

Tom Jones – Spirit In The Room (2012)

Written by bluesever

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01 – Tower of Song 02 – (I Want To) Come Home 03 – Hit or Miss 04 – Love and Blessings 05 – Soul of a Man 06 – Bad As Me 07 – Dimming of the Day [play](#) 08 – Travelling Shoes

[play](#)

09 – All Blues Hail Mary 10 – Charlie Darwin

Acoustic Guitar, E-Bow, Keyboards, Chamberlin, Percussion, Ukulele – Ethan Johns
Harmonium, Piano, Electric Piano [Wurlitzer], Organ – Richard Causon Bass Guitar – Sam Dixon
Drums, Percussion – Stella Mozgawa Double Bass [String Bass] – Ian Jennings Choir – Stile Antico
Vocals – Tom Jones

Full marks for nerve to Tom Jones for opening his second successive album of stripped-down gravitas rock with Leonard Cohen's Tower of Song, transformed from hotel-bar funk into a finger-picked country blues. Cohen's version is a mordant, blackly comic meditation, but Jones can't play lines about "born with the gift of a golden voice" for laughs and so he turns it, unexpectedly and triumphantly, into a eulogy for a life in music. It's also the highlight of this collection mixing covers of rock-aristo songwriters, a couple of well-regarded cults and a sprinkling of blues, soul and gospel. It's never as rollicking as 2010's Praise and Blame, though a version of Tom Waits' Bad As Me will sound agreeably demented to anyone who's never heard the original. Odetta's Hit or Miss answers its own question, sadly, in its transition to country-pop. Most intriguing of all is the closing version of the Low Anthem's spectral Charlie Darwin, into which a full choir is inserted, as if to compensate in big dollops for the fact that doing "spectral" has never been among Jones's noted virtues. ---guardian.co.uk

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