

MICHAEL MENAGER

➤ NOT THE EXPRESS ➤

Michael Menager's sophomore release, *Not The Express* arrives this May 9th, and it's been a long time coming - how many artists can you think of that began their recording career in their late 60s? Menager's 2014 debut, *Clean Exit*, arrived just after the California born, Candelo, New South Wales based singer-writer's 67th birthday, and was quietly self released to a handful of friends and family. That very same week, he lost his life partner Judith to a long and valiant battle with cancer.

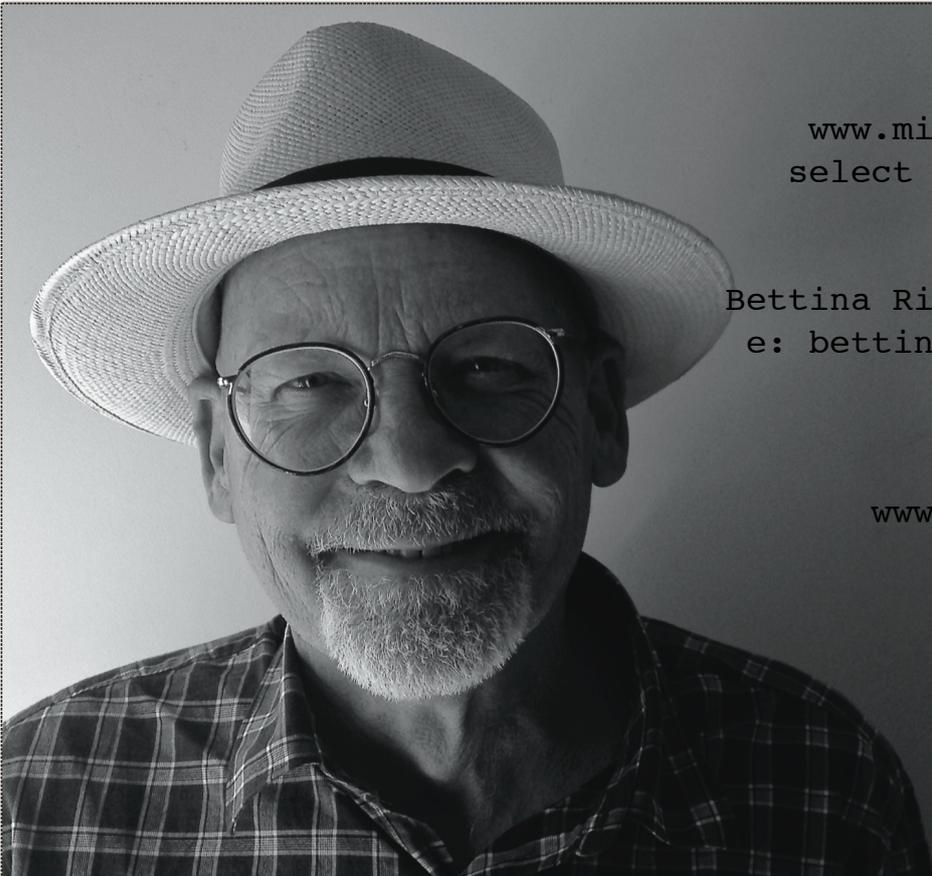
Menager decided, in the months that followed, to throw all of his cards to the wind and return for the first time in 30 years to Los Angeles, the town where he was born and raised, to write and record the songs that would become his second album *Not The Express*.

Recorded in just two days with acclaimed Australian songwriter / producer Heath Cullen at the wheel, and an unbeatable team on board: the great Jim Keltner (Bob Dylan, John Lennon, Lucinda Williams, Traveling Wilburys et al) on drums & percussion, Aaron Embry (Elliot Smith, Willie Nelson, Edward Sharpe & the Magnetic Zeros) on keys, Cullen on guitars and banjo, and Matt Nightingale on upright bass, the album was engineered by Ben Tolliday and mastered by multi-Grammy award winner Gavin Lurssen.

Not The Express has a warm, timeless, sepia quality to its analogue-steeped sounds. The production is spare and spacious, the song craft watertight. The songs are love songs, life songs: they are mischievous and playful, but also heartbreaking, honest, poignant. Menager has lived many lives (scholar, labourer, truck driver, teacher), he has lived them in many places (California, Oregon, Georgia, Algeria, Mexico, France, Australia), and he sings with the wisdom and authority of one who is so well traveled, bringing to mind the work of John Prine, Guy Clarke and latter-day Leonard Cohen. "This machine just lopes along, it's always doing its best / It's a good old train, but it's not the express", he sings earnestly. But wait - this is no apology - it's a celebration.

On *Not The Express*, Michael Menager is inviting us to meet him at the station, lay a nickel on the track, and press an ear to the rail... to poke a little fun at our own mortality, and all the while shine a brilliant light on all of the silent beauty that lies around us. He's asking us to lean into the billowing smoke and acknowledge that the dark tunnel up ahead is an important part of our journey. He's asking us to squint into the sun, and smile. See you down there at the station.

"Menager sings of roads travelled and life lived, and he's warm and funny and wise, his songs delivered with youthful vigour that belies a man of his vintage." ★★★☆ - The Sydney Morning Herald



Available from:
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