



Garrison Starr “**Songs From Take-off To Landing**” Back Porch Records.

Much enamoured by her contribution to last year’s “**I – 10 Chronicles, Volume II,**” I think I can safely say my conclusion had as much to do with Starr’s haunting performance, as the quality of the Steve Forbert tune she covered. Slap bang in the middle of that neck of the woods they call, *Americana*, is where you’ll find Starr on this disc. Add a dash of E-Street Electric Bruce and you get the full flavour of Starr’s cocktail. The story line underpinning the opener “Somethin’s Gotta Change” could be autobiographical, considering Starr’s 1997 major label *false start*. OK, it was a crash and burn disaster that planted serious self-doubts in her head and put the continuance of Starr’s musical career in jeopardy for a couple years. In the final line, Starr attests “*your recovery is on its way, hey, hey...*” If the latter kinda explains the inspiration for the opening cut and confirms restoration, then “Big Sky” which immediately follows surely equates to Starr’s wish for a new agenda. Mid song she warbles, “*I might get something secondhand, if I could stand where you stand.*” What’s more, she realises there is lots of space out there, although the final line “*we may have seen too much to ever come back down*” hints at the possibility of excess. That latter lyric contains the words “*from take-off to landing*” hence the “**Songs**” album title. Apart from a pair of twangtrust [aka Ray Kennedy and Steve Earle] produced cuts, the remainder of the disc is a Starr and Chris Fuhrman co-production. Of the 11 co-produced cuts, according to the liner, seven different studios in East Nashville, Nashville, Burbank, Universal City and Hollywood were used. The *let’s be clever and use too many cooks* syndrome. Frankly, about three songs into the album the hooks disappear, the album runs out of breath, and what remains all begins to sound the same. Now I’m not saying that it becomes a dirge or just plain rambles, but it’s a bumpy, unfulfilling ride.

Folkwax Rating 5 out of 10

Arthur Wood

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