



From reading the press release for Rodeo, the debut album from Cowboys & Frenchmen, I was quick to attach the idea that the album was somewhat concept.

Rodeo features homage to The Coen Brothers critically applauded *O Brother, Where Art Thou* as well as homage to New York and its bustling Jazz scene. It was hard for me to distance myself from the connections or even to distance myself from the manifestation of sound and memory, but that's not a bad thing.

The album begins with *Jazz Styles*, the ensembles homage to the New York Jazz scene. In essence I imagined the bustling sights and sounds of New York itself, what with so much going on in the track. From the smooth horns to the sporadic styling of the drums. Everyone fits in nicely with one another in a strong, tight track that really does embody what one would expect from the New York Jazz scene, as well as an ambient imagining of the lights, the people, the traffic.

A Bridge Inside My Mind, the third track off the album, really does paint a picture of the complexities of the mind. It comes staggering in with drunk and clumsy sounding drums and disoriented horns and keys before finding some type of foothold as the drums and piano come in a bit more focused. It's like being inside a tumultuous mind that's ebbing and rising against the kind of confusion that goes on inside all minds on a daily basis. It's a sea tossed ship struggling against the relentless waves of an angry ocean. Drums, Bass and Piano play sensible against the wildness of the horns. A great track for sure.

Though *Man Of Constant Sorrow* is credited with being the bands insight into American Cinema, I have to say that *Brode's Abode*, track 6 on the album, really brings to mind the old black and whites I fell in love with in my late twenties. Bogart and Cagney come to mind as the album starts out. Smooth music for trench coat wearing P.I.'s walking the dark and dangerous city streets of wherever or creeping in the smoke and darkness of some seedy club, but as the song progresses so does, it seems, the markings of Jazz music in detective films. Think *Lethal Weapon* for example. It's a subjective thought, but it's what my experience with cinema and the flow of this tune brings me to.

Overall I found Rodeo to be a solid album that had no faults whatsoever. The performances on the album are fantastic on a singular level as well as masterfully pieced together as an ensemble, and the mix is so well put together nothing gets wasted. A remarkably wonderful debut album for sure from a group I look forward to hearing from in the future. Definitely check them out.

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