

## Bonnie Koloc REDISCOVERED

Self-Release

★★★★

REDISCOVERED

features one of the  
greatest singing  
voices of all time



Produced by Chris Siebold (acoustic, electric, resonator, lap steel, Spanish guitar), the principle support players on this ten-song album are John Rice (acoustic guitar, Dobro, mandolin, fiddle), Larry Kohut (bass) and long-time Bonnie Koloc collaborator, Howard Levy (harmonica). There are also contributions from Don Stille (accordion) and Steve Eisen (tenor sax); a four-piece string section appearing on Bonnie's *Sunday Morning Movies* and Tom Rush's *Wind On The Water*.

This collection of folk, jazz and blues is intentionally titled REDISCOVERED since most of the songs were recorded for the Ovation and Epic record labels during the 1970s, whilst Bonnie's *Two Black Guitars*, which opens this album, debuted on VISUAL VOICE (2000) released by the UK Naim label. In the REDISCOVERED liner notes, Bonnie dedicates *Two Black Guitars* and the later *Kentucky Dream*, which she also composed in loving memory of her brother, Jim. In the former, whilst holding an old photograph of a '...smiling young boy playing on an old guitar,' Koloc recalls her brother's love for the music of the Everly Brothers. *Kentucky Dream* meanwhile, which originally appeared on BONNIE KOLOC (1973), recalls a wayward brother who was '...sixteen and out on the road.'

The enticing invitation *Lie Down By Me*, a celebration of love, was penned by New York based performer and recording artist, Paula Lockheart. Born in Mississippi, Lillian 'Lil' Green found fame as a blues singer when she moved to Chicago. Circa 1940, Lillian penned the much covered, *In The Dark*—also known as (*Romance*) *In The Dark*. Bonnie's musical life parallels Lillian's, following her 1968 relocation from Iowa to Chicago. The aforementioned *Sunday Morning Movies* finds the narrator fantasising about the plot of a cowboy film that she viewed the previous evening, whilst Bonnie's interpretation of her poignant *Children's Blues* confirms that her voice has matured with age.

Introduced by a Spanish guitar and co-written with Levy, *Elis* somberly celebrates the Brazilian musician Elis Regina

who passed in 1982 at the age of thirty-six following a drug related incident. Regarded as the best Brazilian singer of all time, more than 100,000 people followed Regina's funeral procession through São Paulo. REDISCOVERED closes with creations by three legendary American singer-songwriters. By the early 1970s Tom Rush had already cemented his reputation, whilst the careers of Jackson Browne and John Prine were concurrently on the rise. In addition to the previously mentioned Rush song, there are renditions of *Colors Of The Sun* from Browne's *FOR EVERYMAN* (1973), and the classic *Angel From Montgomery* from Prine's 1971 self-titled debut album. **Arthur Wood**

[www.bonniekoloc.com](http://www.bonniekoloc.com)

## Charlie Parr KEEP YOUR HANDS ON THE PLOW

★★★★☆

*North Country's*  
answer to *Seasick*  
Steve entertains with  
some classic *National Steel* guitar tones  
linked to a mix of some standard and  
traditional folk and gospel songs



Hailing from the same town that the 'folksinger of his generation' (that's Bob Dylan to you young'ns) set out from fifty years ago, Charlie Parr, unknowingly I am sure, has covered on this solid album three traditional songs that were a staple of Dylan's early repertoire. However Charlie's take on *Gospel Plow*, *East Virginia Blues* and *Poor Lazarus* show a maturity and grasp of their place in time that, the then, young Dylan couldn't quite pull off.

Recorded in a church in Duluth itself Charlie states: 'these songs got me interested in music in the first place ... recording them with friends in a beautiful old church was very special.' Those friends include his wife Emily, Four Mile Portage (a string duo from Duluth) and Alan Sparhawk and Mimi Parker from Low.

KEEP YOUR HANDS ON THE PLOW bends and turns between pure gospel *Jesus Met The Woman At The Well* to plain ol' folk tunes like *Farther Along* always performed with a keen sense of their place in music's heritage. None of these old songs are 'thrown away' as the performers strive to add their own authenticity to tunes and words that are familiar to all of us who listen to country, folk, Americana and so called roots music. In the main they

succeed. That is due in no small part to the riveting sounds that Charlie drags from his guitar and the lovely back up vocals from Emily and the other band members. Inevitably there are some of the songs that have been aired one too many times and the lack of new material has pulled the 'star' allocation down a little. Charlie is working on some new material to be released this year which will be eagerly anticipated.

**John Jobling**

[www.charlieparr.com](http://www.charlieparr.com)

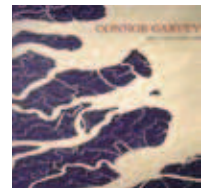
## Connor Garvey WHERE OCEAN MEETS LAND

Self-released

★★★★

Here's a mighty fine  
fourth collection

from Maine songwriter, Connor Garvey



Maine born and bred, Connor Garvey was one of the quartet of winners of the Performing Songwriter contest at this year's Wildflower! Arts & Music Festival, in Richardson, Texas. This eleven-track, album (lasting for almost fifty minutes) is his latest acoustic outing. The infectiously rhythmic *Backroads*, co-written with Arkansas musician, Shannon Wurst, is this album's only collaboration and also launches it. Folk who journey on the spider's web of back roads that traverse this planet's landscape, as opposed to taking the more direct major highways, will be well familiar with the 'long way around' approach. That approach can also be applied to life. Tom Murphy's mandolin takes a major role on the latter tune, whilst Maine singer-songwriter, Sara Hallie Richardson's backing vocals—one of a series of fine contributions she makes—fits Gravey's dulcet tenor like a glove. Possessing a similarly energetic melody, the album title turns up in the *Move On* lyric, a song that poetically focuses on life's daily choices. It's worth noting that the coastal river delta gracing the front of the gatefold sleeve was taken by a NASA satellite. On the melodically restrained *The Reflection*, Colin Winsor's electric guitar shines.

While the foregoing trio are truly accomplished, the ensuing *Pencil Frame* is the gem in this Garvey-penned bag of story songs. For many decades after a young couple purchase a fixer-upper, the room at the top of the stairs remains untouched. As the years pass, children arrive and, in time, depart. On one wall of that upper room, the constant is a blank picture frame,

## NEW RELEASES

drawn in pencil. At the outset, Connor and Hallie sing: 'Oh, what great potential; so much can fit in this frame of pencil, once you commit.' By the couple's twilight years, that refrain becomes: 'But the empty frame, each days it changes, as their life slide show rearranges. Oh, what great memories; so much they fit in this frame of pencil, without touching it.' Frankly, *Pencil Frame* is an amazingly accomplished and mature song for a twenty-something to have created.

'Freedom is flying for those who dare,' is the summation that underpins the almost six-minute long, *The Bird*; a tension-filled tale wherein a trapeze artist achieves precisely that ideal. New England writers, and Mainers in particular, have displayed a penchant for natural world-word portraits, and *Red-Winged Blackbird* fulfils that tradition. The ensuing *Western Wind* is a road song; a genre normally possessing an 'Oh, woe is me' slant. Connor's composition is a joyous travelogue wherein, with Fall approaching, he traverses a continent to witness New England's 'big red.' Waltz-paced, toward the close of *Hold Your Breath*, palpable tension pervades the lyric, and *WHERE OCEAN MEETS LAND* closes with *Mountain Song*. Inspired by French novelist, essayist, poet, and short story writer, Rene Daumal's poem, Garvey's lyric explores the 'because it's there' human compulsion to ascend mountains. **Arthur Wood**

[www.connorgarveysongs.com](http://www.connorgarveysongs.com)

### Highway Ghosts BEYOND ALL HELP

Dedham Street Music

★★★★

Quality Americana  
rock mix Boston  
style



Some really enduring and original songwriting, distinctive vocals and very good musicianship—what more could you want? This is Highway Ghosts' second album; *AFTER ALL OF THIS TIME* came out a couple of years ago and caught a lot of US East Coast attention without a big breakout. The first album was good but this one is better, packed with memorable tunes that can enjoyably be replayed over and over again. All twelve tracks are written by members of the band with guitarist and lead vocalist, David DeLuca heading up the honours board. DeLuca's *Alone* is the lead off track—a haunting

tale of a lovelorn guy made to look a bit of a fool by a girl he clearly doted on. The second track, jointly penned by DeLuca and lead guitarist, Dan Cody, continues on a similar theme, *Losing Harmony* is however more about a relationship gone permanently bad.

DeLuca can write some fairly dark songs: *Can't Put Me Away* is the insistent tale of innocence in regard to the murder of a guy who had been messing around with the singer's girl and was subsequently found in a mine shaft, and *Done Before* is a plea from the hospital bedside for the survival of a partner near to death. My favourite tracks are the bluesy *Laurie*, and the more upbeat *Nothing's Changed* and *Please Don't Run Away*. The latter is self-explanatory; *Laurie* is another joint DeLuca/Cody effort and tells of a girl treated very badly by her, now departed, chosen partner and the singer wanting to help her through her strife; *Nothing's Changed* is meeting up again after both have been through now broken relationships. Undeniably Eagles sounding, not a lot wrong with that, and probably a bit dated, although there is a school of thought, which says that this music never dates, and I prefer to go with that. One thing is for sure and that is that this band and the music they write and play is undeniably good. **Paul Collins**

[www.highwayghosts.com](http://www.highwayghosts.com)

### Joanne Shaw Taylor ALMOST ALWAYS NEVER

RUF Records RUF1181

★★★★

*This Lady sings the  
blues and plays them better than most*

Young Joanne Shaw Taylor is not only treated as an equal in what might be the most snobbish of musical genres but genuinely revered by many much older guitarists and her third album could well be the one that attracts the ears of big league promoters across the Atlantic Ocean. Joanne's last album, *DIAMONDS IN THE DIRT* was generally perceived to be career defining but *ALMOST ALWAYS NEVER* actually starts where that album left off. With the aid of some excellent production work from Mike McCarthy, Joanne Shaw Taylor throws down a gauntlet to the rest of the burgeoning British blues-rock scene.

*Soul Station*, which opens the album, has all the hallmarks of a timeless classic,



and *Beautifully Broken* which follows is a breathy heartbreaker with a Rhodes organ complementing the nicely choppy guitar breaks, before Joanne slides in her own trademark fluid solos. Whilst Joanne was originally billed as a teenage guitar prodigy, it's her maturing vocals on *ALMOST ALWAYS NEVER* that have impressed me the most, although her guitar playing is still astounding! On this album she sounds as if she could have been the offspring of an illicit union between Rory Gallagher and Maggie Bell as her voice has a lived-in richness to it that is perfect for the blues, but it's also clear and smooth enough to cross over onto the commercial radio stations.

Several songs are definitely strong enough for radio play with *Jealousy* being absolutely perfect for a late night when you've had one too many alcoholic beverages as it will induce even the toughest of masculine souls to shed a tear. *Tied And Bound* isn't as risqué as the title might suggest but of a tale of a shattered romance, and Joanne appears to make her guitar growl during the choruses, which is really impressive. *ALMOST ALWAYS NEVER* has been a pleasant surprise as I didn't expect this daughter of the Black Country to be able to match the heady heights she achieved only two years ago with *DIAMOND IN THE DIRT* but, after repeated listening in and out of the car, I think she's actually surpassed that award winning album.

**Alan Harrison**

[www.joanneshawtaylor.com](http://www.joanneshawtaylor.com)

### Joel Rafael AMERICA COME HOME

Inside Recordings

★★★★☆

*Old and brand  
spanking new,  
original or cover,  
here is a magnificent song bag*

In the final verse of the already familiar Joel Rafael/Woody Guthrie co-write *Dance Around My Atom Fire*, this California based musician sings with conviction: 'Warfare is not the settlement; bloodshed is not the element; shake hands and work together; dance around the atom fire.' 2012 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Guthrie's birth and the song previously graced Rafael's Oklahoman troubadour tribute *WOODYBOYE* (2005).

The latter collaboration opens

