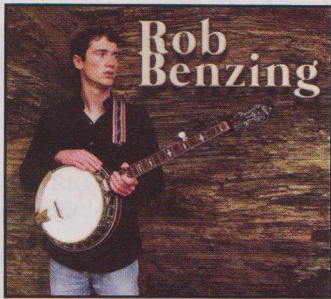


ROB BENZING

Patuxent Music
CD-296



Those concerned with the future of traditional bluegrass music can seek comfort in the latest crop of young pickers coming along, making the next generation of tunes. Rob Benzing debuts with a self-titled album that combines old favorites and fresh tunes from this banjoist and his group of friends and bandmates. Backing up Benzing on the CD are Danny Knicely on rhythm guitar/lead guitar/vocals; Taylor Baker, mandolin; Mark Schatz, bass; Patrick McAvinue, fiddle; Scott Brannon, guitar/vocals; Jacob Mosley, mandolin/vocals; Joey Mosley, guitar/vocals; and Tom Mindte, vocals.

Benzing wrote "Monocacy Crossing" and "Fingerboard Road," the latter of which is a signature piece that showcases not just good picking and timing, but a flair for making an instrumental stand out. McAvinue's fiddle is not to be missed on this one. There are three tracks for banjo diehards, including nice turns on "Shenandoah Breakdown," "Armadillo Breakdown," and "Dixie Breakdown." Joey Mosley handles the vocals admirably on "Carry Me" written by Jacob Mosley.

Benzing, while a youngster, gives a nod to his influences, first to Reno & Smiley on "Sockeye"

and "No Longer A Sweetheart Of Mine," and later to Earl Scruggs with "Lonesome Road Blues." All in all, this CD offers plenty, with a fresh take on some oldies, along with old-time drive. (Patuxent Music, P.O. Box 572, Rockville, MD 20848, www.pxrec.com.) MKB