



TITLE: COVERS
ARTIST: HOLMES
LABEL: GROOVE GRAVY

PRESS REVIEWS & QUOTES

“Across thirteen tracks, Holmes painstakingly recreates some very familiar artists work, often in his own image and while it was recorded in a home studio on a small budget, it still sounds like an expensive recording... crystal clear piano chords, superior sung vocal... While 2011 saw more than enough covers albums hit the market, this one by Holmes is not to be missed. Throughout, Holmes shows a strong sense of musical vision and puts his studio know-how to fantastic use. Classy pop arrangements, other people’s material and a bit of imagination have rarely sounded so good.” - **Real Gone, UK**

Top 100 albums of 2011 - **BlowUpRadio**

“Not everyone could make Ice Cube’s *It Was A Good Day* sound like it was a Ben Folds Five ditty but Holmes nails it as the opening number on the cheerful, almost guiltily enjoyable *Covers*. This works the same side of the blue-eyed soul-meets-hipster-nostalgia street as Mayer Hawthorne, which isn’t a dig against either young musician who respects the craftsmanship and quality in what’s come before as they attempt to build something solid of their own – plus both guys have covered ELO’s “Mr. Blue Sky” this year. This all-covers set shows which giants’ shoulders Holmes wants to stand on, and he equates himself well on beloved nuggets from Yaz (Don’t Go), Queen (Bicycle Race), The Gap Band (You Dropped A Bomb On Me), Michael Jackson (Working Day And Night), Massive Attack (Paradise Circus), Elvis Presley (Don’t Be Cruel), Genesis (That’s All) and more – notably, a howling blues reworking of Depeche Mode’s *Wrong* that could be fairly mistaken for The Black Keys. It’s a bit of a crazy quilt but Holmes sews it together admirably, his heartfelt versions showing affection and a post-modern archness that works for him. He can sing his ass off and his arranging gifts are obvious, doing just what a good cover should – reminding us why we liked a song in the first place while adding a lil’ something – and doing it 13 times over here.” - **Dirty Impound**

“*Tenderness*” (General Public cover): Number 4, Top 25 Best Cover Songs of 2011. “Fantastic album!” - **BestCoverSongs.net**

“If there is a benchmark for how to reinterpret a song then this surely is it!” – **Beehive Candy**

“LOVE this! Seriously one of the best cover albums I’ve heard.” - **Coverville**

"2011 is definitely the year of the cover. And Holmes' project is one of the more unusual of the lot. Ice Cube's "It Was a Good Day" becomes a sunny single. "You Dropped a Bomb on Me" becomes a 1970s AM single. My favorite Jacksons tune is still funky, but now sounds white and nerdy. "Don't Be Cruel" sounds like electronica Beatles. My second favorite Genesis song is a straightforward pop. Musically, it's tight and fun, with guest appearances by Joel Shearer (Damien Rice, Alanis Morissette), Chris Bruce (Michelle Ndegeocello, Sheryl Crow) Lawrence Katz (Bosstones), and Michael Jerome Moore (Blind Boys of Alabama, Better Than Ezra). Wild, wild stuff. And make sure you don't leave before the end, or you'll miss the a capella ELO cover.

- **Berkeley Place**

"I got chills running down my back... Holmes makes these covers sound like they are his own" - **Realm of Music Radio**

"When it comes to cover tunes, I feel unless you approach it with a unique POV you may as well listen to the original song. On the other hand when covers are done right I really appreciate the artists style. Good recent examples are from Michael Carpenter and Matthew Sweet. I would definitely add Holmes (aka Roy Shakked) to this list. The range of covers he has chosen here is truly eclectic, from Ice Cube to ELO. Opening with "It Was A Good Day," I hardly recognized it, because it was played as a sunny pop tune. In many cases, the style performed is the direct opposite of how it was written (Depeche Mode's "Wrong" using a bluesy guitar riff or Elvis "Don't Be Cruel" as a slow ballad) and in the process makes them like Holmes originals. This opens up the song writing to a totally new interpretation, and my favorites here are "That's All (Genesis)," "Why Didn't You Call Me (Macy Gray)" and a totally cool a capella version of ELO's "Mr. Blue Sky." This is a fun collection that's highly recommended." - **Power Popaholic**

"Cover tunes reworked in ways you haven't heard them before" - **Kik Axe Music**

"Holmes is a one man show who released a gaggle of cover tunes last month rightfully titled *Covers*. Ranging from the masters of gangster rap to the King of Rock and Roll, Holmes did all he could to incorporate all musical styles... his rendition of Ice Cube's "It Was a Good Day" was not only good, but helpful. I never know what rappers are saying... But that's besides the point. From a Folked out Compton to a Latin infused "Don't Go" originally done by Yaz. Holmes didn't just reinvent songs from one niche, he chose a variety of genres and when it came time to make them his own, it sounds like he thought it out for each individual song. Bottom line? There's not one definitive style on *Covers* and that's what makes it unlike a lot of albums like it. So if you're a fan of songs that already exist but want to hear a different approach to them? Holmes' *Covers* is for you." - **Golden Mixtapes**

"Piano-rocker Holmes, born Roy Shakked, released an album of covers this week that includes drastic re-interpretations of songs by Elvis Presley, Genesis, Queen, Macy Gray, Massive Attack and this priceless take on "It Was A Good Day," Ice Cube's gangsta-rap ode to joy. Even though it sounds like a completely different style, Holmes actually captures the concept of the original song perfectly. Cube's original focuses on making sure that the listener gets the message about the rampant violence in his community, but in doing so his performance doesn't convey the right emotions to make the character convincing. Holmes proves a much more capable actor than Ice Cube, making the narrator sound genuinely (and appropriately) happy to have avoided all the terrible things listed in the song. While hip-hop covers usually have a certain novelty value to them, the cheerful tone adds to our understanding of this song instead of just being ironic or making fun of it." - **Cover Me**

"With it's iconic status and a storytelling structure that seems like it would be pretty easy to translate into a more traditional, non-rap format, it's kind of amazing that there hasn't been a million "ironic" covers of Ice Cube's 1993 classic "It Was A Good Day" to come down the pike. Holmes has come up with one (as part

of his new *Covers* album) and it's a pretty genius remake, transforming the summery, soul-baked bliss of the Isley Brothers-sampling original into a happy-go-lucky piano-pop tune one could easily imagine someone like Ben Folds Five coming up with. Even more brilliant, without paying close enough attention and catching the familiar references to "triple doubles", "Fat Burger", "Goodyear blimps" and the Lakers beating the Supersonics, Holmes does such a spectacular job re-imagining the song, you almost might not catch on to the fact that he's taking on one of Ice Cube's biggest hits...

The rest of *Covers* features more excellent remakes of tunes from the likes of Michael Jackson, Elvis Presley, Depeche Mode, Macy Gray and The Gap Band. - **Mixtape Maestro**

"LA based Holmes delivers a great cover of Ice Cube's ode to the perfect 24. It's not just a straight cover, Holmes' has given careful thought to musical arrangements and its pretty nice one to kick back too. The song comes from a whole album of covers that Holmes has put together including Elvis, Genesis, INXS, Depeche Mode and Michael Jackson (there is an AWESOME cover of General Public's *Tenderness* too!). - **I Think You'll Like This Song music blog**

"Growing up listening to the music of the rapper before he became the family movie dad or TBS producer, I can say what kind of job Holmes did covering Cube's "It was a Good Day." He pretty much nailed it. Without being overbearing and too poppy, Holmes was able to make the song a little bit his own without ruining the vibe Cube's original conveyed. You've got same feel and still wanna sip on a nice beverage in a brown bag while you cruise and chill. Job well done, Holmes!" - **Independent Media Magazine**

INTERVIEW: Made Loud

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www.SweetHolmes.com