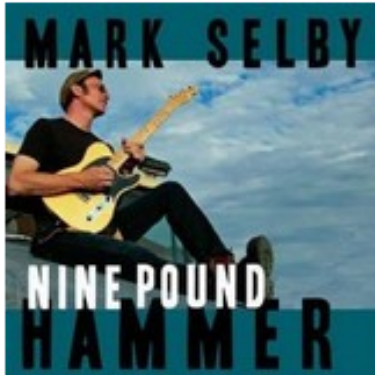


Mark Selby Nine-Pound Hammer ZYX Music

By: John Heidt



What may be Mark Selby's best album earns the title in part because his guitar playing is more prominent than it was on his previous efforts.

This is essentially a trio record, with Selby delivering notes in all the right places and tone about as perfect as it gets. The title cut starts with a nasty slide lick before he delivers chunky rhythm guitar followed by bluesy solos with perfect touches. All the songs show a deftness and approach to the craft - the first four are especially strong; "Buck-Fifty & a Flat-Head Ford" is a country-blues played on electric and the translation works well. Selby accents the fine vocal with a nasty slide solo. "Cold One Closin' In" is a soulful country tune that starts with lots of harmonics and a lyric that equates weather with a

relationship. "A Good Friend to the Blues" has an amazing lyric and effective use of a simple guitar-and-vocal arrangement. "Leveler, Reveler" is a stomping rocker with great solo tones and a rhythm section that shines.

Selby has written songs with Kenny Wayne Sheppard and the Dixie Chicks. Here's hoping that work gives him the time and means to keep working on solo efforts like this one.

Good Times Magazine (Germany)

Mark Selby, Charles Anderson and Darryl Burgess played an effortless, yet exhilarating, concert. Effortless, because all three are absolute experts of their trade, and inspiring because they gave the well-known songs a special touch with a strong dose of live feeling.

Rock, Blues and More (France)

Mark Selby's fourth album, *Nine Pound Hammer*, has everything you need: a super guitarist (go ahead, listen to the solo in "Guitar in the Rain" if you do not believe me!), with a voice that goes well with songs ranging from rock to blues. These are songs meant to be played in public and Selby knows how to surround himself with brilliant musicians.



Blues News (Germany)

Not often does one stumble upon a recording in which everything fits, and the listener gets to really like each song immediately, on the first listen. *Nine Pound Hammer* by Mark Selby, a singer, guitarist and songwriter based in Nashville, Tenn., is such a rare case.

For one thing, it's his outstanding talent as a songwriter . . . His songs really work . . . the hooks, verses, bridges, refrains and instrumental parts sound like they just have to be this way and not any other to achieve maximum effect.

The rock elements – which are not just layer upon recorded layer, but consist of meticulously interlocked guitars, excursions toward roots, heavy chords and fast grooves – are the packaging, the sound these songs need. Here is someone who knows how to create a song from a blues theme without letting it be known that is it in fact a conscious construction. Whether in the ballad-like, the faster or the harder tracks, the interaction of the constructions with the soundscape lets the songs live and breathe and convey a whole lot of freshness, power and energy.

Nine Pound Hammer is absolutely the best Selby has created so far. A great album!



Guitar Magazine (Germany)

On his fifth album, recorded with a trio of musicians, Mark Selby creates real highlights in terms of guitar playing. He moves without inhibition in the borderland of rock and blues, delivering heartbreaking ballads and heavy-drive rock pieces. Striking, groovy, in fact – stunning.