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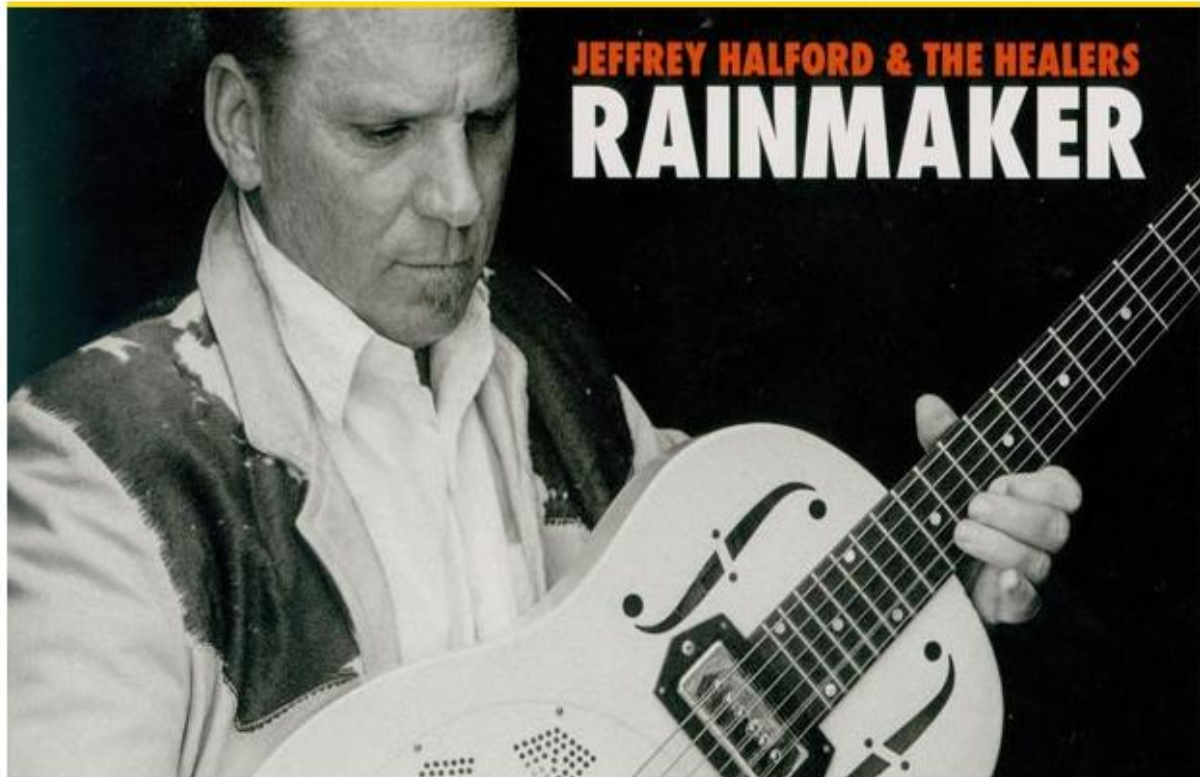


RAINMAKER BY JEFFREY HALFORD AND THE HEALERS

JEFFREY HALFORD

RAINMAKER

by [Michael Welchans](#) | on August 4, 2014 | [0 comments](#) | in [Album Reviews](#) | [Like it](#)



“My lips are cracked and my mouth is dry, I watch the wind drift into the sky, Sewed my seeds, there was nothin’ left, It’s a ghost town around here... We need a rainmaker.”

Rainmaker is a superbly crafted Americana LP. It starts off with the title track, *Rainmaker*, a pulsing and explosive song of loss and hope, complete with a catchy melody, a strong guitar solo and echoes of Ray Manzarek from “Riders on the Storm.”

It's followed up with *Lost Highway*, a blues-pumping, angry slide talkback song with an anthemic theme you can't help but hum along to- and cue up for a repeat listen.

Mexico is a masterpiece of longing, dripping and drunken seduction. Halford's voice echoes vocal tones of Elvis Costello and Jeffrey Gaines with slapback delay and reverb, slide and lap steel guitar that reminds strongly of Detroit artists Joe Jaber ,and the Last Divide and Pete Ballard from Doop and the Inside Outlaws.

"Every movement etched in my mind while you danced underneath the purple sky.."

The fourth track, *Play Some Vinyl* starts like the fourth track of Blue Eyed Soul's Delicious- with the scratch of a record. A strong mix of early 70's Hammond sounds with dirty, straight-up rock-and-roll has a breakdown that begs to be blasted in a car stereo with the windows down.

This leads into *Thunderbird Motel*, a strongly melodic, multi-layered tremolo guitar and vocal highway lovesong of wistfulness, which evolves into some really enjoyable fiddle harmonies.

Second Chance slows it down to a honkeytonk, knee slapping deep, dark crooning Kate Hart-style blues song with an incredible chorus that lifts it up, out of the blues for just a moment, and lets it back down again. The slide guitar solos remind me of Doug Deming, another master of the old style blues on steel guitar.

Nature's Choir begins:

"I left this town so long ago, but I just can't get you out of my veins
Every time I go back, baby, it all looks the same: there's just one road, mostly skies..."

As a softer track that picks up really nicely in the chorus and hits you right in the desert wind, and a well-fashioned bridge that lifts this song up to the next level. A little country shines through rock-and-roll, plus a little keyboards like those in *Play Some Vinyl* and great steel guitar like some of the other tracks; all excellent coalescence in production that make all these different songs sound as one composition.

Cry of Hope continues the pattern with some long pitch bends with his vocals, reminiscent of the incredible Rufus Wainwright, pulled together with some more excellent lap steel guitar, and then it's "time for a major change," as the lyrics in the chorus appropriately warn.

Harry We Need You is a strong, fairly straight-ahead power country track, but the recording closes with *Joaquin*, an exquisite piece of work that playfully skips in the verse but bursts and soars in a simple, wrenching and beautiful chorus of harmony you can't wait to hear again.

Rainmaker is an entirely excellent recording, with strong tone and superb instrumentation, but by far my favorite feature is Jeffrey Halford's voice. He is really something special to hear, so genuine in tone and so close to you as if he is sitting in front of you without a microphone. You will always know it's him as soon as he starts to sing. I am going to enjoy this recording for a long time to come.

Rainmaker by Jeffrey Halford and The Healers is [available on Amazon](#):

Review by Michael Welchans



Rainmaker CD

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