

Custom-made Patlansky blues

By [Johann M. Smith](#)

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Oh Fender, Fender, Fender - the sound that echoes like a tin can in a dead-end street, banging and twanging for more than 50 years now. The one you want is a Stratocaster, of which Dan Patlansky has plenty. And, like the front image of a dirty, dog-eared porn magazine, the cover of his latest album, "20 Stones", makes no secret about its contents. You know exactly what you're going to get.



A decade ago, while the world was coming to terms with "indie" as a genre, and The Strokes to the idea of fame, The White Stripes came to our saving grace with the blues - something we understood very well and could sink into like a good sleazy lover. Ever since, the world has become possessed with blue devils. Numerous bands, from several countries, have tried to give it new shades of depth and life - the next promising more misery and soul than the previous - and with Dan, it's no different.

Cultural rehash

Perhaps the best way to understand this cultural rehash is to compare it to mechanics who built hot rods. Like them, the idea isn't to be original; instead, it's all about getting as close to the actual concept as much as possible -and what's central and most important is how finely you can tune an engine, in this case a Fender guitar.

All the essential classic ingredients are ingrained from tracks one to 10 on "20 Stones". Standard iconic Muddy Waters, Sonics and Lynyrd Skynyrd inspirations are present from beginning to end, as expected. Included are covers of BB King and Joe Josea's Lost Your Good Thing Now; John Cale's Call Me the Breeze; and Jimmy Reed's Bright Lights Big City.

But unlike anything else out there offering the same, Dan isn't ideologically paranoid and often lets slip a "lekka jenga" lick and some funk. And, thus, he's able to substitute his American influences, through offering something new without

overbearing contrast. Praise doesn't get higher than that.

The first track, aptly titled Bring the World to its Knees, is like a sudden gunshot, when instantly everything else has little relevance - just like the best violence in Taxi Violence. The screeching guitar is there, with husky grain vocals for a sidekick, spitting whatever you listened to before in the face. There's not much to say about bass and drums, the innocent bystanders loyally standing in the background.

Twang-wang-waang

Every song is a showcase and the potential backing track of a bourbon advertisement. Stops and lingers, pentatonic solos and sweeps, arpeggios and bursts. Fortunately for you, Dan doesn't cross that fine line between expression and ostentatious masturbation.

The title track is a tranquil instrumental and the only acoustic guitar song. What could potentially come across as peculiar, seems poetic and fitting. It's as if Dan goes into repose and reflects. Rather than digging deeper, he reaches a point of understanding and lets the notes and chords speak for themselves at their simplest, instead of using a million dollar electric riff.

Mixing comes courtesy of guitar nut Theo Crous - and mastering by Reuben Cohen in LA. What more could one want? Perhaps, only a strip show and a Ford Verlane as a courtesy gift upon purchase. Words fail me from here on out. And the reason why the devil created Fender, are for these occasions, when you don't have any. And when hellish emotions need to be suspended in the ether where all men's hearts reverberate and ripple the same. The blues, you either get it or you don't. And Dan Patlansky gives it. Twang-wang-waang!

www.danpatlansky.com

ABOUT JOHANN M. SMITH

Johann MSmith is a music journalist turned content hacker. Known as the IDMMAG launch designer, Johann specialises in entertainment, travel and social commentary. Or as he puts it: "I speak as and for companies through social and design."
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