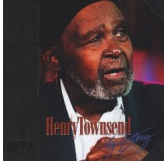


Henry Townsend - My Story (2001)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 18 January 2019 15:52 -

Henry Townsend - My Story (2001)



1 *Less Than A Man* 4:38 2 *Tell me* 5:39 3 *World Full Of People* 3:59 4 *No Fuss And Fight* 3:52 5 *Dreaming* 4:01 6 *You Should've Told Me* 4:21 7 *My Story* 5:36 8 *Help Me Darling* 5:18 9 *Screaming And Crying* 4:33 10 *Put Me On Hold* 4:09 11 *Goodbye* 2:31 12 *Repentance Blues* 4:48 Acoustic Bass – Sho Komiya Guitar [Dobro] – Jimmy D. Lane (tracks: 8,12) Guitar [Slide] – Ron Edwards Piano, Guitar, Vocals, Written By – Henry Townsend

Analogue Productions touts the fact that, with his latest CD, *My Story*, blues singer Henry Townsend has now released a recording, in one form or another, in every decade since the late 1920s. To me, the more impressive point is that Townsend has been singing the blues for over 70 years, so his many recordings over that time span would reveal someone who can not only sing the blues, but understands them and has most probably lived them too. Now, that's something to crow about.

I hadn't heard of Henry Townsend prior to listening to *My Story*. A quick perusal of my *All Music Guide To The Blues* informed me that he was born in Selby, Mississippi in 1909, which would make him about 90 when this disc was recorded. After traveling to St. Louis in the mid '20s, he began to record for Columbia, among others, and has been in and out of the studios ever since. (Unfortunately, his body of work is still rather sparse, a fact that I hope this CD will go a long way toward ameliorating.) Townsend's not just a singer, but a very talented songwriter too, as evidenced by the fact that all of the tunes on *My Life* are self-penned. (After all those long years of banging along, trying to eke out a living singing the blues, can you think of a better title for this album?) With the aid of musicians Sho Komiya on bass, Ron Edwards on slide guitar, and, on two songs, Jimmie D. Lane on dobro, Townsend, who plays both piano and guitar here, lays out a vivid tutorial of just what singing the blues is all about.

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For example, give a listen to the title song to hear how deeply Townsend feels the blues. When he sings the line, "Well, there's a story I've always wanted to tell/Some people think my life's been beautiful/Oh, it ain't been nothing but hell" you can hear the autobiographical nature to the words. Townsend's not singing in the third person here. And if you don't think that that makes a difference, try listening a little harder. These are the blues.

As has become the norm for APO, the sound on My Story is as real as the music. From the vocals, which make it seem as if Townsend is in your listening room singing to you personally, to the tonal accuracy of the guitar, bass and piano, to the soundstage, which is wide and deep, you'll hear everything captured on the master tape (within the limits of current Red Book CD sound, of course).

Pick up a copy of My Story and revel in the blues as they can only be performed by a true original. If the name Henry Townsend is as foreign to you as it was to me, there's no better introduction to his vision of the blues than this album. This is one tale that you'll want to relive over and over, again and again. ---John Crossett, soundstage.com

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