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Michael Stanley

The Job

Review by G. W. Hill

This is such a great album. There's not a weak song or even a weak point here. Musically this lands somewhere in the vicinity of classic rock. There is a good amount of range here, though. It has everything from folk music to country and more built into its musical vision. This just might make my best of 2014 list – it's that strong.

Track by Track Review

Everything's Fine

There's an energetic classic rock sound that opens this. The horn section adds some serious class to the mix. I love the vocal hooks on this and the female backing vocals add a great soulful element. This piece just oozes cool.

The Job

There's a bit of a country rock vibe to this killer tune. This is another strong one. In fact, as good as the opener was (and it was great), I like this even better. It's got a lot of blues in the mix.

Last Good Nerve

A lot mellow, this is a classy piece of music. The bass line in the backdrop isn't fancy, but it's just perfect. The whole dramatic sedate sound approach works really well. This is classic rock with an emphasis on the "class." There is some particularly noteworthy guitar work on this and it does get more powered up later. The extended closing segment is almost progressive rock to my ears.

You Just Never Know

There is no big change here, but this is another great piece. It's got a slow, bluesy, soulful sound to it. It's packed with emotion and charm. It just continues to the tradition of great music.

Survive and Advance

Country, folk and rock all merge on this number. Sure, it's also got plenty of that classic rock vibe. It's another strong tune with a different flavor than the rest.

Maybe This Is the Day

More of a mid-tempo piece, this little number has more of that country element on display. The violin (or should I say "fiddle?") adds to the charm and country sound.

Velvet Parkway

The familiar musical links are all present here. This song is one that shows off a lot of style in a rather subdued arrangement. It's just another great rock song with classic and country elements. In some ways the song reminds me of Tom Petty just a bit, but the first guitar solo almost make me think of David Gilmour. The instrumental segment at the end has some hints of fusion.

Breaking News

A mellow ballad, folk and country merge on this one. It's mellow and more understated than the rest of the music here. It's no less compelling or effective, though.

Unfinished Business

This is a fairly mellow and rather soulful classic rock tune. It's a lot like some of the music Bruce Springsteen does.

Get In Line

There is a bluesy urgency to this. It's got some country in the mix, but also plenty of classic rock. It's one of the cooler tunes on a disc that's all cool.

Taking the Long Way Around

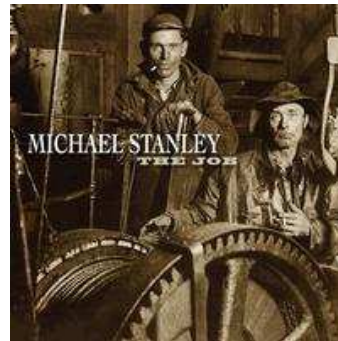
Somehow this makes me think of Roy Orbison.

Same River Twice

Soulful and jazzy, this has a great groove to it.

Dark Angels

This is very much a country ballad. It's quite pretty and the strings add a lot of power at times.



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