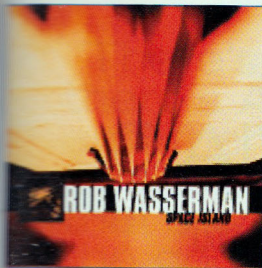


ROB WASSERMAN

Space Island

Atlantic



OUT:

August 15

FILE UNDER:

Bassy loops and grooves

R.I.Y.L.:

Banyan, Ratdog, Béla Fleck

There are countless ways to know upright bass badass Rob Wasserman. Maybe you're a Deadhead who's into his work with Ratdog and Bob Weir. Maybe you've heard him with Branford Marsalis, Lou Reed or Elvis Costello. Maybe you're a bluegrass buff who knows him from way back in the David Grisman Quintet. Or was it *Solo* (1983), *Duets* (1988), *Trios* (1994) or his collaboration with drummer Stephen Perkins in Banyan? Take the best parts from *all* of that, add appearances by Banyaners Perkins and trumpeter Willie Waldman, P-Funk percussionist Carl "Butch" Small and Snoop and Dre's DJ

Jam, as well as production by Dave Aron, and you've got *Space Island*, not so much an exotic location as a state of musical mind. Taking a walk on the "Wildside" with Wasserman is more like blowing through a town of funky spaghetti-Western instrumental jazzscape than the streets of New York Reed rock. "Love Song" and "Nu Ballad" radiate romance like Béla Fleck likes to play it, while "Got To Rock" and "Feel The Bass" tip funk toward a little turntable scratching. The soothing "Sultan Song," featuring Sultan Khan on the sarangi, hints at the boundlessness of this album's scope. Still, it's "Hillbilly Hip Hop" that's probably the best example of multi-genre mish mash—country guitar slides, bass-boomin' groove, rap rhymes. Like they say in the song, "This ain't no acid...funk...jazz...or dread-lock...rock." It's pure Wasserman. »»Robin A. Rothman