south-of-the-border accordion work on 'Candid or Posed' readily recalls the work of the man the song is dedicated to, the recently departed Chris Gaffney ( Dave Alvin Band alumnus and co- founder of much-respected Arizona alt-country outfit The Hacienda Brothers). And a campaigner at the forefront of the current ukulele revival, Sarah and producer/musician Marcel Borrack cleverly match the diminutive instrument to some fine old-fashioned oompah-oompah brass that works a treat!

Grab a copy of Wahine and spend the weekend discovering the remaining delights for yourself!

KIM PORTER, Forte Magazine, Sept 11 2008.