

## MONTE GOOD A Texas Honky Tonk

★★★★★



*A Texas Honky Tonk*  
/ *That Girl Who Waits On Tables*  
/ *I Flew Over Our House Last Night* / *The Corner Of My Mind* /  
/ *I Cheated Me Right Out Of You* /  
*There's A Little Bit Of Everything*  
*In Texas* / *I Can't Tell If I've*  
*Gone Crazy* / *Red Wine And*  
*Blue Memories* / *The Walls Of*  
*This Old Honky Tonk* / *The Right*  
*Combination* / *You Ought To*  
*Hear Me Cry* / *Way Down Texas*  
*Way*

Producers: Monte Good & Randy Kohrs

**Self Release**

34:29

Now here's a guy with a surname that's a reviewer's dream. Think of all the puns we could make of it. However, all I really need to say is that Monte Good lives up to his name.

Cutting his musical teeth in the dancehalls of Oklahoma, he made the move to Nashville in 1989 and got a gig playing steel for Scott McQuaig (who charted a terrific version of *Honky Tonk Amnesia* during a brief spell with Capitol Records). Monte went on to work with Stacy Dean Campbell, John Michael Montgomery, Richochet, and Neal McCoy and while he has these days "retired" from working for other artists he continues to live and record in Nashville, although if you didn't know better you'd swear this album was made in Texas, despite a superb

production by bluegrass of note Randy Kohrs.

Monte certainly favours the dancehall sound and despite being proficient on pedal steel and slide guitar here supplies acoustic guitar on this collection of songs that are "what made Monte Good what he is today".

The choice of songs is excellent, with no really obvious covers, even if one or two have cropped up on Heart Of Texas releases in recent years such as the favourite *There's A Little Bit Of Everything In Texas* (George IV and also Joe Paul Nichols), and *The Right Combination* (covered by Justin Trevino with Amber Digby).

Album opener is Darrell McCall's *A Texas Honky Tonk*, and while Monte might not have the "big" voice of a McCall or Johnny Bush he does it rather well with his smooth style (later in the album he covers Johnny Bush's *You Ought To Hear Me Cry*). *The Walls Of This Old Honky Tonk* from the seminal Red Steagall album *Lone Star Beer And Bob Wills Music* was a great choice, and dare I say, better than the original. I also like the way Monte has made *That Girl Who Waits On Tables* way more Texas dancehall than Ronnie Milsap ever did, and he has nailed Tom T Hall's *I Flew Over Our House Last Night*.

Skeets McDonald is always a good place to go, and *The Corner Of My Mind* a tad more obscure than some of the more obvious Skeets songs. Joe Stampley's *Red Wine And Blue Memories* is also an inspired choice and further proves that what made Monte Good what he is today is some damn fine real country music.

There's just one original song, *I Can't Tell If I've Gone Crazy*, which is in no way out of place in such fine company, but if he writes 'em this good I'd have liked to hear more.

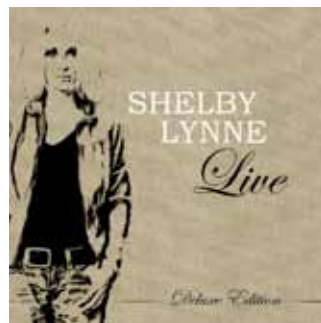
If I'd heard this album sooner it might well have made it into my best of the year. Trust me, if you regularly buy anything Texas dancehall you'll want this.

If I was going to make any pun on his name it's that his middle name should be 'very' or 'extremely'.

Duncan Warwick

## SHELBY LYNNE Live: Deluxe Edition

★★★★



CD: *Revelation Road* / *Lead Me Love* / *I'll Hold Your Hand* / *I Don't Need A Reason* / *Even Angels* / *Woebegone* / *The Thief* / *Heaven's Only Days...* / *Jesus On A Greyhound* / *Leavin'* / *Old Dog* / *Johnny Met June* / *10 Rocks* / *Life Is Bad* / *Tarpoleon Napoleon* / *Your Lies* / *Where I'm From* / *Iced Tea*

1:07:38

DVD: *Revelation Road* / *Lead Me Love* / *I'll Hold Your Hand* / *I Don't Need A Reason* / *Even Angels* / *Lookin' Up* / *I Want To Go Back* / *Woebegone* / *The Thief* / *Toss I All Aside* / *Heaven's Only Days...* / *Jesus On A Greyhound* / *Leavin'* / *Killin' Kind* / *Old Dog* / *10 Rocks* / *Johnny Met June* / *Life Is Bad* / *Your Lies* / *Your Lies* / *Where I'm From* / *Black Light Blue* / *Pretend* / *Iced Tea*

Producer: Shelby Lynne

**Everso Records**

1:33:04

This two-disc set contains two different solo live performances by Shelby Lynne; just her

playing acoustic guitar with no band. The CD was recorded in the small back room of McCabe's Guitar Shop, Santa Monica and the DVD was filmed in the Victorian gothic interior of Union Chapel in Islington, London.

Lynne began as a mainstream Nashville country singer before making a dramatic career change and heading of to California to write her own songs. Lynne sums this up succinctly on the DVD as part of the introduction to *Leavin'*, a song she wrote about the move. "In 1988 I went to Nashville, Tennessee and I got a recording contract with CBS records. I was 18; I wanted to be Tammy Wynette. Big hair, big dreams, everything Nashville wants and needs. In 1998 I decided I wanted to write my own songs; I wanted to be Bobbie Gentry."

All the songs on both discs are original compositions from the second stage of her career.

Lynne's first album of her own songs, *I Am Shelby Lynne*, was released in 2000 to critical acclaim and she has subsequently built up an impressive body of work. Her songs have a lot of autobiographical content and often deal with dark times. The songs from *I Am Shelby Lynne* were written at a low point in her life. This is fairly obvious from the titles of *Your Lies*, *Life Is Bad* and *Black Light Blue*. Even the more optimistic-sounding title *Lookin' Up* is a disguise for a song of desperation, and the nostalgic *Where I'm From* is tinged with melancholy. The success of the original album was aided by arrangements that skilfully gave a subtle, contrasting sugar coating to the often bleak lyrics, but on these stripped down, acoustic versions; Lynne gives full vent to the emotional content.