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Critic's Choice

Peter Mac

Tightly Wrapped (Rockit)

Prolific guitarist and Milwaukee native Peter Mac admits he may never have strayed from his classical and jazz piano training to the plugged-in six-string he so confidently brandishes today without the heavy influence of J. Hendrix. Since then, Mac has led notable local bands—the Converters, Streetlife (the Milwaukee Bucks house band)—with his refined technical skills and moody style. Recently released from local label Rockit Records, his recent instrumental solo endeavor, *Tightly Wrapped*, showcases a 12-track lineup rife with edgy guitar riffs and jazz-infused, progressive rock sounds honed from two decades of fiery electric string play.

From the lighter jazz, infected with intricate guitar arrangements, of the first track, “In Sleep,” to the more heavy-metal sound, reminiscent of his second solo album, in “Twang This,” Mac mixes classic rock, bluesy jazz roots and aggressive hooks throughout the disc. “Mary’s Song” brings out Mac’s Stevie Ray Vaughan side, while “Pastel Doorway” carries a more Latin blues feel. The latest in a six-disc solo career, *Tightly Wrapped* satisfies listeners’ thirst for diversity in his career and proves Mac’s finger-to-fret abilities are gaining speed.

-Matt Richter