



Eliza Gilkyson **"Lost & Found"** Red House Records

By way of taking one final, backward look at Y2K's **"Hard Times In Babylon"** in the first verse of the optimistically titled, opening cut, "Welcome Back," Eliza recalls *"It was the summer of my discontent, It was the fall of a lifetime, It was the winter of my penitence, Waitin' on the springtime."* In the closing chorus, she even slips in the words *"hard times in Babylon"* with an almost dismissive air of *"Huh, they don't seem so hard now."* With the past laid to rest, Gilkyson progresses right into the soulfully rhythmic and percussive "Mama's Got A Boyfriend." Never less than lyrically intense, Eliza's new man *"plays those skins with a mojo hand,"* and further clarifies the relationship with the insight that *"he's a kitchen man"* who is *"banging on her pots and pans."* The sense of *adventuring into the unknown* that arrives with new-found love continues with "Fall Into The Night," and it sounds *utterly familiar*. From one viewpoint it's typically Gilkyson, in word and melody, from another Eliza recorded it for last year's **"More Than A Song"** trio album with Ad Vanderveen and Iain Matthews.

"Babylon," a Gilkyson/Hallman production, was very much a reunion album since it was cut at one of Austin's finest acoustic studios, Hallman's Congress House Studio. Ironically, Hallman and Mark Andes formed Navarro in the late seventies, a unit that went on to work extensively with Carole King. In 1982 Breaker Records issued a four song, 12" vinyl EP, that featured two tracks each by Mark and Eliza. In the late eighties, Hallman and Gilkyson co-produced her **"Pilgrims"** [1987], while two years later **"Legends Of Rainmaker"** was one of the first albums to be made at Mark's, then practically new, Congress House. By way of revisiting a *fondly remembered episode of the past* "Heart Of A Man," first appeared on the acoustically stripped bare, Gilkyson produced **"Undressed"** [1994], the tracks of which Mark mixed. And yes, the latter disc was cut at Congress House. On this rendition, Patty Griffin lends her broken hearted voice. "Heart" also appeared on last year's **"More Than A Song"** collection.

"Easy Rider," written for and about her late father, the composer Terry Gilkyson, who recorded with a band called the Easy Riders, is a daughter's heartfelt memory of a relationship that was not always tranquil and harmonious, and existed on the level of *"the kind of love we almost had."* Keeping it in the family, the only cover on **"Lost & Found"** is brother Tony's "He'll Miss This Train." The story line - a man meets a woman who is reading her Bible on a train that is heading West> The initial dreamlike air of mystery that envelops this tale gives way to events that become more surreal as each line unfolds. Finally, there's a Sunday morning feel of voices raised in celebration – albeit for a life that was lived well - about the 12/31/1999 gathering of *"saints and psychos, freaks and Indians"* in the closing cut "Riverside." As a body of work, and aided throughout by the cream of Austin's musical community, **"Lost And Found"** surely rates as Eliza's finest ever collection of songs.

Folkwax Rating 8 out of 10

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