



MARK SELBY

BLUE HIGHWAY

Mark's Track-By-Track Notes

1. I WILL NOT GO QUIETLY

"This record is really a journey, and many of the songs refer to roads or travels of various kinds -- this track kinda kicks us out onto the highway and gets us moving. Musically and lyrically, it felt like a great way to open the album -- it's a declaration about doing your thing, sticking to your guns, living the life you choose and living it to the fullest. And making some good ol' noise! The different songs on this record take us a lot of different places, but I feel that what connects them all are groove, and this track sets the standard for that, mixing rock energy and some old-school r&b-style guitar riffs (all in open E tuning, by the way)."

2. CHANGE A COMIN'

"I wrote this with my buddy Jimmy Hall, an amazing performer and legendary figure in Southern Rock & soul -- I've played in his band off and on through the years. Jimmy is the lead singer of Wet Willie and has worked closely with Jeff Beck, Hank Williams Jr. and many others, and was gracious enough to join us here. I had planned to play electric guitar on the main riff, but I had done a little acoustic demo of this that everyone kinda liked, so I stuck with acoustic guitar over Daryl Burgess and Chopper Anderson's vicious groove, and keyboard whiz Tim Lauer stepped up with a seriously funky clavinet part. And that mean blues harp? As we say around here: 'that's Jimmy Hall, ya'll!'"

3. GOTTA BE ENOUGH

"Tia (Sillers, my wife, best friend and main co-writer) started humming this groovy melody one night when we were watching a movie, and it grew into this song, one of the first ones we wrote for the record. Hey, it's only a one-day drive from Nashville to New Orleans, let's roll! Tim Lauer's righteous barrelhouse piano, the funky groove, the big fat horn section -- trust me, this was every bit as much fun to record as it sounds like. This track is everything I wanted this album to be about -- a ride, a road trip, a real journey. That's Tia singing along on key lines like 'still in the band' (that cracks me up!) and my pal Crystal Taliefero doing her soulful thing on here as well. And Daryl chuckling at the very end. . ."

4. FORTY DAYS, FORTY NIGHTS

"A year ago I was introduced to Rick Brantley, a hugely talented young singer-songwriter who I expect you will hear great things from in the future. Rick's

from Macon, Georgia, the son of a fire & brimstone southern preacher, so it's only fitting that the first song we wrote together has this elemental, biblical imagery. The way the track just builds and builds made this one a lot of fun to sing . . ."

5. ANOTHER MAN

"I was really intrigued with the idea of this guy looking at who he is now and who he was years ago. He's talking to his woman about whether she can love him as much as 'another man', but it's actually himself as a young buck he's referring to. I love putting adult themes into rock songs, and I'm really happy with the way this one turned out. And on a musical note: my great friend and producer Brent Maher has a bunch of groovy old guitars hanging around the Blue Room studio, and I grabbed an old Supro lap steel off the wall for the slide guitar solo on this one."

6. THIS IS WHY WE ROCK & ROLL

"I was on a long flight across Canada on the Johnny Reid tour, and watched a documentary film about this awesome independent record store in a tough area in the north of England, and how it fed the souls of all these crazy music lovers there. It really inspired me and I began to hear this song and guitar riff in my head; the first part of the lyric was written on the back of my flight ticket. Thanks Air Canada for the great selection of in-flight films!"

7. A LITTLE WHILE

"I love to write songs that tell a story, and it's even better when I can write them with my amazing favorite co-writer and 'better-half,' Tia. This song is a guy telling us the bittersweet story of a first love, with some very pointed honesty and a certain amount of regret. I had come up with a drum loop to build this groove around, and as always Daryl and Chopper elevated the proceedings with their hugely creative drum and bass parts."

8. TROUBLE WANTS

"I've always loved the jazzy minor-key side of blues, especially when it has a funky groove, and have been especially influenced in that regard by the guitarists Cornell Dupree and Kenny Burrell, who I attempt to pay some tribute to here. We thought Rod McGaha, a super-cool jazz trumpeter based in Nashville, would be perfect to play on this, and at the studio he politely asked me what we were looking for from him. I said, 'Rod, just do your thing, but I sang it in kind of a Chet Baker sort of way.' Rod listened to the track and said, 'Uh huh, but Chet Baker never played on no track that funky!' Rod plays so cool and beautiful here, and I love this greasy groove and Tia's inimitable background vocal."

9. LET'S SPEND THE NIGHT TOGETHER

"Every tour we try to throw in an interesting cover song or two just for fun; I thought it was time to record one, and I think we did something unique and really sexy with

this old Stones song. How 'bout my soul sister Crystal Taliefero -- yow!"

10. BLACK DIAMOND

"I was testing out microphones in my home studio, playing open-tuned slide on my steel-bodied Dobro resonator guitar, and this song just popped out. (The tuning, by the way, is d-g-d-g-a-d, low to high.) For the album, we cut this at the Blue Room with one microphone several feet in front of me, for that nasty old-time sound. I love the way it segues into the next track . . ."

11. HELL'S HIP POCKET

"Tia and I collect etchings and black & white art photography, and we have a cool landscape woodcut by an artist named Richardson Rome of Hell's Hip Pocket, a rugged canyon in the Rocky Mountains. I've actually hiked there, it's not far from our cabin in Colorado. As a songwriter you can't have something called 'Hell's Hip Pocket' hanging on your wall and not have it inspire a song! Devil's Backbone is also referenced here -- that's another really gnarly geographical feature, near Loveland, Colorado, in the same area where we did the photo shoot for this record. My main guitar on this track is an old late-50's Danelectro U1 in open G tuning (d-g-d-g-b-d)."

12. MILE ZERO

"Tia and I used to play a lot of gigs in Key West Florida, and the first time we went we rented a Mustang convertible in Miami and drove down the A1A coastal highway to get there -- one of the classic American road trips. Key West is the end of the line, Mile Zero, and there are always a lot of fascinating characters hanging out there, including some like the guy in this song, who may be laying low for reasons he'd rather not go into. These last couple songs on the record are just Daryl, Chopper and I playing 'live' in the studio, doing our blues-rock trio thing like we have on countless stages. Ain't nothin' wrong with that!"

13. (Bonus Track) BACKROAD JAM

"This was a spontaneous jam when we had some leftover time at the end of a recording session (which is why the musicians all gradually join in one at a time -- I think Daryl was still tuning drums when we started). Luckily, Charles Yingling, our engineer, was kind enough to hit the red 'record' button."

MUSICIAN NOTES:

Mark Selby stuck to his workhorse guitars on this project: his favorite old Fender Stratocaster ('Woody'), his trusty blonde Telecaster ('Leo'), a beloved 1960 Gibson Melody Maker ('Brownie'), and a 50's Danelectro ('Spaceman'). He usually played into two amps at once, mixing a mid-60's Fender Deluxe, a modified 60's Fender Bandmaster and a recent Fender Blues Deluxe. A Simple Amps 'Big Iron' is on

several tracks as well. Favored pedals are Barber and Xotic overdrives, VooDoo Labs tremolo and a Diamond delay. Acoustic guitar was mostly 'Moss,' the 1974 Mossman Mark's played forever, supplemented at times by his steel-bodied Dobro and a 1930's Gretsch archtop from the arsenal of producer Brent Maher.

Chopper Anderson played 4- and 5-string versions of the brilliant Alien Audio basses that he designs for himself and other world-class bassists.

Daryl Burgess played the house drum kit that lives at the Blue Room studio in Nashville, and picked up a djembe belonging to the band SHEL for "Forty Days." We're pretty sure he brought his own drumsticks and a bag full of tambourines, and maybe even cymbals.

Tim Lauer played the Blue Room's 1930's Hammond organ, early 1900's upright acoustic piano, and his own grab bag of electronic keys and gizmos.

Charles Yingling recorded and mixed through a 1970's-era Trident console onto Radar multi-tracks at the Blue Room, and drove to work everyday in a big red Chevy Suburban.

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