

Young Rell – You Don't Have To Go

Reviewed by A Band Paul Called Paul

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As Leonard Cohen sang in, 'Tower of Song,'

"I was born like this; I had no choice ...I was born with the gift of a golden voice ..."

I had to double-check the background information provided for Harrell Davenport's, (a.k.a. Young Rell), tingling ultra-live performance of "You Don't Have To Go", a song thematically rooted in the blues tradition of relationship breakups.

Harrell Davenport is 14 years old and sings with the echoes of age-old experience through a gritted, smoky tone that belies his youth.

12-bar blues is a well-established musical convention with many varied interpretations over the decades by artists ranging the early purist style of Jimmy Reed, to whom this song is dedicated, through Muddy Waters to its more skiffle-rhythmed cousin influencing early rock 'n' roll through Bill Haley's "Rock Around The Clock" and Elvis' "Hound Dog".

I guarantee you've heard its comfortably predictable progressions countless times - even the quoted, "Tower of Song," above also follows its chord structure - a context that makes it a challenging space in which to bring originality and freshness.

In this recording, we get just that. It sits within the more purist blues space as a raw and exposed performance that equally brims with a confidence in delivery and playing style, benefitting hugely from the combination.

As with all meaningful blues, the performance represents life laid bare.

The confidence is conveyed through the singer's accepting narrative of his seemingly doomed romantic circumstance.

The combined vocal and guitar delivery is the expression of the soul that came to that acceptance.

One can only imagine how Young Rell's talent shall mature over the coming years as his soulful tone becomes infused and rounded with the richness of further life experience.

I've no doubt it's a recipe for something very special indeed and I'll be keenly watching the development.