

EAR CANDY

Athens Blur Magazine

Issue 10

September 4, 2009

Hank Williams

127 Rose Avenue

Every rose has its thorn. And Hank's not afraid to show his thorny side on *127 Rose Avenue*, with powerful takes on justice, near-poverty, family trees, bluegrass, women with over-the-top tastes, and more.

Avenue finds him walking new streets on his first album of all-new material since 2003's *I'm One of You*.

The cleverly-titled first single "Red, White, and Pink Slip Blues," almost immediately slows things down and takes a long hard look at financial life, or lack thereof. Its message is hard to sum up but it's impossible to not be affected in some way.

Apparently it pays to listen up. Seconds later, Hank loses the cut-to-the-heart conviction found on "Blues" and jumps right into the incredibly catchy "High Maintenance Woman." Oh, and thank God - this is NOT the same-named Toby Keith song. Williams Jr. wrote it himself, and it's not hard to believe he's lived it too (background singers and all). Single-worthy, it sings "she's a high maintenance woman and I'm a low budget man." Keep your ears open for the phone ring; don't let it lead you to reach for your own (phone).

"It's like I'm on the Opry, standing there with Bill Monroe," says Hank of "All the Roads," done with bluegrass maestros The Grascals (c'mon, it's in their name). *Rose* definitely proves the perfect home to grow well into the grass on "Roads." The two acts sound nature-made for each other.

On "Blues," he asks "Is anybody listening?" and if they're smart they will. Let's just hope it's not another six years before there's more...his music brings significantly more than most radio gives it credit for.

(Melissa Coker)