



Album Cover

Dirtboxwailers

SOME DAYS

Released: May 10, 2024

There seems to be more cover bands providing live music in Tulsa these days. Venues that used to emphasize live, original music appear to have loosened the rules. Perhaps COVID is partly to blame, or maybe the venues are simply going with what their customers prefer as drinkers and casual music fans.

Regardless, this is one reason I was looking forward to hearing the new album by The Dirtboxwailers. When one catches the band live, you know it will be filled with 90 percent or more original music.

With their new release, *Somedays*, the band has nine new solid tunes. This album, kind of like the band itself, seems to be flying under the radar. Perhaps it is because the wailers aren't playing several nights a week, or even several times a month. They definitely are not suffering from overexposure.

The band was formed by lead vocalist/guitarist Jimmy Ray Taylor and Sam Matthews, guitar and vocals. They have written some fine original songs with strong lyrics, with a good dose of help from their bandmates.

There is bassist Dave White and drummer Damon Daniel from the Steve Pryor school of hard knocks. Plus you can add keyboardist Chris Kyle from Ego Culture. All three are among Tulsa's most talented artists.

While the wailers are a rock n' roll band, they bleed Southern rock and blues.

My favorite track may be *Blue Eyes Red*, written by Taylor, Daniel and White. It was actually composed during a recording session at Daniel's

home studio, who receives praise for his excellent production of this album. Taylor set the rhythm and White came up with a lot of the chords. Kyle filled in some gaps and with this “wobbly” sound and then strayed from the keyboard at the song’s end to play cello, while Daniel moved from drums to keys at one point.

Another favorite is the rockin’ blues tune, *I’ll Be Fine*. With a chuckle, Daniel describes his contribution this way: “I was trying my Okie Billy Cobham. I got to play double bass pedal on the drums.”

While Taylor’s forte is guitar and vocals, he adds some fiesty harmonica on *I’ll Be Fine*.

Whiskey Kiss (written by Matthews) has a wonderful melody backed by fine lyrics:

Bad blood running through a heart made of stone

Two wolves to feed and I feed the one that can steal my soul

Can't win for trying, with the shape I'm in

One road leads back here and I start all over again

First kiss in the morning, light up the day

Slow burning feeling, my heart is beating

My mind is reeling, my soul is stealing away

Some Days is the title cut with Dustin Pittsley sitting in on lead guitar. A lot of folks will relate to the lyrics:

I took a leap of faith

With a noose around my neck

Struggling and fighting to free myself again

I run towards the light and even if I fall

Being down is better than being no place at all

Some days I'm better

Some days I'm strong

Some days I'm right as rain but the nights are way too long

Some days I'm dying

Some days I'm dead

Some days I'll find myself somewhere in my head

Another winner on this album is the instrumental, *NADA*. It was created on the fly with White, Taylor and Josh Richards trying out different things on guitar. When *NADA* was recorded, Pittsley returned to play slide guitar with Taylor and Richards on guitars as well.

Meanwhile, Taylor noticed the cymbals were choking out the high hat and thought it was a mistake. However, after listening to the record, liked it, and left it alone.

Besides Richards, there also are contributions on guitar by Kelly Oliver.

Some Day is The Dirtboxwailers first release since their initial record way back in 2012. This is way over due and certainly deserves a listen. A very fine album.

Some Days is available on all streaming services.

Billy Austin Martin

