



Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes

More blurbs than you'll ever need, not quite complete, but still ridiculous and here for those who like to go all in...

Blooming Roses – (US & UK Release 2008)

"...The literary album has withered into a state of permanent dialysis. But **cerebral Southern folkie Doug Hoekstra's recently released *Blooming Roses* is the light side of the moon.** It's packed with frisky Muscle Shoals rhythms, gospel-tinged harmonies and helpings of near-whisper swoon. The songs themselves hang on nylon strings and lost regrets..." (*Joey Hood, Nikki Style, May/June 2008*)

"...every songs gets its own appropriate approach and this brings about a great diversity in timbre. From modest songs as 'Instinct' to exuberant rocking tracks as 'Part Of The Problem, Part Of The Solution', **every song on this album is a real pearl...a small masterpiece.**" (*Jos Berg voor, Platomania April 2008 Netherlands*)

"Doug Hoekstra is a singer-songwriter. Strike that; reverse it. He's more of a songwriter-singer, crafting immensely detailed vignettes that are pure Americana and pairing them with subtly earnest arrangements, giving him a signature style...his **latest release, *Blooming Roses,* is a cache of gritty, nuanced tales tackling the horrors and pleasures of life...**" (*Kyle Koster, Chicago Sun-Times, April 2008*)

"Possessing an intimate vocal style that evokes early (pre-"Transformer") Lou Reed, a hard-earned gift for storytelling (he's published award-winning short stories, essays and non-fiction), a gently twisted sense of humor and an adventurous, stylistically diverse approach to music that ranges from Harry Nilsson-esque parlor pop to folk to velvety, underground rock 'n 'roll, **Nashville-based Doug Hoekstra has it all goin' on.** *Blooming Roses* is the culmination of this exemplary singer/songwriter's best instincts, loping through 11 distinct tunes 'n 'tales that track splendidly, decorated by various sonic toys (assorted keyboards, strings, reeds, toy piano, melodica, ukulele, pedal steel, etc.) that provide just-right finishing touches/accents. Throughout, Hoekstra unveils a genuine, big-hearted thoughtfulness rarely found in contemporary music. ***Blooming Roses* is a literate, engaging collection, and the sum total feels like nothing so much as a welcome, un-met friend.** (*Jim Musser, IA Press Citizen, April 2008*)

"...**Doug Hoekstra's modern folk masterpiece.** Hoekstra is a Nashville singer/songwriter who's so good at what he does that he makes crafting a perfect set of folk rock songs seem effortless. Thankfully, his impeccable winning streak continues with "Blooming Roses," his first proper studio album since 2003's gorgeous "Waiting." The songs included here are as tight and expertly crafted as any in Hoekstra's illustrious career... **It doesn't take very long to fall in love with this man's music.** (*Matthew Perrine, Duluth News, April 2008*)

"Doug Hoekstra has quietly become an **icon** of Americana music and the Nashville scene, writing **beautifully spare songs that contain genius-level observations** about people...Blooming Roses consists of another eleven perfectly understated songs that incorporate elements of country, rock, and even jazz. (*Jeff Vandermeer, Amazon.com / Omnivoracious feature, April 2008*)

"...Hoekstra has showed himself to be an especially adept performer, able to switch at a stroke of his guitar or piano across the blues, country, pop, rock, folk and gospel, and to slip easily, often several times in the same song, from one of those genres to another...**another superbly-crafted album of excellent material.** 'Blooming Roses' offers thankfully more of the same, and also something very different." (*John Clarkson, Pennyblack Music, April 2008*)

"With a novelist's eye for detail and narrative, and a songwriter's genius for melody and phrasing, Nashville outsider Doug Hoekstra just keeps rolling along. *Blooming Roses*, with its Velvet Underground-cum-steel guitar vibe, is his latest gem." (*Pop Culture Press, March 2008*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Blooming Roses – (US & UK Release 2008)

"...a rich musical landscape augmented by some of Nashville's best known players; at the center stage is Hoekstra, his compelling narratives delivered with emotional oomph and consistent musicianship. A bit of psychedelia, some lovely country folk flourishes and **one beauty of a song after another makes *Blooming Roses* Hoekstra's strongest and most satisfying album yet.** (*James Cassara, Rapid River Asheville, 4 of 4 stars, March 2008*)

"**One of the Southeast's finest songwriters** for a decade, Hoekstra proffers loose narratives and keenly sketched vignettes in a speak-sung whisper-croon that's Reedier than Lou. It generally drifts over spare folk-blues, but Hoekstra's not limited to that sound..." (*Chris Parker, Independent Weekly NC, February 2008*) or

"...**Hoekstra's whispered croon is close like a lover's confidence**, its willowy presence carried on the softly undulating sound of nylon strings pinging lightly over a loping, minimal snare/cymbal snap....*Blooming Roses* coheres nicely, evoking a somber circumspective vibe that avoids melancholy or sentimentalism, from the quiet reflection of "Instincts" to the country-tinged "Disrepair" to the swelling six-minute closer, "Everywhere Is Somewhere." (The latter recalls the aching Americana of The Band, but was cut in Norway with members of Thomas Dybdahl's band.) (*Nashville Scene, February 2008*)

"Shut my mouth, I believe Doug Hoekstra, **Nashville's bard laureate** has a single, here. (At least one) The title song of *Blooming Roses* has the soothing earmarks of a great song that bears well under voluminous plays. Hoekstra is both a wise and crafty artist. It's no wonder Europe has embraced him even more than the States, where our stomach for celebrity and myriad versions of high school talent shows and popularity contests seem to have no bounds. Indeed, **the high pop art** here and the care within seem otherworldly in comparison....Hoekstra is fiercely quiet; **you don't have to shout when you're actually saying something. And his beautiful music thrives at any volume.**" (*Frank Goodman, Pure Music February 2008*)

"Doug Hoekstra continues to deepen the emotional presence of his evocative songs. Much of their strength comes from the quiet bearing of his voice, contrasted against accompaniment that carries him aloft on the shoulders of a rollicking throng....he favors subtly soulful arrangements that give the finished songs a late-night Muscle Shoals funkiness, mixed with an inward-looking sense of space. The contrasts he utilizes create tensions that underscore the human-scaled core of the songs, enveloping the listener. (*David Greenberger, Harp Magazine, February/March 2008*)

"...**those who have not sampled some of the Nashville-based songwriters' wares are missing out on a delicacy.** Backed by a tight group of Music City players, these 11 tracks are marked by lush instrumentation and lyrics that lean to the literate, feeling more like a collection of short stories. Hoekstra touches on a variety of themes, and takes tales of ordinary life and his keen observations, and paints memorable musical landscapes with them...the title cut, "Blooming Roses," is the strongest song, with its imagery of low-income housing and seeing the hope admits this perceived hopelessness – with roses blooming where bullets once lay." (*American Songwriter, Feb/March 2008*)

"The lyrical, folk-y route usually limits a songwriter, but it's always given Doug Hoekstra an incredible amount of space to roam. The title track of his forthcoming album, ***Blooming Roses***, begins with the line "I was walking through public housing, flyers in my hand." Hoekstra uses such seemingly trivial details to build engrossing stories that strike out from the folk idiom into a surreal, distinctly modern world. Like previous efforts, *Roses* is sonically diverse but clutter-free, trying everything from acoustic performances to tastefully applied pianos, strings, clarinet, and harmonies." (*Scott Gordon, The Onion, Madison WI. February 2008*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Blooming Roses – (US & UK Release 2008)

"His new CD, *Blooming Roses* is arguably his finest. ...**Hoekstra unveils the mix of distinctive storytelling, expressive singing and energetic playing that's always stamped his music as highly personal and captivating.**" (*Ron Wynn, Nashville City Paper February, 2008*).

"Doug Hoekstra bears that kind of sound, **a self assured quietude in his tenor, that suggests stature, implies importance.** He's been compared to Lou Reed, and fans of Yo La Tengo will also hear something to like in his simplistic inflections, especially when he duets with Bobby Bare, Jr., in the bucolic Steinbeck snapshot lyrics of his slow-bopping "Disrepair." But he takes a different turn, as already suggested by the Steinbeck reference. This is no New York haute rock project. Saxophone and soul are the furniture in Hoekstra's simple bedroom of a record, so while this is not "big stage" music, it could be. Fans of ugly-duckling country swing will also find a soft-spoken hero in Hoekstra, who spins lyrical yarns a little like predecessor Townes Van Zandt or flashy contemporary Lyle Lovett. "There's a girl by the window, she's waiting in the sun," he whispers over a slow hushed Motown bassline, "bright as origami, she blinds me like a gun." As if that weren't beautifully awkward enough, he continues, "She's got honey colored hair, and a navy colored coat, her hands are in the pockets of that navy colored coat, her slingshot opinions hit me like waves upon a boat." By this point you might have gotten lost in the words, and wondered where the church organ and country slide guitar came from, but it's too late to care. "Everywhere is somewhere," he tells you she said, "and you're already there." (*Interweb News Service, February 2008 8 of 10*)

"...profundity seeps into every significant detail and **one comes away from Hoekstra ennobled by a sense of humanity...wisdom, calm and articulacy.**" (*Mike Butler, Metro Newspapers UK*)

Bothering The Coffee Drinkers – The IPPY Award Bronze Medalist Book (2006-7 bits)



"Music runs like a liquid vein through these 80-proof experiences. Hoekstra pours it out with a Dylan-esque fervor, giving us a sputtering catalog of beauties and terrors..." (*Paste Magazine*)

"Music, it seems, carries with it a kind of hopes-and-dreams collective unconsciousness, and Hoekstra, with *Bothering the Coffee Drinkers*, taps gleefully into that astral plane." (*Harp Magazine*)

"*Bothering The Coffee Drinkers* establishes Doug Hoekstra as an outstanding writer and essayist, someone just as skilled in penning stories and essays as songs." (*Nashville City Paper*)

"**A grounded, informative, extraordinary piece of work.**" (*Pop Matters.Com*)

"The characters of *Bothering the Coffee Drinkers* are portrayed throughout with dignity, empathy and compassion....enthraling fiction and what should prove to be one of the best fictional debuts of this year." (*Pennyblack Music UK*).

"*Bothering the Coffee Drinkers* is a collection of essays and fiction that are engaging enough to keep the most nonmusical person interested, but every now and then his rock and roll heart takes over. When the backbeat stops, Hoekstra's words still find a way to jump off the page." (*Time Out Chicago*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Bothering The Coffee Drinkers – The IPPY Award Bronze Medalist Book (2006-7 bits)

Doug Hoekstra has earned kudos for his songwriting (deservedly so) and on this his first book shows that he has a knack for the long form as well...Hoekstra has an ear for the way people talk- and why. Unique characters abound in these tales, but they exist as real people, not props. The conflict between the act of creation and the tiresome drudge of commerce fuels much of this book, and as a performer Hoekstra has seen both. His storytelling skills are only glimpsed here, and one wishes for a novel perhaps, but for now, *Bothering The Coffee Drinkers* will have to do. And by the way, anyone who has played their heart out while yapping goofs slurp lattes or Jack Daniels know what a perfect title this book has!" (*James Mann, The Big Takeover*)

"*Bothering the Coffee Drinkers* is a delicious collection of story essays by Nashville-based singer and songwriter Doug Hoekstra that could be set to music as songs, or perhaps vice versa. **Hoekstra is a talented independent performer and gifted songwriter, so it comes as no surprise that he can also write creative fiction... Hoekstra's writes in a style that could safely be called eclectic, but that doesn't do his either his music or his literary genius true justice.** He is like a quirky art collector, putting together odd bits and ends, and then making them into something with an effect so much more than the mere sum of their collective oddities. Hoekstra sandwiches his story essays with a biographical beginning and end piece that is also very effective. It grounds the reading with an even more pronounced flavor of the author's presence and outlook. *Bothering the Coffee Drinkers* is very readable, very enjoyable, and very highly recommended to consumers of good music and well crafted literature." (*Midwest Book Review*)

Six Songs – The EP (2005-6 bits)

"Big songwriting talent...extraordinary lyrics...**one of our most fascinating talents.**" (*Music Row Magazine*)

"*** 1/2 ... equally enchanting is the latest EP from Nashville's prolific Doug Hoekstra. ***Six Songs*** manages to marry Britpop with Southern soul ("The Bottomless Pit"), and blues ("Have it All") with Highland folk ("Picture of the Soul") without exposing the join." (*Rob Hughes Americana, Uncut Magazine*)

"...Doug Hoekstra's aptly titled *Six Songs* EP reminds us of indie rock before it became such an irritant: whispering vocals, whimsical lyrics and a band that sounds edgy even though it's playing a ballad..." (*Time Out Chicago*)

"*Six Songs* is just what its title implies: **six fully realized tunes packed with strong hooks and Hoekstra's keen eye for detail.**" (*Flagpole Magazine, Athens GA*)

"We're so far under the radar," Hoekstra whispers in the opening track of his new EP, *Six Songs*. Yet his prolific career, which has included a record of compelling new material each year for the last decade, proves that the returns can be worth the effort for an under-the-media-radar artist this persistent and talented. New tunes like "Bottomless Pit" are as gripping and well-crafted as the best of his previous work, which remains remarkably consistent. Like a Midwestern Lou Reed, Hoekstra writes hip, diaristic tunes while perennially toying with enlivening his barebacked, rock-influenced sound." (*Michael McCall, Nashville Scene*)

"*Six Songs* and *Su Casa, Mi Casa* successfully intertwine and pull together the several different strands and layers of Doug Hoekstra's multi-faceted musical personality-the concerned social commentator and feisty political agitator, the tender-hearted autobiographer, the stand-up comic and the gritty craftsman....some of his most captivating material yet." (*Pennyblack Music UK*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



"Not one, but two fine releases from underrated Chicago songwriter Doug Hoekstra....*Su Casa Mi Casa* is an absolutely captivating set of live recordings that reads more like *Should've Been Greatest Hits*. Hoekstra's disarming manner, brief inter-song stories, and pithy observations all contribute to the record's intimate atmosphere, as if the concert is taking place in your living room, while the songs are smart, literate compositions that are instantly recognizable as bits of real life..... *Six Songs* is perhaps even more impressive, an eclectic EP with backing band, with a lead song, "Diminishing Returns," that needed to be written in this trifling times. In fact, the underlying political concerns here are spot-on. All in all, worthy additions to Hoekstra's fine canon." (*Pop Culture Press*)

Su Casa Mi Casa – The Official Live Bootleg CD (2005)

"....Chicago export Doug Hoekstra is now based in Nashville, but he spends a great deal of time on the road, sharing narrative images and engaging songs with devoted audiences at home and abroad. Hoekstra's combination of gravity and levity is perfectly captured on the recent *Su Casa Mi Casa*....fans of the acoustic sides of Robyn Hitchcock, the Go-Betweens, and Donovan should take note...." (*The Onion AV Club Madison Wisconsin*)

"...an artist who's kept his hunger and musical strength throughout his entire career, who's becoming, if possible, only better with age." (*Mute Magazine, Norway*)

"Hoekstra says of his songwriting tastes, "I like lyrics that make you feel like you're there, that give you some sense of place -- the wind on your skin, maybe, the way things smell -- almost like cinematic scenes, really." That's the perfect description of his most effective songs: they truly take you places.... And we feel comforted, like a home has been built for us within a song. Maybe that's an apt way to describe the skills of a traveling musician, as building small homes all over the world, and welcoming strangers inside. That's a skill that transcends genre that immediately erases the preconceived notions some of us bring to certain types of music or music audiences. When he's carefully constructing places out of words, and notes, and sounds, Doug Hoekstra stumbles onto something magical, **a genuine secret power music can have.**" (*Dave Heaton, Pop Matters*)

"Guitarist and songwriter, Doug Hoekstra compiles his first album of live gigs in this acoustic little delight. He's a storyteller from start to finish with a gentle voice (soft, yet clinging to an undertone of amusement as he grins with a secret only he knows) with a genuine lust for literate stories played throughout his songs. His songs are a narrative short saga, and filled with sadness underneath the initial humor....Doug's glee abounds with sardonic wit as it's nice to hear a personal live album, because we can see another side. However, he includes some interview pieces and blips revealing a look into a very imaginative and creative side. The way he talks resounds in authenticity making him sound philosophical, intelligent, captivating, and real." (*Corey Graham, CD Review*)

The Live Show (Reviews 2001-4)

Hoekstra continually takes his music to the people, touring throughout the U.S. and Europe, solo, duo, trio or with Combo in hand, doing time at laminate conferences from A2A to CMJ to SXSW, strumming a song on the airwaves on groovy programs such as Acoustic Café, All Songs Considered, BBC (England/Scotland), Live on World Café, WPLN's Songwriter Sessions (Nashville), and more

" *** ... Hoekstra looks more like an alternative music godfather than your middle-of-the-road folkster...in keeping with his appearance, then, the music also strays far beyond the plaintive staples of the genre...his voice is suitably cultured, his guitar playing loaded with the requisite twang, and a passing reference to The Who leads us to understand that he's drawing on a rich vein of influences. **Hoekstra's songs are carefully sculpted, eminently gentle, but with a steely resonance.**" (*David Pollock, Edinburgh Evening News Live at Village, 1/29/04*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



The Live Show (Reviews 2001-4)

"...Hoekstra's quietly perceived reflections on life and society at large belie the fact that he's actually a rather fine showman, seamlessly weaving together stories and observations on current affairs in between songs and **making that vital connection with the audience in the here and now...** Hoekstra's songs live are genuinely moving, but he's at his best when he touches on very American themes and applies them universally - "Birmingham Jail" and "Sam Cooke Sang the Gospel" are particularly strong in this sense and really do create a whole picture in the mind of the listener that you can become wrapped in for four minutes at a time." (*Americana-uk. Liverpool, 2/16/04*)

"This gifted, diverse songwriter is quite an entertainer...proves the unwritten law that a song is best when it stands in a stripped down version" (*Marcel Haerkens, OOR Review, Doug Hoekstra at Theater Lexor, Netherlands, 3/03*)

"Doug Hoekstra's another of those fine contemporary singer-songwriters hovering very much "around the margins" of consumer awareness...his defiantly alternative world-view would seem to stem as much from his Chicago/Illinois upbringing as from an empathy with such diverse flavours of quirky yet evocative Americana narratives as could range from Laurie Anderson to Bruce Springsteen to Lucinda Williams to Leonard Cohen even. See what I mean? - you're none the wiser, so you just gotta hear this guy! And that's why I drove nearly 60 miles of bad road (a notoriously difficult stretch of the beautiful north-west-coast road) in near-darkness in storm-soaked rain that was torrential even by Scottish standards. **Worth all the effort? - you bet!**" (*Dave Kidman, Nethrhythms UK, Live at the Old Inn, Gairloch, 5/24/02*)



"...Extremely personable and charming he set the scene for each song with intelligence and no little humour....you couldn't help but warm to his laid-back style. The content of the songs supplied the strength of the performance. There are no theatrics, the well of passion came from within, musically the tracks are deceptively simple and he alternated between a softer 'speaking' style and the more dramatic. As you would expect they dovetailed neatly with the song's message. (*Berwick Advertiser Live at Barrels' Ale House Review, 10/30/01*)

"Doug Hoekstra doesn't fit easily into an expected genre mold. His songs mix sociopolitical underpinnings into a stew of romantic misadventure...On his albums, Hoekstra allows reasonable and often inventive flourishes to add a layer of drama, mystery and good old-fashioned pop to the very core of his songs. Hearing him live, it was remarkable to hear how organic such touches are to the very core of the songs." (*David Greenberger, Metroland, Live at Valentine's Review, Albany NY, 4/5/01*)

Waiting – The Lo-Fi at Home CD (2003-4 Clips)

"**Doug Hoekstra is one of the true originals**...sometimes the label 'original' denotes weird or difficult, Doug Hoekstra is neither. *Waiting* is the product of an artist who has looked over the fence and describes pretty accurately what is going on in all our lives." (*Michael Mee, Maverick Magazine UK, 3/04*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Waiting – The Lo-Fi at Home CD (2003-4 Clips)

"...Hoekstra's stories mark a high point of literacy and plumb psychological depths unknown to most pop. **Waiting**, the new album, is the most pure statement of Hoekstra's aesthetic yet....the intimacy and the songs linger in the mind. Hoekstra is a master. (*Manchester Metro UK, 1/26/04*)

"...*Waiting*, Hoekstra's fifth solo effort, defies any easy comparisons, as always, Hoekstra opts for the unexpected... elusive and yet somehow irresistible." (*Amplifier Magazine, November/December 2003*).

"Like a musical Eden, the underground's become a hothouse for singer/songwriters, a true embarrassment of riches...Doug Hoekstra has blossomed into an artist to be mentioned alongside Kristin Hersh, Vic Chestnut, Joe Henry, and others that bestow their beauty on this peculiarly personal corner of the musical landscape....Hoekstra has a soft-spoken singing style that rises just above an importuning whisper, shared like a secret above the burbling of his folk-inflected arrangements. Not that you should get the impression his musical constructs are in any way vanilla or simplistic, just gentle and understated in many cases, like the hum of 60s pop hauntingly audible from a distant room....suffused with a reflective softness, a slow, considerate pacing that takes its time surveying its surroundings." (*Big Takeover feature piece, Autumn 2003*)

"...Hoekstra continues to weave intricate stories that united the minutiae of the day to day with wider themes and social commentary....subtlety is the order of the day and few do it better.... we've come to expect such pitch-perfect musings from Hoekstra, **Waiting** is a wholly satisfying, literate listen. (*Matt Dornan, Comes With a Smile UK, Autumn 2003*)

"The songs on *Waiting* belie a deep intimacy, warm personality and also a laid-back tension, as if Hoekstra can be heard palpably awaiting the birth of his child. It is what gives the album its depth and clarity... Hoekstra is a wonderfully developed songwriter. He fleshes out his acoustic guitar-based compositions with clever, inventive instrumentation that incorporates sitar, keyboards, electronic and acoustic percussion, vintage organ sounds and more. The songs that result are living, breathing entities that reveal Hoekstra's profound melodicism, nascent melancholy and concise lyricism...for comparisons, one would instantly reference the melancholy, late-night musings of Elliott Smith and Nick Drake, although without the depression or self-indulgence of either. Hoekstra's voice instantly brings to mind Lou Reed's, albeit less cynical, and at times approaches James Taylor's mastery of phrasing. **The songs, with their emotional clarity and intelligence, have already put Hoekstra on a pedestal with those artists.**" (*David Coonce, Bloomington Herald-Times, 10/23/03*)

"Just like always, **one of the best albums of the year** comes quietly and without fanfare. Stripped down to the bare essentials, Doug Hoekstra's new disc cuts right to the essence of the songs. Deep, sometimes dark thoughts are softened with hazy, dreamy melodies and are balanced with an unfettered romanticism. Somehow, Hoekstra finds a way to softly and insistently discuss love, survival and belief without ever coming across as sappy or unrealistic....this is what makes the album so real, so bittersweet and so relatable. This is one man's universal heart in all its fragile, imperfect glory captured on disc." (*Chris McKay, Flaggpole, 10/8/03*)

" *** 1/2 - The somewhat different folk songs from Doug Hoekstra creep up quietly, at first glance about as volatile as the spark of reality vainly sought by the protagonist of *Blow Beautiful Dreams*. But their affect lingers longer. On his fifth album, the Nashville based avant-garde practitioner of Americana embeds his lightly swinging melodies in the form of a minimalist, happily detailed home recording..." (*Rolling Stone Germany, 10/03*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Waiting – The Lo-Fi at Home CD (2003-4 Clips)

" *** just as vital is the fifth solo outing from avant-folkateer, Ohio-born Doug Hoekstra.. The self-produced *Waiting* is another highly literate affair, less flamboyant than previous, string-laden albums, but still pulling off the enviable feat of sounding lean and intimate while employing church bells, sitar, mellotron and keyboard loops. In particular, the spare "In The Middle Of The Night" and "Sunday Blues" are exceptional..." (*Uncut Magazine*, 10/03)

"**Doug Hoekstra, the crown prince of contemporary Brit-leaning pastoral folk-pop**, has made his most intimate and attentive album to date...Hoekstra remains a truly original voice among today's singer-songwriters, one of folk music's most vibrant and imaginative artists..." (*Stein Haukland, Ink 19*, 9/19/03)

" *Waiting* is state-of-the-art Hoekstra. The songs are meticulously crafted, detailed vignettes, filled with moments that could easily be depicted by a cinematographer or rendered in miniature by an assemblage artist...where previous discs were augmented with horns and gospel choirs, *Waiting* was recorded without adornment in Hoekstra's home studio, putting further emphasis on his modest and imaginative song arrangements...**a songwriter's songwriter.**" (*Philip Van Vleck, CMJ Music Monthly*, 9/03)

"**** ...*Waiting* is as sonically riveting as the finest works of Van Dyke Parks and as lyrically confident as the best of what the often misused term singer/songwriter should offer...Hoekstra has made a huge leap forward, one which hopefully finds him the wider audience he so fully deserves. (*James Cassara, Rapid River Asheville NC*, 9/03)

"To call Doug Hoekstra a folksinger simply misses the point. His tangled tales of intimacy and emotion are wrapped in the most unlikely arrangements -- fragile one moment, tumultuous the next... **Waiting**, Hoekstra's fifth solo effort, defies any easy comparisons. As always, Hoekstra opts for the unexpected...lo-fi, elusive and yet somehow irresistible." (*Lee Zimmerman, Goldmine Magazine*, 9/5/03)

"...the music is hushed, filled with subtleties that reveal themselves in their own good time. The emotion is there....sometimes it feels as if the album actually is waiting, lingering a couple of blocks behind while we learn to slow down..." (*Jeffrey Lee Puckett, Louisville Courier-Journal*, 8/8/03)

"... *Waiting*, this year's tender **12-track masterpiece**....what Hoekstra does so well is take the things we aren't always so aware of and makes them into the things we wish we'd known all along." (*Virtual Brighton*, 8/03)

"... *Waiting's* stories and sketches straddle the forms of elliptical fiction and informed, intellectualized commentary and establishes them as metaphors of the genre...the concept crackles." (*Noel Murray, The Onion*, 7/16/03)

" *** ...*Waiting* offers evidence that (Hoekstra) is adding new dimensions to his roster of story-songs that reflect the milestones of life with prophetic grace." (*Mary Houlihan, Chicago Sun-Times*, 7/13/03)

" **** ...Americana's answer to Oscar Wilde (in terms of literary genius, not being gay and imprisoned), **Hoekstra's fifth studio record is mesmerising, both musically and lyrically.**" (*Mark Whitfield, Americana-UK*, 7/03)

"Nashville's quiet, mighty troubadour rocks again! **Hoekstra is one of the most original and self-assured writers in Music City**, he's not taking his cues from anybody..." (*Frank Goodman, Pure Music Nashville*, 7/03)

"...*Waiting* is best summed up as the folk album T.S. Eliot, Charles Bukowski and F. Scott Fitzgerald never got together to make with Brian Wilson..." (*Mike Davies, Netrhythms UK*, 7/03)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



The Past is Never Past – The Odds and Sods Collection (2002 Clips)

"Hoekstra's odds and sods, this album hangs together so well that it's as vital as his regular releases -- which themselves place him **among the best unheralded songwriters**." (*Big Takeover*, 12/02)

"*The Past is Never Past* is an airy, minimalist, reflective album that has a clean summery feel, and because Hoekstra is such a 'one of,' the songs fall easy on the ear without being in any way 'easy listening'. *The Past is Never Past* comes across as even more interesting than the very well received *Around the Margins*." (*Get Rhythm*, UK, 8/02)

" Hoekstra issued the excellent *Around the Margins* last year; this import-only collection represents that album's leftovers plus songwriting demos and odds 'n' sods. Yet far from being throwaway material, it's comparable to Steve Earle's recent *Sidetracks*: stylistically diverse, at times quirky, but still essential for fans. The singer-songwriter's burnished whisper remains a recognizable calling card in any context.... Hoekstra's newly revealed chameleonic side is an unruly, inelegant and altogether charming affair." (*Spectator Magazine*, NC, 7/10/02)

"...infuses his melodic, vaguely off-kilter songs with evocative, near-filmic narratives along with a strong sense of character, place and humour. Hoekstra's music is considered spontaneous, literate, but never ostentatious – the kind of artist who steam cleans the sullied crown of the singer/songwriter." (*Paul Whitelaw*, *Glasgow Metro*, 5/28/02)

The Past is Never Past – The Odds and Sods Collection (2002 Clips)

" **** this Nashville singer-songwriter might just prove to be **the musical discovery of the week**. Hoekstra mines memories of his upbringing in Chicago's suburbs – vignettes about discovering his brother's record collection, chance meetings while riding the train to the city and simple acts of kindness, all capturing a lifetime in three minutes." (*Phil Mather*, *Big Issue in the North UK Picks*, 5/18/02)

Alt-country artistes may sing of the desert and prairie, literally and metaphorically, but the genre is a crowded field. It's a treat, then, when someone genuinely original comes along. Hoekstra's just such a maverick...his poetic, poignant but far from po-faced lyrics, knock his competitors into a Stetson hat. **A legend waiting to happen.**" (*Joe Cushley*, *What's On London*, 5/15/02)

"Doug Hoekstra is a harmonica-wielding Nashville man whose music vacillates between folkie stuff and more left-field sound experiments...he clearly sings with his mind." (*Time Out New York Critics Pick*, 5/2/02)

" ***1/2 (out of 4) - Ever versatile, his arrangement skills present traditional Twang in a new way...colleagues have drawn comparisons from Beck to Leonard Cohen. My proposal: Forget comparisons, listen to this record." (*Joerg Feyer*, *German Rolling Stone review of The Past is Never Past*, 4/02)

"Singer-songwriter Hoekstra's acute story-songs and witheringly detailed character sketches made up not one but two of last year's strongest releases, *Around the Margins* and the rarities compilation *The Past is Never Past*." (*Jim Ridley*, *Nashville Scene Picks*, 1/31/02)

"It should be pointed out if you've not come across Doug Hoekstra at all yet that not only have you missed out on a genius for years, but that you may not realise you have. Surprisingly, despite the creativity that goes into his studio outings, it's live where he clicks. Still, if you needed a contemporary introduction to his material, you wouldn't expect a collection of tracks and out-takes that didn't quite make it on to a full album to be a good place to start. "*The Past is Never Past*" is exactly such a collection but works so well that it comes across as almost a complete concept album in itself...**a remarkable album** given its diverse origins - thoroughly recommended." (*Americana-UK*, 11/3/01)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Around the Margins – The Independent Music Award Nominated CD (2001-2)

"Hoekstra's near whisper of a voice rides above a musical carpet in which a diverse set of styles are mixed together to form the 'Hoekstra-Sound'...a consistently impressive palette." (*Michel Kleff, Folker! Germany, 11/02*)

"Hoekstra stands out as a voice unafraid to push the boat into sparkling new waters." (*Claire Allfree, London Metro Critics Picks, 10/30/01*)

"This Nashville-based singer/songwriter writes in an elegant and emotional fashion on life's rich pageant. His touching music develops gently, while avoiding cliché country motifs, enhanced by wispy, understated vocals and a dry style." (*Stephen Mitchell, London Evening Standard Critics Picks, 10/30/01*)

"Superb Nashville-based but Chicago-born singer-songwriter with a tasty line in slow-burning melody and subtly affecting songcraft...warm and worldly, dirty, real and poignant fare." (*Time Out London Critics Pick, 10/24/01*)

"Hoekstra is **a remarkably eclectic and fluent performer**, able to turn his hand to the blues, country, pop, rock, folk and gospel, and to flow seemingly effortlessly, sometimes several times in the same song, from one of these genres to another." (*John Clarkson, Pennyblackmusic UK, 10/24/01*)

"**Around the Margins** is a subtly beautiful collection of hushed story-songs...Hoekstra never takes the singer/songwriter path most traveled." (*Jim Walsh, St. Pioneer-Press MN, 8/29/01*)

"*****1/2** (out of 4) - Hoekstra, who has recorded three other albums of smart, quirky modern folk music, has this time made **a musical statement that ranks with the year's best**...occasionally you find yourself admiring Hoekstra more than actually enjoying him, but respect will do when the material is this joyfully new and challenging." (*Mark Jordan, Memphis Commercial Appeal, 8/18/01*)

"We had to wait two years for the follow-up to *Make Me Believe*, the record that made us call him the **godfather of narrative alternative folk**....now *Around the Margins* appears, a headstrong, experimental, but not less worthwhile product...it slowly gives away its pleasures and secrets...." (*Bruno DeY, Roots Town Belgium, 8/01*)

"*Around The Margins*, stays true to its title...it stretches the imagination through arrangements that race from fragile and genteel to barely controlled chaos...it is in every way a magical and commanding listening experience, a telling of well-crafted stories that makes equal use of the freedom of imagination and the more earthbound tenets of a well-schooled intellect." (*Ed Bumgardner, Winston-Salem-Journal, 7/13/01*)

"*** - "a listening experience that is constantly unsettling, yet rewarding...he is writing songs that don't sound like anyone else's, and he has produced an album that illuminates his strengths as a gifted lyrical craftsman and a sonic frontiersman." (*Peter Cooper, Tennessean, Nashville, 6/4/01*)

"...**indefinably rare**...reaches an artistic level that probably surprises Hoekstra himself...by seeking out eclectic territories that aren't hewn in by your typical singer-songwriter barbed wire while maintaining a solid narrative focus and melodic sensibility -- Hoekstra defies the common wisdom that says practitioners of his chosen genre will forever be destined for the coffee-house and bookstore circuit...a role model for the next generation of up-and-comers." (*Fred Mills, Phoenix New Times, 5/10/01*)

"**** - every song leaves me at the edge of my seat...masterpiece." (*Leo Kramer, Heaven, Netherlands, 5/01*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Around the Margins – The Independent Music Award Nominated CD (2001-2)

"**A neo-classic troubadour, bard for a new century.**" (*Allison King, ESP, Greensboro NC, 3/28/01*)

"Nashville-based, roots-oriented rocker Doug Hoekstra reaffirms his place as one of the most quirkily innovative tunesmiths in that city of songwriters with his newest offering, *Around the Margins*...clear that his talent is anything but marginal." (*Drew Wheeler, CDNow Featured Review, 5/01*)

"*Around the Margins* is a blend of acoustic instruments and electronic smarts that yields a sound that's strictly Hoekstra...his musical persona is firmly in place." (*Billboard Full Page Feature 3/10/01*)

"He's not the next Dylan, he's the first Doug Hoekstra, and that should be enough, if history is just" (*Jason Nickey, Bloomington Herald-Times*)

"In an ideal world Hoekstra would be listened to by folk enthusiasts, middle American mainstreamers, retro-heads, and indie-land purists...fifteen years ago, he'd have been heralded the next Dylan or Springsteen." (*All Music Guide*)

Make Me Believe - The First U.S./Europe Release (1999)

"A haunting, compelling, imaginative outing...Hoekstra could easily become one of the most talked about artists in modern music." -- (*Goldmine, December 1999*)

"Hoekstra just may be the **saviour of folk music.**" -- (*ESP Magazine, NC*)

"*Make Me Believe* is the most **inventive, brave and downright quirky** folk album in ages." -- (*Revolutions UK, London, October 1999*)

"Hoekstra is a superb singer-songwriter and ***Make Me Believe*** is a work of warm and worldly, dirty, real and poignant fare. -- (*Time Out London Critic's Pick, October 1999*)

"Hoekstra's "songwriting, whether in broad grooves or ephemeral harmonies, has a knack for **fascinating**...Hoekstra spins tales on *Make Me Believe* with such **idiosyncratic skill**, listeners may find their disbelief quite willingly suspended." (*Drew Wheeler, CD Now, Summer 1999 and Top 10 Folk/Blues CDs of 1999*)

Hoekstra is "**the bridge between Springsteen, Dylan, Leonard Cohen, and Ray Davies**...a joy today given that so many artists sell out before they sell." (*CD Spectrum, Summer 1999*)

Hoekstra is "an exceptionally literate and talented songwriter...*Make Me Believe* is a fine album...(his) continued explorations bode well for his fans." Hoekstra's songwriting "has a knack for being riveting," (*The Big Takeover, Summer 1999*)

Make Me Believe is a "**remarkable record** and...fine, unforgettable listen." (*The All-Music Guide, Summer 1999*)

"*Make Me Believe* is an intriguing album that will surprise anyone expecting a typical singer/songwriter album, and charm anyone with its **Pop artfulness and organic grace.**" (*City Beat, 7/1/99*)

...."**a very original record**..."I don't know exactly where Doug Hoekstra has been hiding all these years, but he's learned a few things. Listen to a few of them on *Make Me Believe.*" (*Ink 19, 6/99*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Make Me Believe - The First U.S./Europe Release (1999)

"...never short of being **completely believable** on every line he delivers" (*Metroland, Albany NY, 5/5/99*)

"the man really knows how to write" (*Cleveland Plain-Dealer, 5/99*)

"...something sympathetic and **terribly honest** about his tale-weaving." (*Icon, Iowa City, 2/99*)

"...the combination of his eccentric, whispery vocals, his jangly acoustic, the poetic lyrics, and the trip-hop touches will make anyone who hears this album a believer." (*Isiah Trost, Guitar World Acoustic, 5/99*)

Hoekstra is like "**Lou Reed without all the chemical enhancements and deviant themes...these aren't just songs, they're little sonic and emotional experiences.**" (*Cleveland-Free Times, 5/99*)

"Like all great artists, Hoekstra continues to challenge himself, meet the test and then challenge himself again. Every album he releases eclipses his previous best. *Make Me Believe* is no exception." (*Durham-Herald-Sun, 4/16/99*).

***1/2 star review - "Hoekstra consistently keeps things **elegant, pretty, winsome**...makes me believe that there is still room for stories about people." (St. Paul Pioneer-Press, 4/4/99)

"his playing as well as his songwriting have matured and progressed to a level that makes me wonder why we're not hearing him on the radio. 'Sam Cooke Sang the Gospel' is certainly better than 9/10 of what is being played over the air these days." (*Nightflying, Little Rock, 4/99*)

"*Make Me Believe* is "a testament to faith, both in oneself and in the redemptive power of music...it further marks Hoekstra as **one of Nashville's finest songwriters** - a messenger of complex and intricately woven narratives...few songwriters can so easily bring their world into ours." (*Rapid River Asheville NC 3/99*)

Hoekstra's powerful and compelling album *Make Me Believe* has moved me like no other singer-songwriter effort has in a long time...a **singular and classic album.**" (*Outsight, Detroit Michigan, 3/99*)

Hoekstra has "produced a **formidable, seminal disc** which shows a way forward at a time when the sheer weight of singer-songwriter discs being released suggests a paucity of ideas." (*Flyin' Shoes UK 3/99*)

Hoekstra "**the godfather of the narrative alternative folk**" (*Roots Town Magazine, Belgium ,3/99*)

Make Me Believe is Hoekstra's "finest work to date," touching on arrangements, production and storytelling sensibilities that "straddle the space between Lou Reed and Leonard Cohen's dark narratives and Ray Davies' more melancholy pop." (*Billboard Magazine, 3/99*)

Both artists "strive to **expand the possibilities of what can be achieved in a four-minute songs**; both display an intelligent, incisive flair for avoiding contrivances and cliches; and both take fundamentally acoustic-based music and turn it into something unique." (*Nashville Scene 3/4/99 dual article on Hoekstra and David Olney*)

Hoekstra's "music is rooted in the singer/songwriter tradition, the arrangement and atmosphere of each song takes it to an entirely new realm...from beginning to end, *Make Me Believe* is a satisfying collection of first-rate songs." (*Album Network, 2/12/99*)

Doug Hoekstra Press Quotes



Make Me Believe - The First U.S./Europe Release (1999)

Hoekstra's *Make Me Believe* "draws from the classics of art and literature," that he "creates **hip, outre folk music.**" (*Tennessean, Nashville, 1-28-99*)

Hoekstra "writes literate lyrics without a hint of pretension, and *Make Me Believe* plays like a classic short-story collection where **every component is a handcrafted jewel** that can stand alone or exist comfortably beside its contrasting neighbors" (*Memphis Flyer, 2/5/99*)

"On *Make Me Believe*, Hoekstra seems **out to redefine the notion of a singer-songwriter album**...chord changes are unusual...dark emotional lyrics...production is downright **visionary**...*Make Me Believe* is like nothing you've heard before." (*The Muze, Tower Records site, 1999*)

Getting tired pulling quotes, but here's just a short sample from the very early years, shout outs to some sadly defunct but important zines of their time...

Rickety Stairs - Nashville Music Award Best Folk Album of the Year Finalist (1996)

"A breathy folk flaneur, this Chicago-gone-Nashville writes dirty-realist story songs that usually begin and end in quiet acceptance. Hoekstra's expanding his musical palette into funkier and more worldly areas, but at heart, he's still a well-spoken back-porch strummer full of **bittersweetly tuneful observations.**" (*Richard Gehr, Village Voice*)

"**** Rickety Stairs is a **compelling journey** through the fringes of society with a tour guide who knows his terrain." (*New Country*)

"**** spare, vivid narratives delivered with quiet confidence and holistic musicality, **one of the year's nicest singer/songwriter surprises.**" (*Tower Pulse*)

When the Tubes Begin to Glow (1994)

"A genuine find - a low-key, deliberately minimalist modern folk record that combines the instrumental eccentricity of recent Tom Waits with the hushed intimacy of early Nick Drake without sounding like either of them, let alone anybody else you can put your finger on. **Original and very impressive.**" (*Steve Simels, Stereo Review Sound & Vision*)