

# Roots Highway

rock'n'roll and other stories

D.B. Rielly's concocted remedy promises an instantaneous cure for many of the most troublesome modern ailments: **Love Potions and Snake Oil** is a collection of slow southern ballads and flashy country jigs boasting a zydeco flavor, with the front man's accordion leading the dances of a trio consisting of Hiromasa Suzuki (a name that hardly recalls the old south, we admit) on the guitar, Rohin Khemani on percussion, and Bruce Gordon on bass. A true diversity of names to accompany a music that recalls the vestiges of an Americana style, lost amidst the thick vegetation of the Louisiana bayou and some forgotten old Mississippi trail. D.B. Rielly comes with a vast repertoire of experience which saw him play at the Montreaux Jazz Festival, at the Apollo Theatre and with, among others, BB King and Chubby Checker (don't we fondly recall the twist?). But it is only today, thanks to **Love Potions and Snake Oil**, that he embarks on his own independent path, which has allowed him to sport a prize at the prestigious 2009 International Songwriting Competition.

What counts, putting aside the glamorous honors, is a music that resounds with that old-time flavor, very widespread and deeply rooted in the earth and in the spirit of old America, beginning with the upbeat dance *One of These Days (You're Gonna Realize)* — a zydeco feel that evokes New Orleans (or what is left of it...), before taking a gentle turn and settling into the romantic tones of *Don't Give Up On Me* — a ballad that looks to the Mexican border, and then D.B. Rielly takes a seat at the piano and plays the moving *Save All Your Kisses*. Love, girls, sentimentality, but nothing slapdash and cheesy: **Love Potions and Snake Oil** is simply a potion from another time and whoever still holds a tender heart will be able to appreciate the simplicity of these melodies, something that did not leave even Phil Ramone and Gary US Bonds indifferent, both of whom express enthusiastic comments about the artist whose past is deliberately ironic and mysterious.

D.B. Rielly plays with irony and a bit of this playfulness ends up in his music: from the accordion barnyard dance tune, *I Got A Girlfriend*, to the ramshackle boogie of *Loving You Again* (T. Rex visits the marshes of Louisiana?) to the devilish rockabilly of *We're All Going Straight To Hell*. Meanwhile, the sensitive soul of the folksinger is never forgotten. The slow acoustic *One Day at a Time* and the all-consuming *Love Me Today* are, in fact, the little masterpieces of the disc, with a listless air worthy of John Prine and melodies that leave all else behind — a timid voice, a very sweet piano, a layer of accordion, a guitar arpeggio, and the result is the real deal.

— Fabio Cerbone (Roots Highway, July 2010)