

## Mp3 Michelle Lewis - This Time Around



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Warm and resonant, driven and upbeat but well balanced adult female contemporary folk pop 11 MP3 Songs in this album (42:19) ! Related styles: FOLK: like Ani, FOLK: like Joni Details: From the gentle picks and strums which begin the opening title track to the last sweet, somber note of the album's closer, Michelle Lewis' new record, *This Time Around* takes you on a journey through the feminine psyche, hinting at Jewel's studied innocence, the fury and solemnity of Tori Amos, the bitterness and biting sarcasm of Ani DiFranco, as well as Sarah McLachlan's sweet melancholy - without ever dumping you in the region of recycled cliché or out-and-out mimicry. Michelle's voice is her own, her stories ring true as the crisp clear tones of her acoustic guitar, and she's not hiding anything. Musically, the album throughout is a warm, cozy collection of pleasant acoustic arrangements, sparse enough to let her young voice take center-stage and tell her stories, yet sophisticated enough to be interesting and fun to listen to. The stories themselves are captivating; she sings with a gentle, almost resigned attitude on themes that in another artist's hands would need a much edgier approach to be effective. "Caroline," for instance, is a loving plea to a pretty young girl's self-esteem: Caroline / you use your smile as your best disguise / you lock yourself in bathroom stalls and cut your inner thighs... Michelle's compassion comes through, and you find yourself mourning the character's self-sabotaged beauty and potential. Her songs are testament to the nobility, beauty and grace of the feminine spirit, without making an enemy of the masculine. One song, "Never Cried For You" certainly stands as a deliberate lashing of a fellow who obviously deserved it; but in most cases her focus is decidedly on bringing women up - not tearing men down. Even in "Midnight," a song which graphically describes a woman in an abusive relationship, the man is faceless and not even to be pitied; instead, Michelle has beautifully addressed her monologue to the woman, encouraging her to see the reality of her life and pick up the pieces of her broken self-esteem: ain't

nobody gonna save you from Midnight / no one else is gonna change your world / ain't nobody gonna save you from Midnight / so get outta there, girl... The message and the tone are hopeful and inspiring, not angry and vengeful. She's playful, too. "Searching for Something" is a delightful frolic, a bored girl declaring she's about to take a walk on the wild side, world be warned! When she sings: I'll spend the night with / three different lovers / 'cause I won't know who I like 'til I try them out, she smiles mischievously through the upbeat arrangement, winking at you and coyly turning away, teasing and dancing to her own joyful beat. If This Time Around is any indicator, Michelle Lewis is an artist to watch for in the coming years. As her voice continues to mature, she will undoubtedly continue to lead listeners into more and more fertile territory within the feminine imagination, her blooming being rich with material waiting to be turned into song - and shared with the world. - Shawn Madden, Skope Magazine

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