



Billboard Picks - Album Picks

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Ghosts

New York-based Irishman Mark Geary, a recent finalist in Disc Makers' Independent Music World Series (of which Billboard is a sponsor), offers an outstanding sophomore release in "Ghosts." His obscurity should end here: With sparse but superlative meditations like "Beautiful," "You're the Only Girl," the pretty lullaby "Mid-nite Sun" and the nearly nine-minute "Hold Tight," Geary's songwriting and delivery recall such top contemporary practitioners as Ron Sexsmith. "Ghosts" also evokes Van Morrison, particularly his early-1970s era. Perhaps most satisfying about the album is that such a project can be released in 2005 at all—apart from occasional drum programming, these are fully organic, natural-sounding recordings; vocoder, synthesizers and other sound manipulators need not apply. "Ghosts" is a collection of superb songs delivered with a quiet intensity that will endear itself to listeners.—CW

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