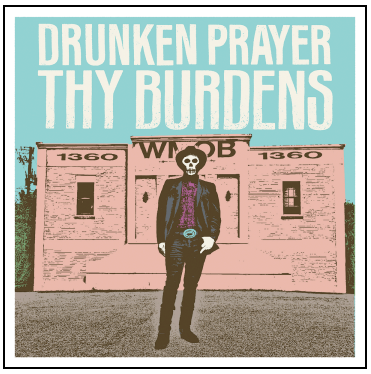
THY BURDENS



On *Thy Burdens* Morgan Geer and Drive-By Truckers' bassist Matt Patton create a completely new type of music on their own: "Cosmic Gospel". This music occupies that sweet spot of overlap at the intersection of Heaven, Hell, Appalachia and The Delta. You don't have to be a churchgoer to completely lose yourself in this exciting and private version of gospel that sounds like a marriage between Otis Redding and The Band.

Thy Burdens is a collection of deep-cut gospel-blues/country tunes rendered with ecstatic fuzz and stomp. With smoldering soulful arrangements, several of these tracks could sit nicely on the 3rd or 4th side of Exile on Main St., another record that synthesizes blues, country, soul, gospel and rock'n'roll. Fans of the eclectic collaborations between Robert Plant and Allison Kraus will appreciate this slightly more rambunctious exploration of similar terrain. Those familiar with the inexhaustible weirdness of Harry Smith's Anthology of American Folk Music, will understand where Geer and crew are coming from, bringing up musical molten core samples from deep below the American spiritual bedrock.

Some of us get a little squeamish when it comes to devotional music. Think of the still generally mystified response that Bob Dylan's "Christian" records get to this day, even among diehard fans. (Incidentally, *Thy Burdens* includes a deep-deep-cut cover of the Bard himself, "Long Ago, Far Away," a tune on the Witmark Demos, first officially released on the Dylan Bootleg series in 2010.) *Thy Burdens* is a "praise" record in perhaps the same way that the Byrds' *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* is a country record. Geer has a deep familiarity with gospel-blues, country-blues, the American spiritual vernacular, but with one foot in the tabernacle and another in the honky-tonk. It's Sunday-morning music that still retains a strong whiff of Saturday night about it.

On this album Drunken Prayer is engaged in the celebration of redemption and grace, torn up over the ubiquity of sin.

Thy Burdens was recorded in North Mississippi at Dial Back Sound, Bobby Matt Patton's studio in Water Valley, MS and former Fat Possum HQ, with friends from Wednesday, Band of Heathens, MJ Lenderman and Jimbo Mathis' group. The studio is also the former parsonage for the church next door.

Morgan Geer is from Mobile, AL and lives outside of Asheville, NC.

Bobby Matt Patton is from Jasper, AL and lives inside of Water Valley, MS.