

Press for Terry Kitchen's *The Post-American Century*

Metronome, Sept. 2015

Hot off the heels of his novel/CD, *Next Big Thing*, singer-songwriter-guitarist Terry Kitchen delivers an uplifting album of life, love and the American experience. Aptly titled *The Post-American Century*, Kitchen pens poignant songs that revel in bluegrass, pop, gospel and folk featuring vivid prose and sweet musical accompaniment while looking back in history as far as the Civil War up to the modern day concern of the Baby Boomer's mortality.

Enlisting a bevy of musical friends that feature singers Mara Levine, Amy Malkoff, Phyllis Capanna, Deede Bergeron, guitarist Brice Buchanan, dobro player Roger Williams, upright bassist Don Barry, Bob Harris on mandolin and Chris Devine on violin, Kitchen delivers original masterpieces in the stellar album opener, "So Much More To Home," the coming-of-age reality of "Perelli's Barbershop," the lilting eulogy for the passing of Kitchen's mother, "Mommy Come Quick," and Terry's clever rendition of The Monkees' 1967 hit, "I'm A Believer."

Pure, well played, sung and produced, Terry Kitchen has handed in one of the best albums of his career. Outstanding!
(Brian Owens)

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"Nothing good lasts," local boy Terry Kitchen sings on "Sequel," the second song on his new release *The Post-American Century*. "Just ask the Mets." The song's protagonist and his significant other are stuck in traffic and slowly passing Shea Stadium, the now demolished home of New York's other baseball team, when he sings the lyric. He's perturbed, yes, but he's also making the most of the situation with a joke. His S.O. smiles, and "for a second we were young again." The passage of time is all over *The Post-American Century*. Things change, and not always for the better, but when you've got a sense of humor, and someone to go through the changes with, it makes the whole mess bearable. "There's a gray one in your hairbrush and my shoulder's feeling sore," is how Kitchen describes aging on "Eternity," his duet with Mara Levine. "I think someone's trying to tell us we're not two kids anymore." Still, this is nothing to be frightened of, because the singer and his lover are facing the future together. Of course getting older isn't just about creaky joints and silver hair. It's also about remembering when you were young, and the disc features tunes about such remembrances, none better than the album's best track, "Perelli's Barbershop." "So pretty that my heart would almost stop," Kitchen sings during the song's chorus. "Peekin' at the Playboys at Perelli's Barbershop." Today, you're lucky if the barbershop has copies of Maxim. There's not much in life better than those first adolescent peeps at a Playboy, but children grow up and life goes on. Things change. It's not all bad though. Just ask the Mets. They won their division this year!

(Adam Ellsworth)

The Noise, October 2015

With an amazing set of tales, a soft, but powerful voice, and elegant instrumentals, Terry Kitchen's latest album touches on real people, with incredible insight, emotion, and the ability to weave stories of all kinds, both happy and less so. "Tall Against the Wave" is by far my favorite. It tells of a Civil War battle where the Confederates repel one Union attack after another, sacrificing thousands for "a patch of Indian corn." It's such an enchanting tale, and as a minor history buff, I'm drawn into it through Terry's seasoned folk style and his ability to make a story come to life. This one has been re-played again and again, and each time the scenes I create become a little more complete. "Perelli's Barbershop" is a coming-of-age sort of tune about how a young man learns the secret to the opposite sex in a rather unsuspecting locale: the local barbershop. This one's so damn funny, and while my own introduction to women wasn't quite the same, it's not too far off, either. Terry's not alone on this album, and I'd be remiss in not giving credit to the skills of Bob Harris (mandolin), Roger Williams (Dobro), Chris Devine (violin) and singers Mara Levine and Amy Malkoff, who work with Terry to craft a mirror image of the world we grew up in, or occupy in the here and now. These aren't just stories we can relate to, they're our own lives, and after hearing the last track fade out, it's not too bizarre to think that we've known each other for years.

(Max Bowen)

Press for Terry Kitchen's *The Post-American Century* (continued)

FATEA Records UK

The *Post-American Century* is Boston-based singer-songwriter Terry's followup to his 2009 album *Summer To Snowflakes*, and encompasses a comparable breadth of human experience within its taut, insightful, and often wry vignettes. Whether upbeat or downbeat, happy or sad, they don't fail to connect with the listener's emotions, and Terry's eye for detail is both uncanny and unerring, supplying tales and situations with which we can identify even if the actual minutiae and/or specific circumstance is further removed from our own direct experience.

Parallels can always be drawn though, as in *Tall Against The Wave*, where the terror and futility of war are voiced by a Confederate infantryman, and the touching *Sequel*, which posits an overheard conversation between two "sixties survivors" trying to find their place in the confusion of this new century. The theme of loss is poignantly explored on *Stay Forever* and its uncredited coda (the disc's brief bonus track *One More Sunset*), while loss of faculties through Alzheimer's brings a role-reversal scenario that's described on *Mommy Come Quick*. The comforts of faith and home values are brought to the fore on two of the album's most immediately appealing tracks, *Rock Of Ages* and *So Much More To Home*, both of which cuts enjoy a tasty, rootsy musical setting (gospel and bluegrass respectively). Praise for the exquisitely-turned musical arrangements can't be avoided here, for the playing of Roger Williams (dobro), Bob Harris (mandolin), Chris Devine (violin) and Brice Buchanan (guitar) ably complement Terry's own soft-toned, honestly expressive vocal confidences and dependable instrumental skills (guitar, mandolin, autoharp and harmonica). Special mention too, for guest singer Mara Levine's contributions: duet vocal on the seriously country-flavoured *Eternity* and harmony vocals on three other cuts.

Just occasionally, I detect more than a hint of overt preachiness, as on the Pete-Seeger-esque *One By One* which (somewhat obviously) explores the tragedy of racism in today's society. But overall, Terry's tried-and-tested modus operandi is quality, perceptive contemporary songwriting with an acute awareness of the human condition. His choice of cover material, unsurprisingly therefore, is fitting: just Neil Diamond's *I'm A Believer*, here shorn of its customary Monkee-some poppiness and breezily bestriding a snappy riff more reminiscent of the Beatles' *Getting Better*. Confident and unashamedly quirky, but it hits the spot in the company of Terry's own compositions.

(David Kidman)

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Oh this is fine pickin' and singin'. The homespunny opening number, "So Much More to Home" is a joyful and yearning song that opens the album with delicate harmonies by Mara Levine. "Sequel" seems like the next chapter of "America" by Simon and Garfunkel. It contains the great line: "We've lived our lives with the wind at our backs/ Blown free from the Summer of Love to the winter of AIDS/HIV/ Now nothing's free, feels like we're refugees in this post-American century." The subject matter of "Perelli's Barber Shop" probably resonates with many young men: "Peeking at the Playboys at Perellis' Barber Shop." Who knew? "Tall Against the Wave" is a tribute to a Civil War battle. It impresses like an eye-witness account. "Stay Forever" is the imploring heart of the lover reluctant to say goodbye to the dying beloved. Not an easy song to write I'm sure. "Rock of Ages" is an homage to a welcoming church who welcomes and heals a lost soul. "Mommy Come Quick" was written when Terry saw the parallels between his mother's childlike behavior with Alzheimer's, and his childhood memories. A sweet tribute. Terry has a gentle tenor voice and delivers each song with an easy style.

(Kimmy Sophia Brown)