

Philip Sayce - Steamroller (2012)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Steamroller* 2 *Stung By A Woman* 3 *Marigold* 4 *Rhythm And Truth* 5 *Black Train*
6 *Beautiful* 7 *Holding On* 8 *A Mystic* 9 *The Bull* 10 *Aberstwyth*

When a musician strives to find depth in his soul, inspiration will emerge, and a fresh, authentic, personal interpretation of reality is born. Canadian six-string guitarist Philip Sayce has experienced such a transformation, igniting passion in his soul to discover his artistic self. Ambitious desire to translate unique perspective with intensity and honest emotion fueled Sayce's fourth album, *Steamroller*, which is the representation of "being real and getting in touch with your own self-power, and celebrating life."

Choosing to record *Steamroller* live at the Chatham County Sound Studio in Nashville, Tennessee, Sayce navigated his vision by enlisting longtime friend and Grammy-nominated producer David Cobb. It was Cobb's insistent sonic approach, blended with Sayce's keen ability to write songs precisely tailored for the contrasting voices of his guitar, that grants this blistering 70s-infused-riff-rock and soulful-bluesy-funk album permission to kick some ass, live with purpose, make sweet love and rock out all night long! Once Provogue Records released this personal masterpiece in Europe 2012 and worldwide 2013, it was evident Cobb and Sayce's collaboration was a success. *Steamroller* quickly rolled onto the iTunes Top 10 Blues list.

From the strike of the very first chord, first single and title track, "Steamroller" explodes with a wave of sexual energy, immediately penetrating the listener with an aphrodisiac-enhanced sensory overload. Sayce's steamy vocals call out like wild-animal-emitting pheromones to attract a mate and vigorously grind into the seductive arrangement of monstrous riffs and bluesy rhythms. The pleasurable and salaciously charged effect is quite addictive, leaving the body vibrant with eroticism.

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In contrast, "Stung by a Woman" is playfully constructed with a groovy rhythm, enticing anyone overhearing the song to strum their own air guitar. The descriptive lyrics magnify the not-so-pleasant aspects of relationships. I guess some people rather enjoy the sting.

As a striking difference to the harder hitting tracks, "Marigold," a song dedicated to Sayce's wife, and "Beautiful" are the ballads on the album. Sayce's use of falsetto is impressive and reveals a sense of longing and desperation anchored in his lyrics, which also compliment the slower finesse picking and desire-saturated riffs. The layered mellotron sounds in "Marigold" carry a whimsical harmony of earthly vintage tones, while "Beautiful" is soulful, with a smooth rhythm and sharp slides.

Sayce embraces his positive approach to life in "Holding On," one of my personal favorites. Purposefully belting out such lyrics as, "Make every moment, don't throw it away...turn it into something good," supporting the concept of self-empowerment and living life to its fullest potential. The composition exposes Sayce's vocal versatility, while intensifying the hook. "A Mystic" is twisty, trippy and a constant tempo-changer. A kickass drum beat accompanied by hazy stoner vocals carry the majestic tune through its bends and trills.

The powerhouse stomper is "The Bull." Heavy infused rhythm and dramatic fuzz-groove are pinned with lyrics such as "when you fuck with the bull, you're gonna get the horns." The intrusive roaring drums, crying bass and screaming guitar assault the senses as Sayce reaches for a climax of wah-wahs during his guitar solo. Max out the volume, which is also highly recommended for the rock anthems, "Rhythm & Truth" and "Black Train," another personal favorite. The guitar breaks and 30-second notes are incredible, guaranteed to leave a permanent impression.

In the final track, Sayce pays homage to his Welsh family roots with an instrumental track, "Aberystwyth," the city where he was born. The story is articulated with a daunting vibrato and finishes with perfect powerful feedback.

Steamroller is an crafted work of art, delivering a passionate 'self-power' message charged with authority, maturity and wit. It seems that Philip Sayce has spent much of his music career flying under the mainstream radar. Not this time. Steamroller may very well be the breakthrough album to expose his unquestionable creative talent, finally promoting him to the ranks of a

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