

CD Review: Drive By Truckers' new album among their best

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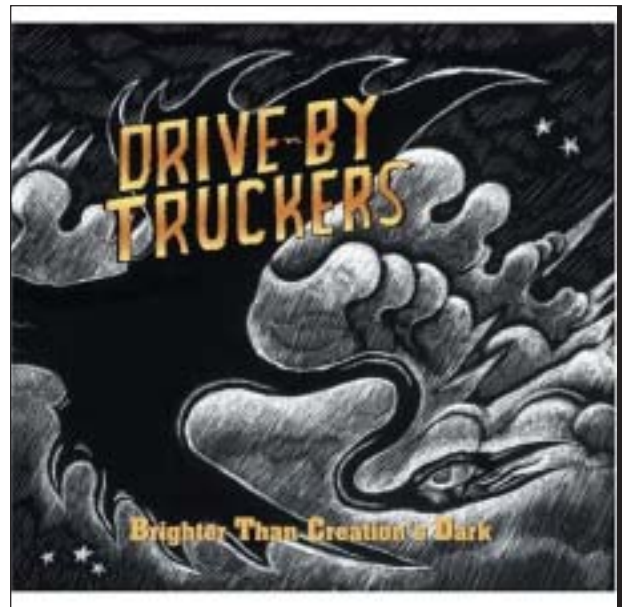
Last week the Drive By Truckers released their 7th full length album and once again proved that they are one of the most important rock n' roll bands to immerge in the last decade.

I'll make no bones about it; I think the Drive By Truckers are the best rock band in existence at this particular moment. They write the type of songs that are instant classics, songs that dig deep into your heart while simultaneously being full of fun-time rocking goodness. Their new album, *Brighter Than Creation's Dark*, with its 19 new songs, only serves to cement them as brilliant songwriters in the vein of greats like Bob Dylan, John Lennon and Neil Young.

A lot has changed within the group since its 2006 release, *A Blessing And A Curse*, such as the departure of songwriter Jason Isbell, and the stepping up of bassist Shonna Tucker, who contributes three songs to the new album. She also contributes more heavily with harmony vocals than she has in the past, and the results are absolutely heart-rending, like her vocals on front man Patterson Hood's "Two Daughters And A Beautiful Wife" which opens the disc.

Hood's long-time partner Mike Cooley contributes seven of the tunes this time, and there is no lack of praise that can be thrown his way in regards to cleverly crafted songs and brilliant lyrics. Take, for

example, the third verse from "Self-Destructive Zones" which comments on the music scene of the early 90's:



"The hippies rode a wave putting smiles on faces / that the devil wouldn't even put a shoe / Caught between a generation dying from its habits, / and another thinking rock and roll was new / Till the pawn shops were packed like a backstage party / hanging full of pointy ugly cheap guitars / And the young'uns all turned to karaoke / hanging all their wishes upon disregarded stars"

Overall the album is a little bit softer than what we've heard from the truckers in the past, but don't let that fool you, Hood's "The Man I Shot" might be the heaviest track the Truckers have ever recorded. It's also an excellent commentary on the war in Iraq, but in a human perspective rather than a dogmatic, preachy

one.

Following that track is Tucker's "Purgatory Line" which is a surreal, ambient track

that is fairly uncharacteristic for the Truckers, yet fits perfectly into this album. Another somewhat uncharacteristic track is Hood's "You And Your Crystal Meth" which seems to aurally create the tripped-out experience of the drug in the title.

One of the best tracks is Hood's "The Opening Act" which just drips with the film-noir personality of classic movies from the 40's and 50's. Another winner is Cooley's "A Ghost To Most" which eloquently describes the anti-hero who just can't quite fit into the world.

All in all, this album ranks right up there with the best that the Truckers have released, which ranks it above 90% of what is called music these days.

For more on Drive By Truckers, see *The Clarion's* interview with Patterson Hood on page 9.

Warm Items Drive

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- Large Men's Jackets
- Men's Gloves
- Warm Blankets
- Women's Tights and Warm Pants
- Head, Toe, and Feet Warmers
- Sleeping Bags
- Tents/Tarps
- Thermos's for Hot Liquids
- Jeans/Pants of All Sizes