

Nick Motil spent a residency playing at Jimmy Buffet's Las Vegas restaurant, attracting quite a few ears before traveling the country's college tour circuit. His mode is folksy country, well laid out, unhurried, classically oriented. *Butterflies* crops up as a mellow piece of wistful memory 'n regret with marvelous musical accompaniment, and the title cut has some very cool modernist touches, turning anthemic, a well-turned track that should hit the charts nicely if it can make its way through the traffic leading there. *Cliché* is the folkier rondo of the bunch, my favorite tune of the CD, departing so well from the rest of the EP as to be almost a completely different band. Motil really knows how to compose for the charts, so I don't see how he can miss, except...

...except I can't figure out why I can't be more enthusiastic about it all. Perhaps because the offering is just the slightest bit too formulaic, a skosh too country, his voice and moods a tad monotonic. None of that quite fits, though, and sounds much too judgmental for such otherwise impressive fare. Then again, I feel the same way about the later Eric Anderson, Harry Chapin, and a number of other well-respected musicians who did quite well. I can easily envision Motil opening for The Infamous String Dusters or some equally worthy genre ensemble, and the duet here with Tara McLean on *Home* is tasty as hell—the two fit really well as she goads a few new heights out of him—but something's either slightly askew or too formulaic to entrance the ear completely. In the end, it's probably a tribute to the guy's skills that I can't quite figure out what's nettling.

Track List:

- Try Harder
- Butterflies
- Everything's Alright
- Cliché
- Either Way
- Home

All songs by Nick Motil.

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