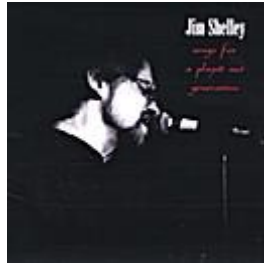


Mp3 Jim Shelley - Songs For A Played Out Generation



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"By turns ugly, angry, tortured, wistful and exhilarating." -- Alternative Press 18 MP3 Songs ROCK: 90's Rock, ROCK: Modern Rock Details: "I'm glad I'm not a rock star/laughing and acting stoned/I'm glad I'm not a rock star/But I wish I was anyway." -- "(I'm Glad I'm Not A) Rock Star" Small-town football player-turned-schoolteacher, pushing 40, makes lo-fi rock recordings of extraordinary beauty and power, but can't keep a band together and struggles endlessly for recognition. No, I'm not talking about Robert Pollard! This is the tale of Jim Shelley, a/k/a Book Of Kills. "I was on the Guided By Voices mailing list once," relates Shelley, on the phone from Harrisonburg, Virginia, where he's taught English and coached the high school football team for more than 12 years. "I think half the people on there are jealous teachers!" Anyone with a brain and a heart who heard Book Of Kills would be jealous, too. In a career spanning 10 years and some 20 cassette releases, the man has assembled an impressive body of work. Inspired by The Beatles, Sex Pistols, Husker Du, and the Pixies (to name a few), and playing with the freedom only obscurity offers, Shelley recombines his roots into classic punk-rock, folk-rock, industrial-rock and whatever-else-rock strikes his fancy. Book Of Kills (the name was appropriated from Marshall McLuhan) has been a live band only sporadically over the years, in part because of Jim's free-form aesthetics. "I've never been able to get people interested in playing 80 percent of the stuff I've written," he laments. "They only want to do a certain kind of song, whereas I'll put a folk song on with an industrial song. That just blows people's minds. They can't accept that." The limits of small-town life also come into play. "Harrisonburg's only got about 35,000 people living here," says Shelley. "I've probably played with every musician in this damn town." Of course, new players keep getting born, but the generation gap is hard to leap, even for a die-hard punker. In the most recent version of BOK, "two of the guys were really young, like 18 years old. It was too big of a gap; it just got really strange." Like most

home-tapers, Shelley is no stranger to self-doubt and despair, yet for all the setbacks and frustration, he can't see ever quitting. "It's something you have to do," he says. "It's who you are. It's what you are!" And the lure of the spotlight forever tugs at this Little League coach and father. "One of the best gigs I ever played was over at the high school," Shelley recalls. "Something like 500 or 600 kids came and the place just went nuts. There was some really hard-core moshing going on; two kids came out with broken legs. I'll never forget being on stage, staring into the distance and seeing the principal at the back of the auditorium -- utterly helpless!" "There's a place I can go/Where no one else can go/It's so good to feel so free/Nobody can get to me/I am always so happy/I can be what I want to be/In my room." -- "In My Room" --Jim Santo, DemoUniverse

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