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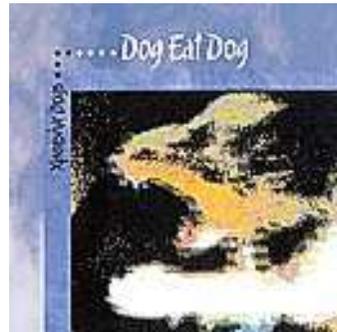
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LISTENING ROOM

XPENSIVE DOGS

Dog Eat Dog [Rokit Records]



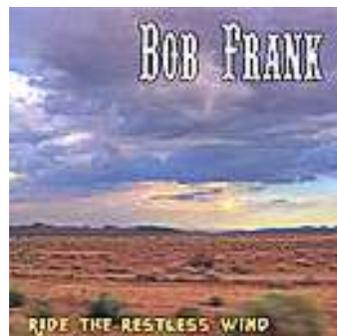
Ten years ago, **Gary Tanin** of Xpensive Dogs was among one of those who relied purely on the internet to create music. Never meeting Japanese musician **Toshiyuki Hiraoka**, the two traded music files on the net to create the Dogs' debut release.

The years have certainly honed Tanin's craft - the

production is exquisite and the performance solid.

The album opens promisingly. The instrumental title track, with its glimmering guitar, would do any surf movie proud. **Hell**, with its "this is the place" and "psycho killer" phrasing, and **Flowers Grow**, with its Latin rhythm, both recall the Talking Heads. However, it is tracks like **Sacrifice**, **Pinocchio** and **The World Has Gone Insane** - with their bouncy beat, crafty wordplay and, not to mention, the album's all-star cast - that put the Dogs down the evolutionary path that included bands such as Was (Not Was). Now that Tanin has exorcised some of those ghosts that might have dogged him, perhaps he would like to consider a full-fledged surf album as his next project - after all, the man has a twang that just won't go away. **(7)** - **Stephen Tan**

Note: Visit www.rockitrecordsusa.com to order the album.



BOB FRANK

Ride The Restless Wind [Bowstring Records]

A much more assured outing than his last album, Pledge of Allegiance (2004), Bob Frank's new Ride The Restless Wind goes down the countrified singer-songwriter road. It features a full band including fiddle player Gabe Witcher (who plays with Merle Haggard), multi-guitarist Jim Monahan and others who bring out the melodies in Frank's love songs.

While one wishes that Frank's voice had that special spark to carry the songs to another level, the songs themselves, Cup of Wine and Within A Few Degrees, prove his future as a songwriter. **(5)** - **Philip Cheah**

Note: Visit <http://www.bobfranksongs.com/pages/shopping.html> to order the CD.