

Mp3 Kelly Jones - Handle With Care



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Singer Songwriter 10 MP3 Songs POP: Folky Pop, ROCK: Americana Details: Kelly Jones is an adventurer. Her willingness to dive right in and experience things fully is what made her decide to jump headlong into music, as well as what propelled her to deliver such an accomplished second album in a very short amount of time. It's what led her to move from the laidback, tightly knit comfort zone that is Portland, Oregon directly into the frenetic pace and uncaring arms of New York City. And it's most certainly apparent in her songwriting, where she explores the dark corners of yearning with an unflinching eye, a keen sense of melody and an unfailing willingness to pick herself up, dust herself off and get right back in the ring no matter how many bruises she's sustained. It's an unsurprising approach that was fostered at an early age. Not everyone gets to travel the world with their British father while being raised on a horse farm in rural Washington, or is reared in a home with a record player as likely to be spinning '60s French pop as American country music. In high school, Kelly trained in dance and shone at classical piano, only later picking up a guitar and in a characteristically idiosyncratic move beginning her career in rock covering classic pop/rock numbers at French nightclubs when she was studying abroad. Handle With Care is only Kelly's second album but it sounds like something you'd expect from someone with far more years under her belt. Where Brave Heartache was a phenomenal debut, Handle With Care is quite simply a stunning, confident and mature record that stands alongside such accomplished contemporaries as Kasey Chambers and Rhett Miller without qualification. "My first album was really my first attempt at song-writing," says Kelly. "At that point I was just trying to say something honest while searching for what I was good at. Those were little songs that came out of my journal; songs that stemmed from situations I was trying to make sense of." Part of being a fast learner is knowing who you can trust. When it came time to record Handle With Care, Kelly returned to her musical home of Portland and enlisted the help of

the musicians who'd encouraged her from the start. A group of talented friends producer Patrick Tetreault and Drew Grow from Careen and guitarist Jaycob Van Auken helped Kelly realize her vision. "There was this collective fusion of tastes happening, Kelly says of the recording. Jaycob is an amazing guitarist, Patrick has an incredible pop sensibility and Drew, a talented song-writer, would faithfully challenge the arrangements to ensure an element of unpredictability. Everyone was doing their different thing, but applying their strengths to my songs." The record was recorded at Ripcord Studio in Vancouver, Washington, (where Willie Nelson is rumored to have recorded) mixed at Supernatural in Oregon City, Oregon and mastered in Nashville, Tennessee and the sound reflects that geography. Although undeniably polished, the record feels far more Northwest than Nashville. "I have two very distinct sides to me" Kelly remarks. "There's the 'country side,' which guards everything organic and wide-eyed in me, and then there's the 'city side' that's always curious, searching for diversity and new experiences. I feel the two pulling at me constantly, and I'm always trying to balance them." Balance seems to come easily to Kelly. While there's a sadness to much of her music, it's a sweet sadness you can almost imagine her sitting alone in her bedroom, dreaming away the heartache. There's a fragility and vulnerability (sentiments perfectly conveyed by her sometimes girlish vocals,) but also an underlying strength and determination. Handle With Care shows an artist who's constantly learning and evolving but never apologizing. On the album opener, the upbeat pop-rock number "Stuck Being Pretty", Kelly declares "I'm stuck being pretty, pretty down on myself." On "Make Me Cry," she admits, "I'm not happy feeling fine. Won't you make me cry?" The noir-ish "Consolation" is melancholy at its most hauntingly beautiful, while "Panic" finds hope at the most irrational moment. Even heartbreakers like "Out of Nothing," "What's So Wrong" and "Heart Like Mine" find the optimist within. "Lonesome Heart" is a warning to a potential lover that the narrator is damaged goods and a dangerous proposition disguised as a beguiling, steel-guitar drenched country shuffle. Kelly winds the album down with the languid acoustic number "Don't Forget Me." There's no danger that you will. Handle With Care is just the latest installment from a gifted singer/songwriter who's just hitting her stride.

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