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Texas Platters

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL TOLAND, AUGUST 29, 2014, MUSIC

Evil United

Honored by Fire (MVD)

There's hardly a strain of amp-abusing heaviness Austin metal god Jason McMaster hasn't fondled, from the pioneering prog metal of Watchtower and the spandex hard rock of Dangerous Toys to the NWOBHM stylings of Ignitor and AC/DC worship of Broken Teeth. Evil United puts thrashing power metal into the veteran screecher's cross hairs. *Honored by Fire*, the quintet's second album, blasts off with the one-two jawbreak of "Dead Can See" and "Caesar," Todd Connally and John Valenzuela's twin guitars wailing, the rhythm section of Don Van Stavern and Jason West galloping, and McMaster ripping through the stratosphere. "Paupers graves as far as the eyes can see," he seethes on the latter. "Cloak and daggers breeding conspiracy." Not exactly an inconvenient truth as far as social commentary goes, but it fits the brutal riffology. Mighty ragers both, "Tomb Spawn" and "Bloody Water" preface with "Grave" and "The Cottage," acoustic instrumental interludes that threaten to bring some class to the joint. Never fear, however. "Ripping Flesh" and "Mind Over Pain" ride the lightning straight to the black hearts of denim-jacketed headbangers everywhere. Evil United don't fuck around.

★★★

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