

Simon Waldram – Album – So It Goes

Reviewed by Drew Jarvie (The Delerium Trees) – AMJ Music

'So It Goes' is Simon Waldram's eighth album and it continues to display his brilliance as a singer, songwriter and musician. When not busy as a solo artist he also finds time to make music with Cake Sloth, Dynamite For Partisans, Manko Force, Sky Club and Meminta.

The album begins with the haunting **'You'** – a haunting melody is given a haunting vocal with a simple acoustic guitar accompaniment. Adding to the atmosphere are sustained violins and cellos. **'I Miss the Sun'**, the album's second track, is a much more upbeat affair, a superb pop song, very much in the style of Australian band 'Empire of The Sun'. After the yearning of **'You'** the summery instrumentation and laid-back vocal give an optimistic feel.

A sombre piano introduces **'Don't Worry'** and the returning string instruments add to the song's emotional tug. Beautifully sang, beautifully played. **'Boats in the Sky'**, a great name for a song, immediately lifts the emotion to a happier place. A great pop song, jangly guitars everywhere!

'The Wild Wanderings of Wildebeest' sees the tempo increased again, hints of punk and an absolute belter of a bass line. Wildebeest provided a change of style, the next song **'Moonstone'** shows some the folk influences Simon has met along the way. Folk tinged, the vocal line is perfect and the counter melodic violin adds to an almost 'live feel' A subtle change sees the chorus change to a more bluegrass vibe, further enhanced by some cracking guitar work.

'Windswept' is the album's longest song is beautifully driven by rhythmic guitar, a simple drum beat and a well-spaced bass line, all of which provide the perfect foundation for Simon's expressive lyrics. Lloyd Cole would do well to match this with his angst driven songs. High praise, well deserved. Keeping the contrast idea with the songs, the longest song is followed by the shortest song the instrumental **'One May Afternoon'**. The acoustic guitar plays lovely broken chords with the occasional full chord. A simplistic but thoughtful melody sits on

top, a feel of being at one with nature – singing birds join in with the well-being.

The album ends with '**Shimmer**', apt as one of the lyrics suggests Autumn has gone and Winter fast approaches. 'Autumn' representing the passing of a relationship or a friend, Winter representing the future. Extra shimmer is created by the acoustic and some lovely choral synth effects.

'**So It Goes**' is an album full of different styles, genre changes and emotions. The slow songs create emotion, thoughtfulness, the tugging of heartstrings whilst the faster songs create an optimism, perhaps hope, a sense of well-being in the future. Simon Waldram guides us through these various feelings as well as parts of the year with spacious, almost laid-back vocals. However, this is magnificent use of the voice to create a story, which becomes our friend even in a crisis.

A must listen album, well produced, top class musicianship and most importantly, Simon's lyrics and message brought to the fore.

One of the best albums I have heard!!!