

TRAIN WRECK IN GM
HOUSTON JONES AT MCGRATHS PUB
FEBRUARY 16, 2007



Checked into McGrath's to see how our boys Houston Jones were faring. At the early hour of 8, we found the place packed to SRO. Travis was comfortable and self-assured as usual in that space, while preserving that endearing sense of stage self-deprecation which makes us love him all the more.

That evening was a run-through of largely instrumental items to appear on their next CD, now in the can and expected end of March.

All of the new stuff is quite good, most notably a number called "Big Red", which has that progressive build-up of all instruments to cumulative crescendo reminiscent of "Train Wreck in Gmajor", which the ensemble closed out the evening as encore, including an impish "Garrymore" in the middle.



One of the audience members commented that the group appears to be moving into the realm of jazz and away from the pure John Fogerty styled "Americana". Chojo Jacques appeared with his unique mandolin and violin skills and he appeared ready and able to insert himself as an ensemble player rather than a superstar, although his credits could certainly put his name up in lights. Henry Salvia provided some magnificent comping on the keyboards for several songs with a Henry Butler/ Marcia Ball feel, and -- all band members are multi-

instrumentalists -- took up the electric squeeze box for a tasty cajun romp. Travis stepped back with his Gibson to play largely rhythm, bringing his well-tuned vocal pipes up for the old standards later in the evening. As usual at McGrath's, which the band regards as a kind of home base, the final two sets featured requests from the audience.



By midnight, when the band retired, the whole place rose up in standing ovation bring the boys back for a couple more.

If you have not heard Houston Jones live, you have not yet lived.