

the dog

The newest recorded effort by veteran, Knoxville, Tenn.-based songwriter is a mad squall of rock energy and gimlet-eyed optimism that could only be produced by a man who's still young-at-heart enough to believe in possibilities, but wise enough to know that things rarely turn out the way you expect.

In short, it's vintage Tim Lee.

The third solo outing since he made his return to recording with 2001's primarily acoustic *Under the House*, finds Lee re-exploring some of the same fuzzed-up sonic ground he trod with 2004's *No Discretion*.

Like its predecessor, *Concrete Dog* finds Lee again working with drummer/producer **Don Coffey Jr.**, and bassist/wife **Susan Bauer Lee**.

And as with *No Discretion*, Lee again ventured into Coffey's Knoxville-based **Independent Recorders** and **Money Shot** studios in Water Valley, Miss., to lay down tracks. And, on the recommendation of **Steve Wynn**, Lee also cut "Greyhound from Jackson" at **Wave Lab** in Tucson, Ariz., with producer **Craig Schumacher** manning the boards.

"Like most things I do, there was no pre-planned idea," he explained. "I just started recording songs as they came up, and as time passed, it started to take shape."

Unlike Lee's previous recording, the band that made *No Discretion* is much different from the one that convened to produce *Concrete Dog*. This combo, with the addition of guitarist **Greg Horne**, has logged the miles, playing bar after bar across the American Southeast and beyond, where it gelled into a seasoned unit. And it shows.

"With my wife playing bass and co-writing, and my best friend playing drums and co-producing I've got a more permanent group that encourages me and works with me," Lee said. "It just makes it more fun."

Concrete Dog also finds Lee opening the songwriting shop to include frequent contributions from Susan, and, with the title track, a rare full-band composition.

"One day, Susan put some lyrics on my desk that ended up being the first verse of 'Real Bad Habit,'" Lee recalled. "When I got around to looking at them, the song came together very quickly.

"A lot of these songs – including 'Get



Bruce Newman

tim lee

Lee has created another musical masterpiece that ranks up there with the best works of Chris Stamey, Mitch Easter, and even Alex Chilton. Yes, it's that good.

—John Sewell
MetroPulse

Concrete Dog finds the slightly sardonic, supremely Southern pop songsmith at the top of his game.

—Carey Miller
Clarion Ledger

Up,' 'Dead Guy Story,' and 'Half Life' – came from her original ideas," he added. "I was just lucky enough to have the opportunity to finish them."

The aficionados know the **Tim Lee** story. But, for the neophytes, it bears repeating nonetheless.

In the 1980s, Lee was one-half of fabled Southern poppers The Windbreakers, one of the great coulda-

been stories of the college radio era. Along with songwriting foil **Bobby Sutiliff**, The Windbreakers produced four gorgeous and underappreciated records.

The fans swooned. The critics loved them. Naturally, they didn't sell. So Lee and Sutiliff packed up their tents at the dawn of the 1990s. Though they've ceased to exist as a recording entity, Lee and Sutiliff do periodic live shows under The Windbreakers' banner and turned out a best-of collection *Time Machine* (Paisley Pop, 2003).

But even as The Windbreakers spent the 1980s barnstorming across the country in support of their own releases, Lee kept busy on his own. With **Rain Parade** guitarist **Matt Piucci**, he turned out *Gone Fishin'*, and with ex-**Nurses/Half-Japanese** **Howard Wuelfing**, there was *Paid Vacation*.

There were also brace of solo records, but for most of the 1990s, Lee remained silent.

In 2001, he broke his silence with *Under the House*. It was, Lee said, "like learning to walk again."

So, here it is, *Concrete Dog* – proof positive that **Dylan Thomas** was right: There is just no reason to go gently into that good night.

Tim Lee sure isn't.

—John Micek

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