

Dane Donohue's "L.A. Rainbow" Shines Bright in His Miraculous Return to AOR

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It's been 46 years since the world last heard from Dane Donohue, the enigmatic AOR singer-songwriter whose self-titled 1978 debut became a cult classic among West Coast music aficionados. Now, against all odds, Donohue returns with "L.A. Rainbow", a shimmering new album that reaffirms his legacy while sounding as fresh as any contemporary Yacht Rock revivalist could hope to achieve.

Released on Sony Music Entertainment's Legacy Recordings label, with P-VINE Records handling the Japanese market, "L.A. Rainbow" stands as a testament to Donohue's timeless artistry and a genre that continues to evolve decades after its heyday. Working with co-producer John H. Nixon, whose band Page 99 played a significant role in the album's creation, Donohue has crafted a collection of songs that seamlessly blend past and present, recalling the golden age of West Coast soft rock while embracing the polish and precision of modern production.

"After 45 years, this is the first time I've recorded something that feels as good as my 1978 album," Donohue said in his in-depth interview for Goldmine – The Music Collector's Magazine, expressing the joy of his long-awaited return to the studio. Indeed, "L.A. Rainbow" captures that same breezy, sun-drenched spirit of his Columbia debut, with lush harmonies, soulful melodies, and crisp arrangements that evoke the finest elements of the AOR sound.

The album's title track is a standout—a sprawling, cinematic ode to Los Angeles, drenched in nostalgia and shimmering instrumentation that brings to mind the city's golden coastlines and hazy sunsets. With Nixon's deft production, the song feels both timeless and current, bridging the gap between Donohue's original sound and the new wave of Yacht Rock torchbearers like Young Gun Silver Fox and Page 99.

A major highlight of the album is the participation of Scandinavian AOR star Ole Børud, who lends his smooth vocals and guitar work to two tracks. Børud's contributions, along with Nixon's expertise, elevate "L.A. Rainbow" to an extraordinary level of craftsmanship, with every song sounding meticulously crafted yet effortlessly laid-back—a hallmark of the best AOR records.

For Donohue, this album is deeply personal. "For many years I believed it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to record a second album that could even come close to matching the quality of my first Columbia recordings," Donohue shared. It's a sentiment that rings true for any artist coming back after nearly five decades away. Yet, "L.A. Rainbow" not only matches his past work, it surpasses it in emotional depth and contemporary relevance.

The chemistry between Donohue and Nixon is palpable, with the latter's vision for blending old-school AOR sensibilities with modern flourishes breathing new life into every track. Donohue credits Nixon's "golden address book" of talented musicians as a crucial element in the album's success, a nod to the sense of collaboration that permeates the record. From the pitch-perfect vocal harmonies to the pristine guitar tones and lush arrangements, "L.A. Rainbow" feels like a labor of love crafted by a team of musicians who truly care about the legacy of AOR.

The album doesn't just rest on nostalgia—it moves the genre forward, proving that AOR still has plenty to say in 2024. Songs like "Lonely Day In Paradise" and "Sunrise On The Water" stand out as modern classics,

effortlessly mixing the smooth, jazzy chords of late '70s soft rock with contemporary lyrical themes. The production is impeccable, and Donohue's vocals, still rich and resonant, guide each track with a seasoned warmth.

It's a rare feat for an artist to return after such a long hiatus and sound not just relevant but inspired. "L.A. Rainbow" is more than just a comeback—it's a celebration of a genre and an artist who refused to let time dim his creative light. For fans of Donohue's 1978 debut, this album will feel like coming home. For newcomers, "L.A. Rainbow" serves as an introduction to a West Coast music legend who, after 46 years, is once again in his element.

In an era where the Yacht Rock revival has gained new steam, Donohue's return feels like a crowning moment. If "L.A. Rainbow" teaches us anything, it's that true artistry never fades—it only gets better with time.