

Mp3 Neil Zaza - Sing

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Guitar master Neil Zaza combines lush melodies and guitar wizardry with electronic elements to create a passionate, modern tapestry of sonic bliss. 12 MP3 Songs ROCK: Instrumental Rock, POP: with Live-band Production Details: Sing This was just a crazy CD to make from the very beginning. My longtime friend, Robb Cloepfil, owned a video production studio in Springfield, Missouri, and was nice enough to give me full access to a back studio/office there. So I set up a nest of recorders, mixers, and amps and sequestered myself away in that little room and just created for a few weeks. Why Springfield, of all God-forsaken places? Why not? This was the first time I realized that I actually write better away from the crazy normalcy that is my life in Cleveland. I am more focused and less distracted when I'm on the road. In fact, most of my best work has been done in hotels around the globe. In any case, the majority of the songs on Sing were written there in Springfield, with "I'm Alright," a track that has become somewhat of my signature tune, being the first. The rest just started to flow from there. As for my decision to self-produce this record, I definitely felt the pressure after working under the guidance of "The Sensei of All Things Musical," Michael Morales, on my previous Thrills Chills disc. So, I enlisted Eric Fritch, a producer/multi-instrumentalist out of Columbus, Ohio, to lend an ear. He was a fantastic choice at the time because he balanced Morales' print of microtonal perfection with a more stripped down, loose, and vibe-oriented approach. It was a refreshing change, although the shadow of Morales will forever linger: I can still listen back to Sing and wish that I had done a few things differently. I feel the playing is good, but not great, on this project, although it contains some of my favorite and most intimate compositions. The band was different as well. The chapter with Doug and Chris had come to a close and I think the project reflects a whole different character because of it. No better or worse...just different. Michael Papatonis played drums on Sing and Eric played everything else (even select rhythm guitar on "Phunk II"). It was fantastic live as Eric was the utility man that would play whatever was needed. We started tracking at Artist/Producer Addison Steel's state-of-the-art home studio in Springfield with great success. But after a few weeks, Eric felt that we might be able to achieve better results if we worked with one of his friends in Columbus. Enter Joe Viers. (At this point in the narrative, you should hear angels singing and bright lights

radiating: A main character in my life just entered!) We moved the whole crew to Joe's studio of choice, John Schwab Recording in Columbus and started tracking guitars and everything else that remained. Right from the beginning, Joe and I had a magical chemistry. I felt very comfortable tracking with him and, as a musician himself, he really knew how to add a constructive spin to the session whether it was technical, musical, or just telling a great non-politically correct joke. I've never used anyone else since. Sing, which was initially released on High Chief Records, was the first CD that I actually backed the gain down for some leads and let the wood of the guitar be heard. Tunes like "Amazing Grace" and "Crazy Love" were good examples of this newfound phenomenon, proving that it can sometimes be just as expressive to tone it down as it is to crank it up. Meanwhile, the live version of "Melodia," which was taken from the Thrills Chills CD release concert at the Cleveland Agora a year earlier, represents the other side of the decibel spectrum! (In fact, I have a bunch of material from that show that will eventually make its way onto other projects.) Although Sing represents a slightly mellower page in my body of work, it would ultimately play a critical role in refining my direction and setting the stage for the more melodic slant of my future material. For this reason, I consider Sing an important transitional record. Neil Zaza 2005

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