



Nanci Griffith **"Poet In My Window"** Rounder/Philo Records

In terms of historical perspective, this album, Griffith's sophomore effort, is the only recording that she made for Tom Southwick's Featherbed Productions, circa 1982. Prior to **"Poet In My Window"** Griffith had appeared on two recordings issued by Mike Williams' B.F. Deal label. In 1977, she contributed three songs to the **"B.F. Deal Sampler Vol. 1"** and the following year recorded **"There's A Light Beyond These Woods."** Featherbed reissued/released the **"Light"** and **"Poet"** albums and when Nanci signed with the Rounder/Philo stable a couple of years later, they, in turn, also issued **"Light"** and **"Poet."**

On the twentieth anniversary of recording **"Poet In My Window"** Rounder/Philo have issued a remastered version, and done the same for **"There's A Light Beyond These Woods"** and her first of two albums for the Cambridge, Mass. imprint, **"Once In A Very Blue Moon"** [1984]. One can only surmise that the non-appearance of Griffith's only other Rounder/Philo work, **"Last of The True Believers"** is down to some greater plan for an as yet undetermined date.

Of the trio of Rounder/Philo reissues, **"Poet In My Window"** is the only album that Nanci recorded at John and Laurie Hill's Loma Ranch Studio in Fredericksburg, Texas and it is also the only Philo re-release to feature new material. "Can't Love Wrong" dates from the 1982 sessions, when Nanci was 28, and originally featured Nanci's voice and guitar, and Brian Wood's ever intuitive lead acoustic guitar. While the version featured here has been enhanced by contributions from members of the Blue Moon Orchestra, thankfully their input is not intrusive relative to the feel of the original eleven cuts.

From the outset Griffith, as a lyricist, was profoundly influenced by the work of Southern novelists, and as she notes in the liner "Can't Love Wrong," a sad song of parting, was inspired by reading the biography of Carson and Reeves McCullers. Reeves died from an [accidental?] overdose of sleeping tablets in 1953 after the couple were married for a second time. "Workin' In Corners" is a knowing nod to the performing musician's life that Nanci had led since she was fourteen, when her father chaperoned her during her Sunday night performances at Austin's Hole In The Wall. Throughout her career Griffith has acknowledged the work of fellow Texas writers and here she covers the Jimmie Dale Gilmore/John Reed classic "Tonight I Think I'm Going To Go Downtown." The album closes with the reflective title cut, a song that Nanci penned during the Loma Ranch recording sessions.

Folkwax Rating 8 out of 10

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[400 words].