

Alejandro Escovedo With Don Antonio □ – The Crossing (2018)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Andare* 0:53 2 *Footsteps in the Shadows* 4:49 3 *Texas Is My Mother* 3:01 4 *Teenage Luggage* 3:25 5 *Something Blue* 4:11 6 *Outlaw for You* 3:26 7 *Amor Puro* 2:38 8 *Waiting for Me* 3:17 9 *How Many Times* 4:29 10 *Cherry Blossom Rain* 3:36 11 *Sonica USA* 2:20 12 *Rio Navidad [Explicit]* 3:45 13 *Silver City* 5:57 14 *Fury and Fire* 2:13 15 *Flying* 3:08 16 *MC Overload* 3:04 17 *The Crossing* 5:20 Bass, Backing Vocals, Percussion – Denis Valentini Drums, Percussion – Matteo Monti Guitar, Bass, Lap Steel Guitar, Keyboards – Don Antonio Guitar, Vocals, Percussion – Alejandro Escovedo Organ, Electric Piano, Piano [acoustic], Synth – Nicola Peruch Saxophone – Franz Valtieri, Gianni Perinelli Strings – Prague Metropolitan Symphonic Orchestra Vocals – Emma Morton, Nicholas Tremulis + Grand Piano – Vanni Crociani (1) Guitar – James Williamson (4), John Perry (8), Wayne Kramer (11) Bass Clarinet – Gianni Perinelli (15) Beats – Franco Naddei (16) Vocals – Peter Perrett (8), Sabrina Rocchi (9), Joe Ely (13) Vocals [spoken word] – Freddy Trujillo (12), Joe Ely (17)

In 2000, Alejandro Escovedo wrote a play with music titled *By the Hand of the Father*, a moving song cycle that dealt with the Mexican-American experience as families left one home behind in hopes of finding another on the other side of the border. Escovedo is the son of one such man, and *By the Hand of the Father* was informed by the lives of his own family members. In 2018, Escovedo explores not dissimilar themes on his concept album *The Crossing*, but instead of telling the story of his father and those like him, here he imagines a story of two expatriates not unlike himself, and what their lives might be like if they made their way to America in these times. In 17 songs, *The Crossing* follows the journeys of two young men who came to America -- Diego from Mexico, Salvo from Italy -- chasing a dream of the nation they came to love from vintage punk rock, film noir, and beat-era literature. In their minds, America is not only a place of freedom and opportunity, but of ineffable cool, and if the art lives up to their expectations, the reality of daily life outside the American mainstream is another matter. These songs run the emotional gamut from the furious celebration of "Sonica USA" ("I saw the Zeros and they looked like me/This is the America that I want to be") to the bitter rant of "Teenage Luggage" ("America is beautiful, America is ill/America is a bloodstain in a honky tonk kill") to the rueful wisdom of the title cut ("Thoughts and prayers they never last/Don't waste them on the past/We all become history when we make the crossing"). Escovedo wrote these songs in collaboration with Italian

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rock musician Antonio Gramentiere, with Gramentiere and his band Don Antonio providing the backing, and the partnership proves to be inspired, with the musicians tackling the multiple influences and shifting moods of this music with passion and aplomb. And Escovedo has brought in some impressive guests for these sessions, including Wayne Kramer of the MC5, James Williamson of Iggy & the Stooges, Peter Perrett and John Perry of the Only Ones, and Joe Ely (who lends harmonies to a beautiful cover of his song "Silver City"). With *The Crossing*, Escovedo puts a new and compelling spin on the oft-told tale of the American dream as seen both from a distance and up close. In his hands, this story is both timeless and as up to date as the latest news bulletin, and it connects as great music and outstanding storytelling delivered by an artist who has a unique talent for both. ---Mark Deming, AllMusic Review

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