

Eric Bibb – Blues-Ballads and Work Songs (2011)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 28 September 2011 18:35 - Last Updated Tuesday, 30 July 2019 10:45

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01 – *Goin' Down The Road Feelin' Bad* 02 – *John Henry* 03 – *Take This Hammer* 04 – *Cocaine Blues* [play](#) 05 – *Candy Man* 06 – *Goin' Down Slow* 07 – *Sittin' On Top Of The World* 08 – *Come Back Baby* 09 – *Frankie & Albert* 10 – *Stagger Lee*

[play](#)

11 – *Juke Dance* 12 – *My Honey Pie* 13 – *Satisfied* 14 – *Sophisticated Shade*

Bass [Höfner Violin Bass], Bass [Vintage 63] – Roger Ekman (tracks: 12, 13) Body Percussion [Mouth-Percussion], Shaker – Svante Drake (tracks: 12, 13) Electric Guitar – Kahanga "Master Vumbi" Dekula (tracks: 12) Electric Guitar [Electric Slide Guitar] – Christer Lyssarides (tracks: 13) Guitar, Vocals, Producer, Liner Notes – Eric Bibb Mandola – Christer Lyssarides (tracks: 14) Sousaphone – Bo Juhlin (tracks: 14)

Released at his 60th birthday, *Blues, Ballads & Work Songs* is a new album Eric Bibb says he's been working on for most of his life. Most of the songs in the album were "standards" of the folk/blues scene when Eric was first exposed to them.

One of the most powerful examples of this childhood memory is Track no. 4 "Take this hammer", which Eric's father used to sing when Eric was just a boy. His father even recorded it on a LP (Vanguard). This piece is one of the most haunting in the album. Eric quite rightly stresses in his foreword that the "trick" with this kind of albums is "how to make it your own - while still honouring the tradition". Some of Eric's arrangements in the album (eg. Tracks 2 and 6), I think, do great justice to the tradition while both his singing and guitar playing are more bluesy and rougher than what we've been accustomed to hear from him. I liked that.

On top of the lyrics, Eric explains the origin of the songs, and when/how he first got touch with them. Useful and interesting info on various artists and old recordings. Would be intriguing to see Eric's collection of blues recordings!

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Most of the songs are played by fingerpicking - in Eric's recognizable style - various guitars (12 string, 7 string, ...), all mentioned in the intro to each track. The differences of the instruments can be heard, if focused, through Jan-Erik Persson's very transparent recording (as often with Opus3 records) of the guitars. Eric and Jan-Erik have been working together for 35 years - what's a better way celebrate such friendship than to release an album that reflects deep personal roots of Eric Bibb's art. ---inner-magazines.com

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