

BLURT



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Turnpike Troubadours



Goodbye Normal Street

(Thirty Tigers)

www.turnpiketroubadours.com)

Three albums on, the Turnpike Troubadours have evolved from the hard-bitten road warriors their handle implies into a band of musical journeymen of a distinctly blue-collar variety. Rousing fiddle-fueled hoedowns find their place alongside tears-in-the beer balladry and the kind of weary laments that their cowboy hat-wearing compatriots from Nashville tend to tout as part of their stock and trade.

The honky-tonk "Call a Spade a Spade" and the rousing barroom send-up "Before the Devil Knows We're Dead" aside, the Turnpike Troubadours eschew a traditional template while still sticking to the basics. Consequently, both the snappy banjo-plucked "Gin Smoke & Lies" and the bitter ballad "Wrecked" come across as equally weathered and tarnished. Likewise, the band's dogged drive and determination never drifts far from the surface, whether it's the tongue-in-cheek courtship song "Good Lordy Lorrie" or the feisty tenacity summoned through "Blue Star." Ultimately, it's a populist approach that stirs their sentiments and finds them building their brand with the masses. Happily then, *Goodbye Normal Street* finds them heading in the right direction.

DOWNLOAD: "Wrecked," "Gin Smoke & Lies," "Before the Devil Knows We're Dead" LEE ZIMMERMAN