

Acoustic Guitar

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Chuck Brodsky, Color Came One Day

By Mike Thomas

Chuck Brodsky can sing, fingerpick, and strum with the best of 'em, but the Asheville, North Carolina, folkie is above all a storyteller, and a riveting one at that. *Color Came One Day*, produced and recorded in Nova Scotia by Canadian roots music maestro J.P. Cormier, rates as Brodsky's finest batch of tightly spun tales since 1998's *Radio*. (That album's title song introduced many listeners to the heartwarming true story depicted in the 2003 dramatic film of the same name.) At his best, Brodsky gives meaningful voice to the everyday characters, both ordinary and eccentric, who make their communities tick. For example, there's the empathetic small-town barkeep who pours "The 9:30 Pint" and the resourceful doctor's wife who brings progress and prosperity to remote Appalachia in "Miracle in the Hills." Even when a bristly Brodsky blows the whistle on corporate polluters ("Seven Miles Upwind") and the powers-that-be who trample on civil rights in the name of security ("Dangerous Times"), an underlying tone of warmth and compassion runs through all his carefully observed narratives. Yes, he brings color to the commonplace but also a depth of understanding that's comfortable with subtle shades of gray.

(Chuckbrodsky.com/Waterbug, www.chuckbrodsky.com)