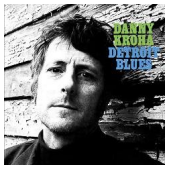
Danny Kroha – Detroit Blues (2021)



1 Poor Howard 2 Detroit Blues 3 I'll Be Rested 4 Way Down In Florida On A Hog 5 Oh Death 6 Rueben, Oh Rueben 7 Come Out Of The Wilderness 8 Leavin' Blues 9 Little Lulie 10 Adam And Eve 11 Rich Girl, Poor Girl 12 Run Johnny 13 House Of The Rising Sun 14 Up Above My Head Danny Kroha - Vocals, Guitar, Diddley Bow, Mouth Bow, Banjo, Jug, String Bass, Tambourine, Washboard

Danny Kroha reached living legend status years before the release of 2015's Angels Watching Over Me, the first album issued under his given name. In the years leading up to that collection of powerfully raw solo blues and public domain tunes, Kroha established himself as a one of a kind talent, changing the course of Detroit music as one-third of the indispensable garage punk band the Gories in the '90s and staying active with a non-stop string of genre-challenging bands ever since. Kroha brought the same insistence on defying expectations to his solo renditions of traditional blues and gospel material, radically reworking the arrangements and applying production that recast Folkways-styled songs with a grainy, lo-fi surrealness. Second fully solo album Detroit Blues follows a similar path as its predecessor but upgrades the production values significantly and leans more on folk-blues than spiritual songs. All 14 tracks are played on entirely acoustic instruments, and some of the most striking ones are performed on instruments Kroha made himself. "Little Lulie" is one of several songs featuring a home-made washtub bass, backing the bright acoustic guitar and Kroha's high-spirited vocals with a rubbery wobble. Songs not featuring washtub bass sometimes get their low end from notes blown on an empty jug. The jaunty "Adam and Eve" scrapes its rhythm out on a washtub and replaces the harmonica and fiddle melodies of other versions with a kazoo solo. The colorful and wildly varying arrangements make every track stand out just a little from the last. The one-stringed diddly bow that showed up on Angels Watching Over Me makes a return appearance on album standout "Come Out the Wilderness," and throughout the record Kroha showcases different homespun percussion, slide banjo, and jaw harp. The instrumentation shifts, but the overall atmosphere is consistent and full of highlights. Kroha's take on folk-blues numbers like "Oh Death" and "Leavin' Blues" feel like substantial evolutions from their original versions, and throughout Detroit Blues he refreshes material that is, in some cases, nearly a century old with a patchwork of captivating revisions and reconsiderations. It's another unsurprisingly fantastic

chapter of Kroha's discography, one where his inventive spirit expands on the possibilities of traditional songs until they become something new and all his own. ---Fred Thomas, allmusic.com

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