

Robert Morgan Fisher

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NOTES FOR A NOVEL
Imperative Records

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NOTES FOR A NOVEL is Texas-born, California-based Fisher's third release on his own Imperative imprint. As well as being a performing songwriter, Fisher is an unpublished novelist—irony or not, that's what he claims on his web site—and he's also a writer of short stories and screenplays. I guess it's no great stretch to relate that; based on the foregoing, Robert is no slouch when it comes to penning literate narratives. The line: 'I've been making notes for a novel' launches the opening song "Unimpressed"—that single word being the narrator's intended book title. By way of expanding the concept, Fisher shines his investigative torch on a series of not quite straight arrow characters, including an anabolic sports jock that has '...never cracked a book, but he's been booked on crack.' Conjuring up 'a fact is stranger than fiction' climax, the characters interact in a massive conflagration. A father who passes on to his son the dream of becoming an astronaut is one of the scenarios portrayed in the structurally similar "Don't You Wanna Go To Mars?" Employing the moral that there's a smidgen of good in all of us, a female music teacher and self-proclaimed good Christian, '...got two boys that I raised since my husband left me...' becomes the voice coach of a former work-worn hooker in "Angel Within." Once upon a time a horse, gun, compass and map were prerequisites to cross the United States, leading the lonesome narrator on this Darryl Purpose co-write to conclude that there "Oughta Be a Highway." While the foregoing four legged solution was environmentally green, toward the close, Fisher's narrator expresses a desire—ironically—for 'Welcoming Arches, fossil fuel on demand.' The ten-minute long "Kissinger" delivers the contention that this former US Secretary of State (1973-1977) is a culpable war criminal. Fisher grew up during the 1960s, and "Harold Examiner" which is set in Camarillo, Ventura County recalls major events—the Tet Offensive, the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy—as well as minor events—the television cop series Adam-12—from that decade. Merged with the foregoing historically factual backdrop, curiosity gets the better of two young kids who are paid by a neighbour to babysit his pot plants. Singer-songwriter Dave Morrison adds his voice to the light-hearted personal tribute "Morrison Fixed His Guitar," while on the second Darryl Purpose co-write "Granted," Fisher's young son Grant plays piano—and you can tell! Written by Tommy Faile, the closing selection "Big Joe And Phantom 309" recalls a ghostly occurrence while hitchhiking at night and Fisher delivers it as a spoken narrative in similar style to the Red Sovine original. Fisher's lyrics are certainly opinionated and punchy, some could be interpreted as judgemental but I'll let the reader decide. Among a gaggle of players, Fisher is joined by John McEuen (banjo), and supported vocally by John York, Julie Christensen and Janis Ian. Arthur Wood

www.robertmorganfisher.com

