



Christy McWilson "**Bed Of Roses**" Hightone Records

Two years on from "**The Lucky One**" we get McWilson's sophomore solo effort. Recorded at the same Glendale, California studio as its predecessor this collection of twelve songs, which includes three covers/co-written numbers, was, once again, produced by Dave Alvin. In fact much of the supporting cast of pickers has been retained – Alvin [obviously !!!], Don Heffington [Emmylou Harris, Lone Justice], Rick Shea [one of Alvin's Guilty Men], Peter Buck [R.E.M.], Greg Leisz [legendary sideman and producer] and Chris Gaffney [solo act in his own right]. As one of the Picketts' vocalists, McWilson was playing alt. country with them in Seattle bars long before alt. country was even *invented*. One of the other Picketts singers, drummer Leroy "Blackie" Sleep, pitches in with a backing vocal on the closing cut "Tightrope." Jesse Colin Young's thirty plus year old song "Darkness, Darkness" appears to be the popular song to cover currently. Maybe it sums up what a lot of us feel about life in, *the not so bright*, new millennium. Iain Matthews/Elliott Murphy cut a version for their "**La Terre Commune**" last year. Alvin, c/w gravel vocal tones, duets with Christy on the Jerry Miller/Don Stevenson co-write and ballad "8:05." Miller and Stevenson were members of Moby Grape and the song first appeared on the band's self-titled 1967 debut disc for CBS. The amusingly titled Dave Alvin and Christy co-write, "Shooting Fish In A Barrel" is a rockabilly tour de force. McWilson copes well with the change of pace of the material, all the way from the pop smarts of the *incongruously* titled "Life's Little Enormities," the rockabilly rhythm of "Lila Jean" and gentler numbers such as the almost traditional sounding "Sheep Song." She may not be Nashville's version of contemporary country, but she sure as hell sounds genuine.

Folkwax Rating 7 out of 10

Arthur Wood  
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