

Rolling Stone REVIEWS



Hard Working Americans

Hard Working Americans
Melvin/Thirty Tiger



By **JON DOLAN**

JANUARY 21, 2014

Todd Snider specializes in bitingly funny, populist country-rock storytelling (his 2012 album *Agnostic Hymns & Stoner Fables* was a vivid Great Recession indictment). Here, he convenes a tough, versatile band for a set of rootsy, lefty covers like the Bottle Rockets' "Welfare Music" and Frankie Miller's desperate 1959 hit "Blackland Farmer," which is redone with taut New Orleans swing. The highlight is a country-blues take on **Randy Newman's** "Mr. President (Have Pity on the Working Man)," maybe an unfair pick in an age of brickwall GOP opposition but sung with an angst as old as labor itself.