



# Sun209

## The Americana Music Journal

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Posted by *Ken Paulson*

## Review: Jason Boland & the Stragglers



*Rancho Alto*, the new album from Jason Boland and the Stragglers, offers up traditional country music with a contemporary perspective.

Although comparisons to George Strait and Merle Haggard are inevitable and appropriate, Boland also brings to mind a young Gordon Lightfoot, combining traditional sounds with a resonant voice and a strong sense of narrative.

There are stories laced throughout *Rancho Alto*, from the trapped miner in "Down Here in the Hole" to the sweet sentiments of "Mary Ellen's Greenhouse."

The songs are strong throughout, particularly the final two tracks.

"Forever Together Again" should be the last dance at the roadhouse, a "Tennessee Waltz" for a new generation: "Singers and dancers, late night romancers, good-timin' cowboys and girls are looking for trouble through tiny beer bubbles that burst when they hit the real world."

The closer is Greg Jacobs' "Farmer's Luck, a song about a man who is about to lose his farm to a recreational lake project. It's a stirring work, somehow melding heartbreak and eminent domain.

**OCTOBER 31, 2011 AT 5:15 PM**

[...] The album was produced by Dave Percival and Lloyd Maines at Austin's Yellow Dog Studios (formerly based in Tulsa). "If Boland could find a place on the radio, there might be hope for country music yet." – Jeff McCord (Texas Monthly) "Rancho Alto is another in a consistent line of great records that Jason Boland and the Stragglers have made dating back to their Pearl Snaps debut." – Brad Beheler (Galleywinter) "Although comparisons to George Strait and Merle Haggard are inevitable and appropriate, Boland also brings to mind a young Gordon Lightfoot, combining traditional sounds with a resonant voice and a strong sense of narrative." – Kay Paulson (Sun209) [...]