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RORY ELLIS

Two Feathers

★★★★½

Passenger / Bringin' Daddy Home / Home Tonight / Rollin' On / Two Feathers / Suburban Soldier / Work / Little One / No Love In This War / Take Me Away / Dear Satan / Wrong Side Of The Tracks / Darlin' Man

Producers: Rory Ellis & Dave Steel

Villainous VRN 0009

49:24

Rory Ellis is a singer-songwriter from Australia and *Two Feathers* is his fourth album, but the first that I have had the pleasure to hear. His style is heavily influenced by blues with some seamlessly integrated country and folk flavourings, but the most striking thing is his deep, resonant



baritone and his excellent Nina Simone-like phrasing.

Ellis composed all the material on the album and he has a wonderfully poetic use of words. Each of the songs includes a brief explanation of the circumstances that inspired the composition. Judging by the number of lyrics that cover the subject of travel and the prevalence of British references, he must spend a lot of time on the road and a large proportion of that time in the UK.

There seems to be weariness in his view of life on the move and pondering how this life has affected his relationships. *Rollin' On* and *Bringin' Daddy Home* are both full of feelings of homesickness, *Take Me Away* was written on Brighton station before commencing yet another journey, *Home Tonight* was written in Leicester and is a contemplation of another night in a hotel room, and *Little One* (written in Southampton) muses on the love for a daughter that he wishes he could see more often.

Passenger is a contemplative song about the more figurative journey through life and references the song, *Love's Been Good To Me*, that appeared on the last Johnny Cash album.

The album is not all about travelling and he writes about the racially motivated riots in the Cronulla area of Sydney in *Suburban Soldier*, *No Love In This War* covers the feelings of a soldier sent to fight in a foreign land for a war he doesn't understand, and *Wrong Side Of The Tracks* looks at the wasted lives of youths who hang around the streets of his home town.

Dear Satan is about transgression and temptation and

could have appropriately been called *Sympathy For The Devil*, if someone hadn't thought of it first, and *Darlin' Man* is a tender eulogy to a friend and fellow musician who liked his drink a little too much.

Ellis's marvelously rich and warm voice would be enough on its own to whisk you away into a reverie, but when this is allied to his exceptionally well crafted songs it makes a potent combination. (roryellis.com)

Michael Hingston

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