

JUBAL LEE YOUNG



Jubal Lee Young
Dosey Doe - The Woodlands, TX
June 12, 2009
Photo by Dave Clements - DWC Photography

“THE LAST FREE PLACE IN AMERICA”

www.JubalLeeYoung.com

JUBAL LEE YOUNG

You wouldn't need to know anything about Jubal Lee Young's background to hear that this is a cat who has the proverbial "it." But heritage he has indeed. On his third album "The Last Free Place in America", the only son of outlaw country-rock/Americana royals Steve Young ("Seven Bridges Road," "Lonesome On'ry and Mean") and Terrye Newkirk ("My Oklahoma", "Come Home, Daddy") comes ever more into his own.

Young's smoky molasses-rasp of a baritone sounds both familiar and new at the same time on this collection of eleven originals and one cover (Richard Dobson's "Piece of Wood and Steel."). Along the way, Young conjures the spirits of everyone from John Lee Hooker on drone-y blues like "Boom, Boom, Boom" and "Dead Miners" to the classic rock of Bob Seger ("Piece of Wood and Steel") to the sort of snakey-fiddle, cracked shot-glass outlaw country-rock Hank Jr. made back when he was still cool. ("Justice or Death.")

Young has survived some dark times – when not working in radio (for Nashville's once-ubercool WKDF), he spent his 20s drinking, drugging, and wrestling with his legacy by rocking way harder than was entirely necessary, and you can hear that era distilled to its purest essence in the midnight malevolence of "Animal Farm." And on the jaunty, hilarious "I Refuse," you can hear him exult in his relatively newfound comfort in his own skin.

Nowhere is Young's soaring voice or sharp songwriting skills displayed in bolder relief than on the title track, which was inspired by a passage in the Woody Guthrie biography *Ramblin' Man*. Late in his life, the disease-wracked and bottle-wrecked Guthrie had been institutionalized in a Brooklyn nuthouse, where at last he found relief from J. Edgar Hoover's black-suited Red Scare inquisitors. "They decided he was probably harmless if he was in the nuthouse, so they kinda wrote him off," says Young. "A couple of his Communist friends came by and were expressing concern for his well-being, and Woody said, 'Y'all don't worry about me. I'm okay. In here, I can stand up and say "I'm a Communist," and they just look at me and say "Aw, he's crazy." This is the last free place in America.' That whole book was a good read but that one story just jumped out at me – I thought 'that's a song.'

"It's kinda still true," Young continues. "We claim this is a free country and it's not in a lot of ways. Whether the Constitution prohibits or not, the social mores will. The whole churchiness of America can be uptight."

So too can be the Americana world Young is often lumped in with. "I'm okay with it," he says. "I don't know if they are okay with me, though. When the genre first started, it was a lot freer than what it is now."

And just as Guthrie could only find freedom in a Brooklyn nuthouse, so too does Young look in Americana's dark places. If Young is to dwell in Americana, he dwells in its slums – the back alleys where Patterson Hood passes a joint to Scott Miller while Todd Snider sleeps one off nearby.

-John Nova Lomax

"THE LAST FREE PLACE IN AMERICA"

Jubal Lee Young "THE LAST FREE PLACE IN AMERICA" - Track by Track

Reconstruction Records (RR-0002) - Release Date: June 19, 2009

***** GOING FOR ADDS: JULY 13, 2009 *****

1. **"Uh, Let's Go!"** – I guess I wrote this one somewhere around the time that we were recording the last CD. I was actually feeling like I wanted to express how I was feeling about the recent death of a friend in some musical fashion. I had the guitar on, pen in hand, paper available and got nowhere fast, as is often the case in songwriting. But then I started thinking about how much he loved Ray Wiley Hubbard and I cranked this one out. Enjoy.
2. **"Justice or Death"** – This one's hard to explain. I almost feel like it's a joke that I told but didn't even get myself until later. I just had this guitar piece I was playing with that felt like some Psycho-Mountain-Hillbilly thing and before I knew it I had several verses written. It's a darkly humorous slant on how fearful people often are and how they tend to look for something external to save them or complete them.
3. **"Boom Boom Boom"** – Someday there may be a song that can change the world. This one is not it. It evolved over time as something I would play to entertain my daughter. Have fun with it. She always did.
4. **"The Last Free Place In America"** – This one came from a story about Woody Guthrie during a period when he was institutionalized after his behavior became a bit erratic from Huntington's chorea. I recommend Ed Cray's Ramblin' Man: The Life and Times of Woody Guthrie (2004) for further study on Woody.
5. **"Bloom, Lily, Bloom"** – I'm not sure how to tell this story. It was a perfect storm of having just read Wise Blood by Flannery O'Connor and a conversation I had with a young lady when I was touring in Switzerland in 2005. It's a song of encouragement for the oft misunderstood inner artist in all of us.
6. **"Dead Miners"** – It's another slightly more understated song about greed. Why is it that every time there's an incident at a mine we later find out that they had been cited numerous times for safety violations and essentially did nothing and were not pressed on the matter by the authorities? Yeah. I'm pretty sick of that sort of thing.
7. **"Whatever You Do"** – I was never completely sure if I really liked this song or not, or even if I thought it was really finished. But the handful of people I played it for always seemed to like it a lot. It made it on the long list when we started looking at songs for this album and, as you can see, it made it. Please congratulate it!
8. **"I Refuse"** – This is a semi-autobiographical anthem I wrote in 2004. It barely saw the light of day, but at some point I played it for someone who just flipped out over it. I still didn't believe it. But I figured I'd give it a shot and started playing it out some. It's a good lesson in the artist being the worst judge of their own work. For the record, I didn't actually eat glass; they just thought I might have.
9. **"Piece of Wood and Steel"** – Richard Dobson's amazing song was first brought to my attention by my ol' dad. The first version I actually heard was the David Allen Coe cut. So that's where I go the notion of the key changes, but I took it down a notch and added the little vocal interlude between them. This song captures so much.
10. **"Falling For You"** – We recorded this song for the very first record Thomm and I worked on together, but in one of those bizarre music business meetings we decided to cut the first CD to 10 tracks and this was one that was left off. Somewhat inexplicably. It just didn't seem to fit on the last CD ("Jubal Lee Young"), but we knew early on that it belonged on the new one. My dad always accuses me (good naturedly) of ripping him off. He says it sounds like his version of "Rock Salt & Nails". But that's not true. I actually ripped it off from his version of "Don't Miss Your Water". Did I just sound like a politician?
11. **"Animal Farm"** – Who knew I would ever come to consider recording this one again? I first wrote and recorded this in about 1993 after re-reading the Orwell book of the same name. In 1994 I recorded a more official studio version with a band I had that rocked and rocked hard. Even though I have come to embrace my musical roots and heritage more as I've gotten older, I have always had a special place in my heart for this song. And for occasionally getting my rock on. There's always going to be at least one weird one on a Jubal Lee Young record, folks. This is the one for this CD.
12. **"One and One Is One"** – I actually wrote this song ahead of its time, I think. As best I can figure, I wrote this one about 1997 and recorded it with a 3 piece rock band I had at the time. I ran across some old recordings as we were ramping up to record this album and this one, all but forgotten, jumped out at me as having some real significance right now. The phrase "one and one is one" is something that was repeated back to me as something I was saying over and over in my sleep one morning while I was visiting a friend in LA. So I wrote it into a song.

JUBAL LEE YOUNG

“THE LAST FREE PLACE IN AMERICA”

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING:

"Jubal goes out on the edge and doesn't just survive, He triumphs. There is an acceptance of The Great What Is, an unflinching attitude that blossoms into a flat-out joy in being alive."

- David Olney, Singer/Songwriter

"Open Letter to Steve Young: Hey man, your boy rocks!"

- Kevin Welch, Singer/Songwriter

"Using the cliché 'The Apple Doesn't Fall Far From the Tree' one can certainly hear that the bloodline from Jubal's father, Steve Young, to Jubal has not strayed.

On his third album Jubal Lee has captured Love - Loss - Freedom - Pain and Fantasy! With a Folk/Troubadour blend "The Last Free Place in America" will surely keep you smiling, lamenting and day dreaming."

-Rick Heysquierdo, KPFT Lone Star Jukebox

"Here you have one of the finest singers that the Americana genre has produced. He's got that elusive thing, a sound. When he opens his mouth, what comes out just sounds good."

- Frank Goodman, PureMusic.com

"[Jubal] is a brilliant songwriter... He really blows me away."

-Corbin Maclaine, Stillpoint Media

"[Young] follows the steps of his father, folding folk and rock into gritty tunes that embody the spirit of vintage '70s country soul."

- Kathy Justice, Independent Weekly

"He's such a great singer... I think the songs are real, real good. I am a fan."

- Mary Gauthier, Singer/Songwriter

JUBAL LEE YOUNG

"THE LAST FREE PLACE IN AMERICA"

1. "Uh, Let's Go!"
2. "Justice or Death"
3. "Boom Boom Boom"
4. "The Last Free Place In America"
5. "Bloom, Lily, Bloom"
6. "Dead Miners"
7. "Whatever You Do"
8. "I Refuse"
9. "Piece of Wood and Steel"
10. "Falling For You"
11. "Animal Farm"
12. "One and One Is One"

GOING FOR ADDS: JULY 13, 2009