

LIMBECK



DEFIANCERECORDS LX

Hi, Everything's Great.

Defiance Records LX (Nr.60) – STREET-DATE UK: November 17th, 2003
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The twang of a road-tested Telecaster, a glorious wash of open hi-hats and snapping snare patterns, the warmth of a perfect bass line and the earnest declarations of a man yearning to be on the highway, heading east on the 15 to anywhere but Southern California – the new century has its first essential road record. Limbeck's latest, *Hi, Everything's Great.* (Defiance Records), is the sort of tribute to the American landscape only seen through unflappable virtue. The songs tell of the simple moments that end up meaning so much: a rainy day sitting on steps in Ohio, a long drive home from Tuscon with sleeping bandmates, a purposeful conversation with an old friend (ex-goth kid), and the relationships – whether lasting, fleeting, found or lost – along the way.

Many of the tales sung on *Hi, Everything's Great.* are birthed by a photograph taken by singer/guitarist Robb MacLean, who explained, “A lot of times what makes a song come about are the pictures that I’ve taken on the road that are really nostalgic to me. It’ll remind me of what was going on within the picture or what went on that day.” In doing so, MacLean writes at a level of honesty rarely seen in modern rock music, perhaps akin to classic country or folk recordings. MacLean never changes the names of people in his songs and he never fudges the details for dramatic effect. “Robb is someone that is really a stickler for keeping to the facts,” said lead guitarist Patrick Carrie. “I think that’s where the importance is, so if you bend them a little bit it throws them off. All of our stuff, if you read into it, it’s like watching the Robb TV show.”

Hi, Everything's Great., recorded and produced by Ed Rose (The Get Up Kids, Coalesce, Kill Creek), exhibits a palpable change in Limbeck's sound from their 2001 album *This Chapter Is Called Titles*. While the band's full-bore exuberance and love for Cheap Trick-style sing-a-longs is still present, Limbeck – MacLean, Carrie, bassist Justin Entsminger and drummer Matt Stephens – have let their alt-country leanings bear light.

Under the production guidance of Rose, Limbeck spent much of their recording session at Black Lodge studios in Kansas tweaking their prior notions of proper studio equipment. Experimenting with a slew of amplifiers, guitars and drums – often choosing shoddier models – Limbeck emerged with a more natural sound.

“About half the stuff I used was just a bunch of garbage that you’d find at a garage sale that happened to work for that song,” Stephens said. “If you listen to the bass drum and the snare drum very, very closely, it distorts a little bit. It’s just because it wasn’t a good bass drum.” Limbeck took further liberties by adding lap steel guitar, banjo, and cowbell parts to their mix. Piano, Hammond organ, and Rhodes keyboard (played by MÏÈe’s Chris Cron) and female backing vocals (sung by Rachael Cantu), also added to the album’s countrified flavor.

“We’ve been traveling a lot and country music is good road music, and that’s just a fact,” Carrie said. “We started listening to Old ‘97s records and now we’ve worked back to Hank Williams and Johnny Cash, then back up to The Flying Burrito Brothers and Uncle Tupelo.”

Armed with the endearing *Hi, Everything's Great.* and a thirst for interstate transit, Limbeck's success is in its journey – the places yet to be seen, the people yet to be met and the photographs yet to be taken.

“We’re at that point in our lives when we don’t wanna know what’s around the next corner,” Carrie said. “It’s not like we’re that old, but we’ve been in Southern California for a while now and it’s nice to drive and not know what’s on the next corner. It comes down to just being four friends that are in a van, free-roaming … Good times!”

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