



Diverse Vinyl DIV 035

Danny & The Champions Of The World: Hearts & Arrows

Format: 1LP 33rpm / standard sleeve

Manufacturer: Diverse Vinyl

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Danny & The Champions Of The World are releasing their third album but first on vinyl, "Hearts & Arrows" on 14th February 2012. Singer/songwriter Danny Wilson was formally in critically acclaimed alt.country legends Grand Drive. The follow-up to 2009's acclaimed "Streets Of Our Time", the album was produced by Tony Poole and mixed by Ted Hutt (Gaslight Anthem, Lucero). The album features an entirely new Champs line-up which includes Rockingbirds bassist Chris Carter.

Whereas the Champs were originally a loose and chaotic collective of like-minded souls – so loose and so chaotic that, at any given gig or session, you couldn't accurately predict who exactly would be performing alongside Wilson – this new incarnation of the group is a proper rock'n'roll band, wholly and entirely committed to being the Champs.

»I love folk music, I always have«, Wilson says. »But I'm so bored of 'new folk', and the trendiness that surrounds it, everyone pretending that it's 1971 again. I wanted to make a totally un-bearded record. My reference points were Black Flag and Bad Brains, Tom Petty and Thin Lizzy, not Nick Drake and Sweetheart Of The Rodeo. Forget 1971, this is 1976: Dr Feelgood, Nick Lowe, just great rock'n'roll.«

Be assured, "Hearts & Arrows" sounds much more alike Tom Petty than Black Flag (who are name-checked on "Can't Hold Back"), but it is also the rockiest waxing the Champs have thus far delivered: you can hear it in the hopeful pulse of opener "Ghosts In The Wire" and the purposeful, melodic hurtle of its chorus, the chiming riffs of the title track and its infectious call to freedom, the urgent gospel-y overtones of "You Don't Know (My Heart Is In the Right Place)". The album also harbours some of Wilson's trademark heartbreakers, ballads and laments ... Some of his best, in fact, as the potent mourn of "Too Tough To Cry", and his fair-minded, Guralnick-inspired meditation upon Elvis - "Colonel & The King" – prove.

"Hearts & Arrows" - Danny George Wilson (voc, p, g, harmonium); Tony Poole (g, keyb); Chris Clarke (b); Steve Brookes (dr, perc); Rosalie Deighton (voc); Lachlan Wilson (sax),