

Mp3 Lloyd Thayer - The Bumper Pool Diaries



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13 Ballads of hope and beauty, with pedal steel echoes of Appalachia, the Delta, and old weird America.

13 MP3 Songs FOLK: Alternative Folk, BLUES: Folk-Blues Details: The Bumper Pool Diaries is the third album released in one year by Boston based Dobro virtuoso Lloyd Thayer. This album highlights Thayers songwriting, with songs that are poetic snap shots of an America that has been long forgotten, and yet somehow still resonates with the modern world. The album covers a wide range of styles, from the simple folk ballad of Earl to the gospel blues shout of Loneliness, using an equally wide variety of instruments including Dobro, musical saw, pedal steel, theremin and many more. The album was referred to by one Dutch reviewer as the Sgt. Pepper of the folk world which also highlights Thayers producing and engineering skills. The Bumper Pool Diaries features 13 songs performed by Thayer, with accompaniment by several well known artists including Rob Laurens, Michael Dinallo, Josh Kantor, Susan Levine, Danielle Miraglia and Tom Bianchi. The following article about Thayers three cds in one year mission was written by Ted Drozdowski for the Feb. 7th edition of the Boston Phoenix. Lloyd Thayer is recounting the roster of instruments he plays as we enjoy Indian food in a Central Square restaurant. "There's dobro, harmonica, guitar, I have a sitar I can play some nice things on, clarinet, saxophone, didgeridoo, and a hurdy-gurdy I can really make some wild sounds on, theremin - but I'm really bad at it - musical saw . . . " "Wait," I say, nearly choking on a bite of pakora before seizing a chance to solve one of life's great mysteries. "Musical saw? What's the difference between a musical saw and a regular saw? Can you get one at Home Depot?" "I tried that for a long time and got every kind of saw and couldn't get a sound out of them. You have to get one from a musical-saw maker. It's the way the steel is tempered. The steel is crosshatched in a conventional saw, which makes it more rigid and durable. In a musical saw, all the steel's grain goes the same way, so it will vibrate more. The key is to hold the handle between

your knees and keep it in an 'S' shape, bending the tip down, and to use a violin bow on the smooth edge." Thank me later. But thank Thayer now - by attending one of his shows, like the gig coming up at Somerville's Sky Bar February 24, or by buying one of his recent CDs via [lloydthayer](#)- for being one of the more interesting musicians in the Boston area. His name may be unfamiliar, but chances are you've seen him in Harvard Square or on a subway platform with a guitar laid flat on his lap, a slide at the end of one heavily tattoo'd arm and fingers moving like a spider over the strings at the end of the other. Or on the stages of clubs and coffeehouses, where he's become a frequent presence as a headliner or an opener for bluesy artists like Paul Rishell, Annie Raines and Johnny Winter. And his voice is as memorable as his incendiary lap slide - a gravelly pit bull's bark that resonates with dirty soul. In person, however, Thayer is a soft-spoken, gentle fellow, qualities he may have acquired through his practice of Buddhism. And they're assets for him as slide-dobro and harmonica teacher at Club Passim's music school. Still, he's a man with a mission: to self-release three albums in 12 months. The first, *Blues for Boston*, appeared last May, followed months later by a headlining performance at Passim that dashed from conventional blues to folk, Eastern melodicism, bad-ass rockin', and tunes by Stevie Wonder and Run-D.M.C. The second, *Birds*, has just come out, and he's already at work on number three, recording at home with a computer, a handful of microphones, and the same patience that makes his performances on the first two both exacting and energetic. "I got the idea for making three albums in a year from a conversation I had with [lap-slide guru] David Lindley. He was playing Johnny D's, and I asked him how he was able to stay on top of playing so many instruments - oud, bouzouki, slide guitar. He said he thought of them as different heads on the same dragon. I thought, 'Okay, that makes sense,' and then when I got home, I thought, 'What the hell did he mean by that?' " Nonetheless, a notion was sown. "I began to think about the heads I deal with on my own dragon. Blues is one, and then there's the Eastern music and my instrumentals, and the kind-of folk songs I write. If I go to a blues festival, I'll pretty much stick with blues, but at a coffeehouse gig or, say, the Middle East, I know people will want more than one style. But some people get confused when they hear my earlier CDs" - Thayer has made five including *Birds* - "because I've got every style at once in there. So I thought that by making three CDs of different styles, I could offer people a specific choice of my music." Indeed, he's encountered blues fans who bristle at the Middle Eastern-flavored microtonal improvisations he's likely to toss into the middle of a Son House classic. But Thayer's too good and too creative a player to be confounded by rigidity. Even on *Blues for Boston*

there's a powerful medley of Howlin' Wolf's "Killing Floor" and Dylan's "Masters of War" that stretches both songs from their historic roots all the way to the scorched desert of Iraq. Improbable as it seems, Thayer got into playing lap slide guitar because of Ozzy Osbourne. At the time, he was an "armpit guitar player," as snooty sliders like to put it, in a band called Nobody. "We decided to make an album of Black Sabbath songs. The project started when I wondered, 'What if Tammy Wynette did "Iron Man" as a love song?' I felt like some of the songs would benefit from dobro, so that's how I got started." Eight years later, the Brockton native and three-time art-school dropout has evolved into a personal stylist and a regional treasure - though he's more modest than his abilities require. "I feel like my music is meant for the people who somehow find it. Like water, it will find its way rather than have me force it on them." He's firmly in touch with his inner Buddhist as he says this, and indeed, till a few years ago, he didn't even sell or promote his CDs - he gave them away to anyone who asked. "I feel that Buddhism is really an important part of my music, because it helps me be present and aware of my life, and to be grateful and less distracted by the chaos that goes on around us. And I love the idea of playing in the Square or the subway and having a connection with people. Then it's surprise music - a gift of free music to somebody who's just passing by."

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