

fit into other people's? Don't get me wrong, I'm really enjoying most of this album. It's a cut above much of what's coming out by the other male country singers signed to the Nashville majors ... it's just that I really want to listen to Chris Young being Chris Young. **Alan Cackett**

www.chrisyoungcountry.com

Greg Trooper INCIDENT ON WILLOW STREET

52 Shakes Records

★★★★

12 classy new Trooper
character studies



Almost 30 years a recording artist, Jersey Shore bred Trooper's 12th release, produced by Grammy winner Stewart Lerman (Loudon Wainwright, Jules Shear, TV's Boardwalk Empire), was recorded at The Willow. In late 2012 as the sessions for his latest album approached, on his web site, Greg wrote: 'What a crazy year it's been. Moved twice, robbed once, and wrote a bunch of songs. Sandy came in at the end and tried her best

to wipe us out but we'd have none of that...' In July this year, Greg's beloved mother Rita passed. While life's path can be rocky and unpredictable, solace is consistently found in song...

In the studio, Trooper (vocals, acoustic guitar, harmonica) was principally assisted by long-time collaborators Larry Campbell (electric/acoustic guitar, pedal steel, mandolin, fiddle, Irish bazouki, banjo, piano)—boy does he shine—and Ken Blevins (drums), plus Houston based Jack Saunders (acoustic/electric bass, harmony vocals) and London bred Oli Rockberger (organ, piano, electric piano). Lerman also contributed bass, and played piano on the opening opus, step-daughter Lucy Wainwright Roche sang on one selection, and chip off the old block, Jack Trooper, drummed on one tune.

Featuring 12 Trooper originals, *All The Way To Amsterdam* launches INCIDENT ON WILLOW STREET. The portrait of a dysfunctional Texas family, the main character—a bookish young girl—dreams of one day skating on Amsterdam's frozen canals. Trooper ups the tempo for *Good*

Luck Heart, an optimistic love ode, while the slower, ensuing *Steel Deck Bridge* is a getaway song. A Celtic inspired melody underpins the mighty fine *Mary Of The Scots In Queens*, wherein we learn that the green-eyed, bagpipe playing object of the narrator's undying affection is married—'I always hated that Irish Brian.'

The organ/pedal steel propelled *Everything's A Miracle* explores a melodically soulful groove, and, vocally featuring Lucy Roche, the river town couple in *The Land Of No Forgiveness* hatch a plan to run away. In the 'cold dark streets' of a city a woman, tired of 'the cheaters and thieves,' seeks the love of *One Honest Man*, and I-o-v-e also underpins the ensuing *Amelia* and the up-tempo, lyrically sly/racy *Living With You*. Halfway through *This Shitty Deal* the narrator acknowledges that, in love, he simply got what he deserved, *The Girl In The Blue*, a rose in her hair, possesses a Mae West stare, and with potent banjo and fiddle support INCIDENT closes with *Diamond Heart*. **Arthur Wood**

www.gregtrooper.com

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