

## **February 2014 – Live Show Review, New Haven MO, Riverfront Cultural Society**

*“Grifters & Shills singer/songwriters John and Rebecca Stoll have a way of pulling you in like a slow moving stream and moving you on to the wellspring of music –that original and bountiful source of something you thought you already knew.*

*I don't think I've ever heard people at a show asking when the short break would be over so they could get more of what Grifters & Shills can offer up. We have a lot of musicians from all over the US make their impressions here, but on this particular night we couldn't wait to see what else was in store. And the duo did not miss the opportunity to take us over the top to the very end of the show.*

*There've been duos that can put out a full sound, and some that just give it to you straight up, but even if you didn't close your eyes, you would swear there were more band mates on that stage. And maybe there were...the souls of the great roots musicians did seem to be channeling through. ”*

– Janelle Hoffmann, Riverfront Cultural Society

## **Popa's Tunes – Review of ‘Trainwreck Junkyard’**

Popa talks about Grifters & Shills' album ‘Trainwreck Junkyard’. Review published July 21, 2013.

*“Grifters & Shills Trainwreck Junkyard EP features Rebecca's enchanting twang and tight harmonies with John over the impressive strings of John's multi-instrumentation create a feel good porch stomper sound as warm and filling as a plate of mashed taters and gravy...”* – Popa

Full text of the review is here: <http://popatunes.blogspot.com/2013/07/grifters-shills-trainwreck-junkyard.html>

(Please note, 'Grifters & Shills' was previously known as 'Westbound')

## **Family Reunion Country – Review of ‘Now & Then’**

Cousin JD, from Family Reunion Country, talks about Westbound's album ‘Now & Then’. Published July 18, 2012.

*“...While Nashville and Austin fight over the face of Country music, Westbound beautifully represents the heart of Country. Without overdoing production or attitude, Westbound gets right to the essence of the music. With an organic sound that seems to bubble up from the earth itself and flow clear and pure as a mountain stream, Now & Then is a trip in time to the very beginnings of American music. Like T Bone Burnett's masterful production of the Oh Brother Where Art Thou soundtrack, Now & Then represents a time and place before mass communication, when singing was only done by those with something to say...”* – Cousin JD, Family Reunion Country

Full text of the review is here: <http://familyreunioncountry.blogspot.com/2012/07/album-of-week-now-then-by-westbound.html>

## Bay Area Houston Magazine – Interview and Live Performance

Zach Tate, with Bay Area Houston Magazine, interviewed Westbound in the late summer of 2011.

*“It would be easy to overlook Rebecca Ferguson and John Stoll’s solid songwriting (performing as Westbound) in the wake of Stoll’s frenetic guitar playing and stomp-box fervor and Ferguson’s electric vocals. Behind the fury of this roots Americana inspired duo are two people winding their way down life’s whiskey roads and heartbreak hills, churning out great songs along the way. As they write in the liner notes of their latest CD Blackjack Road: ‘We hope that you enjoy this journey with us, with the windows down and the music loud, and the road wide open ahead.’...”* – Zach Tate, Bay Area Houston Magazine

Full text of the interview is here: <http://www.baygroupmagazines.com/index.php/noshowlatest/226-westbound-1-12>

## Reviews of ‘Blackjack Road’

*“This is an absolutely great CD, and an amazing debut for these two young musicians. It’s a mix of fast, hard-driving songs, many with some wickedly witty lyrics, and soft romantic ballads. Their sound is fantastic—it’s hard to believe, on some of these songs, that it comes from just two: Rebecca Ferguson on lead vocals, and John Stoll doing the entire instrumental support, plus back-up vocals. Some of the fast songs, like track 3, “Makin’ Time,” have an incredible, complex driving rhythm that reminds me somewhat of the early Allman Brothers Band, although that band used two lead guitars and a bass to create its sound, and Stoll does it all by himself. And with her husky voice, and the way she sings with all-out intensity, Ms. Ferguson reminds me quite a lot of Janis Joplin.”* – Amazon.com

*“Watch out for this duo- they are going right to the top. Each song opens up a whole new world with haunting lyrics and impeccable vocals. I fell in love with this album and you will too. Bravo!”* – iTunes

*“Westbound is a two person band from Texas, that has found a niche in a mix of americana, southern rock, root rock and a hint of blues. I was a little skeptical when I first saw that there were only just two members in the band, but when you listen to their music you can not tell a difference. This made a refreshing sound when compared to other artist in similar genres. I am a fan of country music and would like to see more and more artist go back to their roots as these two did and remake a sound that everyone loves...”* – Jason Babiuch, Project Backstage. Full text available here:

<http://www.projectbackstage.com/2011/03/21/westbound-blackjack-road-review/>

*““No one is immune you know I’ve seen it spreading all over town, there’s a bad case of fine tastin’ whiskey chasin’ fever goin’ around”. Okay, she is no doctor, but she plays one in this song. As Rebecca Ferguson, who with John Stoll makes up Westbound, cranks open the recent release with the above hook; you know she is playing for keeps. Her vocals grab a hold as frenetic acoustic guitar chords flutter and fly.”* – Danny McCloskey, The Alternate Root – The Online Source for Roots Music

## Space City Rock – Interview

Robin Babb, of the Houston-based publication Space City Rock, conducted an interview with Westbound in March, 2011.

*“Westbound is the hard-rocking duo of Rebecca Ferguson and John Stoll, who released their debut album, Blackjack Road, last year. You can catch up with them on their website and on their Facebook page...”* – Robin Babb, Space City Rock. Full text available here:

<http://www.spacecityrock.com/2011/03/26/caroline-sessions-interview-3-featherface-and-westbound/>