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By John Gjaltema

Brant Croucher fits between the row of new heroes Robert Ellis, Andrew Combs and John Fullbright. The craft are all songwriters who serve honeyed songs with a nasal twang. Young men alternating sweet piano songs with shuffling honky tonk. Blanco County Lights (White Cat) is a wonderful album. The Texan roamed the world and returned to Houston to work there under the leadership of Jack Saunders to this record. The oldest song he wrote about ten years ago. Doing Well stood on his debut Old Denton Roads, an album he recorded in his own words at a time when he was not yet ready for such a task. Today, he has more experience and that is to hear the smooth way musicianship here is. The bright honky tonk of 84 Boxes swings loosely. Doing Well on that we hear the stanza "running around on empty 'and that will be a reference to Jackson Browne. The tinkling notes of Lloyd Maines dobro master Drink (Drink Drink), while guitarist Sam Austin explores the horizon Time I Walk Away. Eleanor Whitmore lends her fiddle to the beautiful title track. The swinging Joie De Vivre provides better times with piano keys leap of happiness. Very different valve Greenville Avenue, where violin and piano drop a moody atmosphere. Available at CD Baby.