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**ALL MUSIC 4-Star Review: "A bit like Tom Petty
crossed with the Smithereens"**
"This album is easily one of their best"

The Clarks Set Tour Dates for Summer/Fall

Rock band **The Clarks** continue to earn praise for 'Restless Days' (High Wire/Fontana,) their first studio CD in five years. Hot on the heels of two **USA TODAY** placements, and their highest-ever **Billboard** chart debut, the Pittsburgh-based band now sees **ALL MUSIC** praise them with a **four-star CD review** that says "***this album is easily one of their best,***" and compares them to "***Tom Petty crossed with the Smithereens.***"

allmusic

ALL MUSIC

6/26/09 CD Review by Steve Leggett

Four Stars

Pittsburgh's Clarks have been around for a while now, some 20 years, actually, and they've been through the whole music business cycle of starting a band, building an independent fan base, releasing albums on their own, learning to create a sustainable business as a working rock band, signing to a major label, being dropped by a major label, and gracefully surviving it all with their energy and creativity intact. And *Restless Days*, the group's eighth album, proves that the Clarks still have plenty of musical validity left. They don't stray far from their usual power pop template here, which is a good thing, since they do it so well, sounding a bit like Tom Petty crossed with the Smithereens, but some of the country elements in their sound are a little more pronounced on this album, which again is a good thing. It creates freshness, and draws attention to the Clarks' wonderful vocal harmonies. Among the stand-out tracks here are the urgent anthem "Inside," the buoyant "Trampoline," the wonderfully observed "Sunshine," and a driving, garage rock version of the classic "What a Wonderful World," which doesn't exactly redefine the song but at least forces a second look at it, which is really what you should want if you're covering a standard. Sounding as fresh as when they started out, the Clarks continue to prove that getting older doesn't mean diminished accomplishments, and this album is easily one of their best. Two decades in, that says something. <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=10:hnfoxzI0ldse>



MODERN DRUMMER
The Clarks' Dave Minarik 6/30/09

MD readers. My name is Dave Minarik, and I play drums for a Pittsburgh-based band called the Clarks. We're excited to release our latest CD, *Restless Days*. I thought I would share a bit of information about the recording process, rehearsals, and gear I used during this project.

The band started rehearsing for this project in the winter of 2008. In the past we've rented spaces in Nashville or used our own rehearsal space. Since we were going to record in Pittsburgh for the first time in many years, and since none of the bandmembers lives in close proximity anymore, we were fortunate to find a space made available by the company that prints our T-shirts. We hashed out material for a few months until we thought we had a strong song base to work from. At this point we brought Sean McDonald onboard as the engineer and producer for this project. After a few more months of fine-tuning each song, we felt that we were ready for the studio.

Days before we were scheduled for recording, we got a call from the Pittsburgh Penguins asking us to do a version of Louis Armstrong's "What A Wonderful World." Not a band to pass up an opportunity like that, we decided to fit the song into our schedule. Within three days it was arranged and recorded. You might think that three days is a bit long, but consider the fact that no bandmembers were in the studio at the same time, and that we were playing shows at the same time. The song turned out great, and the Penguins and our fans loved our version of this timeless classic. Recording in this fashion set the tone for the new project.

With all of the live shows out of the way, it was time to lay down some drum tracks. I had the entire band come into the studio for one evening to lay down template tracks for all of the songs. These songs weren't complete—the vocals weren't all there, and the guitar parts weren't done—but the basic structure and tempo of the songs were. I spent the next week laying down some solid drum tracks. This was a great way to record. I could spend as much time as I needed to get things right or maybe work out some fills.

Sean McDonald happens to be a great drummer and was wonderful to work with. We got to take the time we needed without having other bandmembers bored out of their minds, sitting around and waiting for me to finish. I think in the end it was all worth it. Most of the songs are a single drum track with the same basic kit. However, the seventh track, "Come Round Here," is three separate loops.

The kit Sean and I assembled was a mismatch of drums. Sean is really a mastermind when it comes to getting great tones. I have a few very nice kits; one of my favorites is a late-'40s, early-'50s Slingerland. This was one of those \$500 finds that you read about in magazines, similar to finding a cherry 1948 pan head that's been sitting untouched in a barn since the original owner parked it there in 1949. This kit has a great sound, and I've used it exclusively on the last three projects. Sean decided to try some different kick drum options and settled on a 24" Yamaha kick with a 26" Radio King kick in front of that. The results are *unbelievable*. Sean and I combined our snare drum collections, so we had all of the bases covered.

As a listener, I really like this record. I hope that most of you will agree. If you have the chance, please give it a listen.

Happy drumming!

Dave <http://www.moderndrummer.com/modern-drummer-blogs/The%20Clarks'%20Dave%20Minarik/>



CD UNIVERSE - 6/09

Like Cleveland's Michael Stanley Band or Cape Cod's Incredible Casuals, Pittsburgh's the Clarks developed a huge, rabidly loyal following in their home city, but had trouble breaking out nationally. Undeterred, the group kept churning out its infectious, uncompromising brand of rootsy pop/rock year after year. *RESTLESS DAYS* revealed that two decades of hard work had paid off handsomely, with the Clarks' sharp, melodic songwriting, stellar harmony vocals, and heaping helpings of country twang sounding more solid than ever. "Trampoline's" driving guitar riff and ear-candy hooks recall the Smithereens' best work while "True Believer" combines the heartland rock of Alejandro Escovedo's band of the same name, with Cheap Trick-style power pop. One of the strongest albums in the Clarks' storied catalog, *RESTLESS DAYS* showcased a band only getting better with age.

BEAVER COUNTY TIMES, PA

By Scott Tady, Times Entertainment Editor 6/09

Get 'Restless'

On Tuesday, hometown rockers the Clarks release their eighth studio album, "Restless Days." Singer Scott Blasey and bassist Greg Joseph split the songwriting, and in an exclusive interview with the Times share the inspiration behind each track.

Trampoline: "This story evolved many, many years ago by a friend of mine. He was dating a girl who was coincidentally dating her longtime boyfriend off and on. She couldn't make up her mind. He made it up for her." — Joseph.

Inside: "This is a song about an abused girlfriend who kills her lover. The narrator is an old acquaintance to whom she goes for advice." — Blasey.

True Believer: "Is about an unknown actress who lives by herself and paints self-portraits seldom seen, which is another way of saying few people really know her. The singer of the song falls for her but doesn't know if she's being truthful in proclaiming her love or just acting. The lyric, 'She knew how to play the true believer,' can be interpreted in two ways; either she's the true believer and knows how to play the role, or he's the true believer and she just played him. Regardless, she dies young, broken and alone." — Blasey.

Midnight Rose: "This started as a song for my daughter Ava Rose. The verse lyrics were dark so I turned it into a song about a train. It involves a man who has blood on his hands and thinks he can escape his problems, and jail, by catching a ride out of town on the Midnight Rose." — Blasey.

Soul and Skin: "Just another breakup tune. The band nailed this one from the first time we worked on it at practice. Truth is I've never even owned a cat. Or had an oak floor." — Joseph.

Sunshine: "Sunshine is about an old man who long ago abandoned a woman who loved him and a job that supported him for his own selfish desires. Now he's at the end of his life and has nothing but photographs and regret." — Blasey.

Come 'round Here: "True stories of days gone by. There are tragic figures in all of our lives and I wanted to tie them together somehow. It's like an old man sitting on a front porch talking about who doesn't come

around here anymore. The last verse refers to John. Who is John?" — Joseph.

Restless Days: "This is a song about a man who has spent most of his life in jail and he's pleading for it to the judge and jury. He sees how unfair justice can be and takes his only solace in the arms of his girl." — Blasey.

The Clowns: "We've never been much of a politically motivated band but at some point I got really frustrated by all the politics over the past couple years. It has deteriorated into self serving from serving the people. Or am I naive?" — Joseph.

Runaway: "The story of a restless, hard-living woman. For some reason this song reminds me of our travels through the West — the truck stops, gift shops and little bars and restaurants along the way." - Joseph.

In Between: "The only autobiographical moment for me on the CD. It's a song about being down, way down, and having someone to help see you through to the other side. It's all good now." — Joseph.

What a Wonderful World: We were contacted by the Pittsburgh Penguins to do our own version of the Ramones version of the Louie Armstrong version of this song. The Penguins used it for commercials and promo purposes in the 2008-09 season. We were so happy with the result that we decided to include it on the new CD. It was an honor to be able to cover such an important song in American music history. — Joseph.

How You Spin It – The Herald-Standard, PA

The Clarks spend their 'Restless Days' living the dream By: Lori Ann Goodwin 6/09

From the ever-popular Fayette County favorite "Cigarette" to "On Saturday" and "Penny on the Floor," The Clarks' music seems to find a good fit with the people of this area. "The people of the region have embraced us and branded us with a lot of things about Pittsburgh," said guitarist Robert James. For the past 20 years, the foursome of James, Scott Blasey, Greg Joseph and Dave Minarik have found a way to not only stay together, but also to maintain a musical integrity that has garnered them quite a following in the Pittsburgh region. And with that they launched their first studio album in five years "Restless Days" earlier this week. The new 12-song album features 11 original songs by The Clarks, plus a rollicking cover of "Wonderful World," which was commissioned by the Pittsburgh Penguins and used as part of their 2008-2009 season marketing campaign. James said Blasey and Joseph wrote all of the original songs on the new album, but that all members of the band have the opportunity to put their fingerprints on the songs. James added that they all have ventured into being storytellers with the lyrics, and that the songs on this album definitely generate emotions in him. "Scott and Greg have individually grown as writers, telling stories more and more," James said. While he said he is drawn to all of the new songs, one that he finds relatable is "True Believer," the first track on the album. "That song may strike a chord with people," he said. "It has a universal theme." The band also is working with a different producer than on their last three albums, and James added that they are exploring a lot with old production. When asked what the band has been up to in the past five years since the release of "Fast Moving Cars," James said they all have been doing some solo projects. "Scott and I have been raising our families," James said. "Dave did a solo record and has been building motorcycles." Greg Joseph also put out a solo album, according to James. James added that he is blown away by Blasey's ability to maintain his creativity and musical stamina while raising two children, and said that a big focus for himself has been raising his daughter. "What we do gives me a nice balance in life with my hobbies, music and family," James said. "I'm very blessed that my career has allowed us to perpetuate this life." And it's those real-life experiences that enable the band to come back and speak to the people of the area. James said that those individuals of the region are the ones that continuously embrace them, and that in itself is a level of success. "I'm very humbled by it," he said. And this weekend, The Clarks will be bringing that everyman's rock 'n roll to the Pittsburgh area with a show tomorrow at the Amphitheatre at Station Square. But don't look for The Clarks to explode into full-blown American mainstream. The band is quite happy with the success they've achieved so far. "Chasing that brass ring can sometimes be a recipe for disaster," James said. "That's definitely something we would have to address as a band." James said it's been a great ride, one he hopes continues.

The band's first studio album in five years has also seen a remarkable response at radio, with airplay on Alternative, Rock/Classic Rock, AAA and Country stations.

More info:

The Clarks are an American rock band that have sold over 300,000 CDs, managed to stay together for 20+ years, and support themselves through their music. They've received extraordinary notoriety in their hometown of Pittsburgh, while remaining under the radar for the rest of America. But The Clarks have a sound that's bigger than one town.

They are - **Scott Blasey:** Lead Vocals, Electric & Acoustic Guitars; **Robert James:** Electric & Acoustic Guitars, Vocals; **Greg Joseph:** Bass Guitar, Vocals; **Dave Minarik:** Drums, Vocals.

From the scorching guitars of 'Trampoline' to the distinctive storytelling of 'Midnight Rose', their new songs deliver a real rock band playing real instruments. Add in overlapping vocals, driving percussion and great hooks, and you've got a cohesive collection of muscular music from a seasoned band that knows their trade. If Green Day played songs written by Paul McCartney, the result might sound a bit like 'Restless Days'. The new album features 12 tracks in all -- 11 original songs by The Clarks, plus a rollicking cover of 'Wonderful World', which was commissioned by the Pittsburgh Penguins and used as part of their 2008-2009 season marketing campaign.

'Restless Days' was recorded in Pittsburgh and produced by Sean McDonald, who has also worked with indie faves Grapevine, Carroway, and Mercury, but perhaps is best known for his work on the PBS 'American Soundtrack' and 'My Music' series.

The Clarks describe themselves with pride as a band that's *"always fashionably in style and fashionably out of style all at the same time. They've never struck arena-rock poses – never had any gimmicks or affectations at all. They just get onstage and get it done. And they've never found a reason to do it any other way. Because if your casual college band turned into a career dream come true, complete with airtime on 'Late Show with David Letterman' (<http://clarksonline.com/video/ls qt.html>) and more than a quarter-million albums sold – and you managed to do it while remaining based in the hometown where your families, friends and biggest fans are – why tamper with success?"* That sentiment still stands, but as the title of their new album suggests, the band is getting a bit 'restless'...

Upcoming concerts include:

Aug 1	Fayette County Fair	Uniontown, PA
Aug 9	Rochester Inn Parking Lot	Pittsburgh, PA
Aug 15	Washington County Fair	Washington, PA
Aug 22	Waterford Fairgrounds – Howapalooza	Ligonier, PA
Aug 28	The Cellar (Kelly Pavlik's 13th Round)	Struthers, OH
Sept 6	The Palms Steakhouse	Conneaut Lake, PA
Sept 16	Altoona Rail Roaders Museum	Altoona, PA
Sept 18	Grog Shop	Cleveland Heights, OH
Sept 19	Beat Kitchen	Chicago, IL

Look for more tour dates to be announced soon. Visit www.clarksonline.com or myspace.com/theclarks

Hear audio samples of 'Restless Days' here: <http://brickwallmgmt.com/theclarks/>