

Mp3 Daniel Smith - American Made



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This CD is full of uptempo, hopping country-rock songs, along with sweet ballads that were all written by Daniel. Includes the sentimental country radio hits "I'm Going Home", "Right Side Of Love", and "Thank You" (Tribute to the American Soldier). 12 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Country Rock, COUNTRY: Modern Country Details: BIO ALBUM COMMENTARY American Made By Ed Morris It's a good sign when a song from an artist's first album earns this level of praise the first day it's played on radio: "Today on your show I heard Daniel Smith's 'I'm Going Home.' I would really like to get a copy of this song. I lost my Mother to cancer last December, and when I heard this song this morning it really touched my heart. I want to share it with my family." (Listener message to DJ Mike Thomas, KFAV-FM, St. Peters, Missouri) Within Daniel Smith's rugged six-foot-five frame lies the heart of a poet and the warm, sincere and comforting voice of a best friend. Like those of Kris Kristofferson, Smith's lyrics are literate and well-defined meditations on life's uneven surfaces. All 11 songs on this debut album American Made are Smith's solo compositions, except for one he co-wrote. Clearly, here is an artist with his own voice and vision. Smith grew up in Taylor Mill, Kentucky, a small town just across the Ohio River from Cincinnati. Although Cincinnati has long been a center of country and bluegrass music, Smith says his inspiration came from his parents' record collection, which tended to be heavy on albums by Eddy Arnold, Conway Twitty, the Statler Brothers and the gospel-singing Gaithers. Like most boys his age, Smith also developed a strong affinity for rock music. In college, he began playing in his fraternity's rock band, No Exit, which made a sizable name for itself working the clubs and bars of Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. "Eventually we broke up," Smith says, "and I kind of fell away from music for a while. But I finally realized that making music was what I wanted to do with my life. And I found myself drawn to country music. So I started writing songs and just getting to know the business." As he was learning the

music trade, he supported himself by buying and "rehabbing" houses for sale. While still living in Kentucky, Smith recorded a four-song demo and "shotgunned" it by mail to Nashville record labels and music publishers. "Obviously, I didn't know a lot about the industry then," he admits. " But that's what I did at first, and then I came down to Nashville just to get the feel of everything." He began making these exploratory trips in the winter of 2001 and the following summer he moved to Nashville. Smith's big break came in July of 2003 when he met Larry Sheridan and Robin Ruddy, the owners of Best Built Songs, a music publishing company, and Parlor Recording Studio. (Sheridan and Ruddy would later be honored for their work on the Grammy-winning folk album, *Beautiful Dreamer: The Songs of Stephen Foster*.) "I went in there to record a demo of a song called 'Thank You: Tribute To The American Soldier,'" Smith recalls, "and I struck up a relationship with them. I had done showcases and songwriters' nights at places like the Hall of Fame Lounge and the Broken Spoke and all that, but this was my first taste of the real music business." Impressed by his songwriting skills and recording potential, Best Built Songs signed him to a publishing contract. Sheridan produced and Ruddy associate produced and played on *American Made* for their Parlor Records label. Smith says he goes out of his way to keep his songwriting outlook fresh. "To be honest, I try not to listen to a lot of commercial radio so I won't be influenced by it," he explains. "I write more from my own perspective, material that will suit me personally and yet still be commercial." This go-it-alone approach is apparent throughout *American Made*. Smith's "Thank You" is not an angry song as so many other tributes to soldiers have been. It doesn't lash out at terrorists or war protesters or threaten to kick anybody's butt. Instead, it is a dignified yet impassioned expression of gratefulness to those who've risked everything. In "Right Side Of Love", he rejoices for the once-misguided woman who's now found the man of her dreams, declaring that "the ship of fools she's been sailing on/has finally run aground." Smith says he was inspired to write his comic "Fifth Amendment" after watching a Rockford Files rerun. "She had a bad case of Fifth Amendment," moans the betrayed lover, "acting a lot like a guilty defendant/refusing to answer the questions I posed/afraid that the truth just might be exposed." Elsewhere, Smith writes and sings of honesty ("What U See Is What U Get"), the joys of a good marriage ("We've Got Love"), lessons learned ("True Measure Of A Man") and the benefits of living life on the edge ("What's Wrong With That"). "I'm Going Home," the song that sparked the letter quoted above, transports the listener from immobilizing despair to transcendent hope. Not a bad start. At its best, country music rises above the fluid sounds of steel guitars and quaint postcard images of home. It finds wisdom in the

commonplace, joy in the absurd moment and strength in unblinking self-awareness. This is Daniel Smith's territory and the landscape he shares with us in American Made.

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