

David Vest - Roadhouse Revelation (2014)

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01. *Freight Train Rolling* — 03:22 02. *Stand Your Ground* — 04:03 03. *Ramblin' Man* — 04:11 04. *You Came Through* — 03:45 05. *Streetcar* — 05:17 06. *Gone Too Far* — 02:28 07. *Crooked Politician* — 02:27 08. *Santa Fe Steamer* — 03:12 09. *That Happened To Me* — 04:13 10. *Heart Full Of Rock And Roll* — 04:46 11. *Pretty Things For Anne* — 01:12 David Vest - Composer, Organ, Piano, Vocals Gary Kendall - Bas Teddy Leonard - Guitar Joby Baker - Percussion Mike Fitzpatrick - Drums, Percussion

David Vest is an American now living in Canada. Like his previous CD “East Meets Vest”, this is a quartet recording with David’s piano and vocals backed by the rhythm section of Downchild, Mike Fitzpatrick on drums and Gary Kendall on bass, and Fathead’s Teddy Leonard on guitar. The supporting players carry the tag of ‘The Willing Victims’! The CD was produced by David and Gary, Teddy and Mike lending a hand on the mixing, so everyone was closely involved in the making of this album. David wrote all the material with one collaboration and one cover.

There is plenty of piano here and two solo features for David; the CD closes on the aptly titled “Pretty Things For Anne”, a beautiful short piece of solo piano which finishes far too soon after just 1.12. “Santa Fe Steamer” in contrast lets David loose on a boogie piece which will get anyone’s feet tapping. More great piano features on “Freight Train Rolling” which starts with the drums and piano locked into the train rhythms before David sings the first verse, supplies some strong right hand accents and Teddy weighs in with an excellent rock and roll flavoured guitar solo to start the album with a bang. “Stand Your Ground” rocks hard with a guitar riff that comes out of the Rolling Stones’ songbook. David’s lyrics seem to have a touch of desperation as he asks if the protagonist has the strength to stand his ground and there are strong solos on both guitar and piano here. Less successful is the cover of Hank Williams’ “Ramblin’ Man” where David felt obliged to try a ‘yodel’ on the vocal which did not work well to these ears (although the rest of the song is fine and adds a touch of country to the mix). “You Came Through” is arguably the strongest cut on the album with a sensitive lyric and a catchy tune. The song reminded me of Dylan in his prime: “In my time of lost connections you reasoned with me while the world was

turning blue. Peace of mind is what you gave me and when only love could save me you came through". With an elegant and expressive guitar solo as well, this is an impressive song.

"Streetcar" is more piano-based, almost jazz/ragtime in style as David recounts the odd tale of a ghost streetcar and the presence of a long-lost love. "Gone Too Far" is a short jaunty blues, with some country flourishes on guitar. "Crooked Politician" is a co-write with the late Paul deLay, a real putdown of political corruption with the memorable lyrical finale "just a low down crooked politician, you can tell him you heard it from a blues musician". "That Happened To Me" returns to the blues in a piece with plenty of left hand piano notes to accompany the rather downbeat lyrics of knowing how it feels to be 'down on the bottom'. The final full song "Heart Full Of Rock And Roll" counters the depression with some more upbeat music in which David tells us that he has "a mind full of trouble, a heart full of rock and roll". The applause at the end confirms that this one was recorded live. ---John Mitchell, bluesblastmagazine.com

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