

## **Jim Stringer**

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### ***From Freight Train Boogie:***

JIM STRINGER & THE AM BAND

In My Hand... (The Music Room)

Austin and Chicago have been duking it out for the title of "Home Of Real Country Music" and with this CD, Jim Stringer & His AM Band land a hard left hook right to Chicago's kisser. Without ever sounding cliché, the Texan's original songs on this CD bring in a touch of bluegrass, a touch of folk, a touch of polka, a touch of western swing, a touch of Gothic Americana, and a whole lot of authenticity. The covers are wonderfully chosen, with Joni Mitchell's "Raised On Robbery" being a wonderfully executed surprise that gets a lot of play on my iPod. The musicianship is executed well enough that the playing frames Stringer's voice -- a wonderful, rich baritone -- and lets him weave stories for us. The songs can be a bit dark, but even the dark ones celebrate what is happy in life. The production is also well done, crystal-clear and mixed expertly so the feeling of being right there comes through nicely. This CD is a 38 minute clinic on how to write, perform, and engineer a real country CD -- a clinic that Music Row would do well to attend.

Jim's site. Buy from Amazon.

Released May '04, reviewed by Clint Weathers.

### ***From St. Louis Riverfront Times:***

On May 11, the Music Room released Jim Stringer and the Austin Music Band's In My Hand, a crackerjack 12-track example of traditional country music. For In My Hand, the band's third CD, Stringer, who wrote all but two of the songs, provides vocals and plays acoustic guitar, electric guitar, lap steel guitar, baritone guitar, six-string bass, tic-tac bass, and other instruments—the poor bastard should apply for combat pay.

Stringer, a fiftysomething transplant from Kansas, boasts a timeless tenor, unassailable talent as guitarist and bandleader both, and often breathtaking skill as a lyricist. He and the AM Band—rightly characterized by 3rd Coast Music as “the closest thing Austin has to a supergroup”—handle with fluency material reminiscent of the finest western swing, rockabilly, and classic country, romping through Joni Mitchell's “Raised on Robbery” (a duet with Karen Poston), performing with stately sonority the love song “Dance Like a Child,” gleefully juking on “Pink Tornado.” Finally, beyond all of its other graces, the title track and opener to In My Hand unfolds with all of the lovely implacability of a Greek tragedy, a work deceptively easy in its cadence and dreadfully hard in all other respects. In short, it's a disc of considerable artistry.

--St. Louis Riverfront Times

