

Mp3 Terri Hendrix - The Ring



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Eclectic contemporary folk music with attention to detail and expressive lyrics. 11 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, COUNTRY: Country Folk Details: When Terri Hendrix released her last album, 2002's *The Ring*, it marked the end of the first part of a long and rewarding creative journey that propelled the San Antonio-born, San Marcos, TX-based songwriter to some of the most celebrated performance venues in America, including the Austin City Limits Music Festival, Live at Mountain Stage and the Kerrville, Philadelphia and Newport Folk Festivals. Supported by a dedicated grassroots fan base, Hendrix - who studied opera on scholarship at Hardin-Simmons University before dropping out to milk goats for guitar lessons and hone her chops on the central Texas open-mic circuit - has bypassed label offers in favor of releasing such albums as her 1998 breakthrough *Wilory Farm* and 2000's *Places in Between* on her own Wilory Records. Her one-of-a-kind mix of folk, pop, country and jazz-inflected roots rock has long been lauded by publications ranging from *Mojo* to *Texas Monthly* to *Billboard* and London's *The Guardian*, but *The Ring* was the album that raised the bar. It tripled her fan base, gained widespread radio support that opened new touring opportunities, and launched her new distribution system, in which she used her 50,000-member mailing list to market her e-commerce store, terrihendrix.com. In doing so, *The Ring* quickly outsold all of her previous releases without the costly trappings associated with most major distributors. In addition, *Performing Songwriter* declared it "thoroughly captivating" and one of the 12 best independent releases of the year. So how exactly does one follow that? Simple: break it all down, and start again new. In the two years following *The Ring*'s release, between her relentless tour schedule and co-writing a Grammy-winning instrumental for the Dixie Chicks ("Lil' Jack Slade"), Hendrix took time off for a long, hard look at her life, career and music. "It was time for a reality check - personally, with my business, and with my music," she says. "I had achieved my goals and I was restless for new

beginnings." She was inspired in no small part by the Zen-like task of stripping away the layer upon layer of bad wallpaper that smothered her newly purchased, fixer-upper home in ducks and polka-dots. The raw beauty (and patches of just plain raw) she found hidden beneath mirrored the personal themes she was simultaneously exploring in her writing. "I realized that 'wallpaper' is everywhere," she explains, "from the news on the TV and radio to the way we all hide our true feelings from ourselves and the rest of the world on a daily basis. The more wallpaper I peeled away in my home, the more obsessed I became with stripping it away from my life, too, and writing about the truth underneath it all." And so began her brand new journey, the first chapter intriguingly titled - what else? - The Art of Removing Wallpaper. "Every song is about how things may look one way on the outside, but they might really be something totally different," says Hendrix. Or, as she puts it succinctly in the album-opening "Breakdown," "Sooner or later the day's gonna come / When you have to face / What's underneath it all." It's an unflinching examination of life's truths - good and bad - reflected as nakedly in her originals as it is in the album's three telling covers, including an impassioned take on rapper LL Cool J's "I Need Love," a song first introduced to the folk world by Luka Bloom but taken here by Hendrix to a place all her own. "I shied away from it at first because it's already been done twice before," admits Hendrix, "but in the end I felt like I didn't have a choice, because I enjoyed singing it so much. Plus, I really wanted to change it to a woman's point of view, but sing it unisex so everyone could relate to it." If the overt sensuality of "I Need Love" and the serious introspection of tracks like "Breakdown" and "One Way" catch some listeners off guard, well ... that's the point. While not without the flashes of musical and lyrical whimsy that many consider to be Hendrix's trademark (along with the homespun charm and humor that shine through her spirited live performances), it's fitting that an album so focused on truth vs. perception should lead even veteran Hendrix fans into unexpected territory. To wit: both "Monopoly" and "Judgment Day" are couched in gospel, but her unapologetic, critical stance on both is more fire and brimstone than hallelujah. "One Night Stand," meanwhile, is a bundle of contradictions squeezed into a sexy party dress - coy and vulnerable on the loose and funky surface, assertive and proudly impenetrable underneath: "You may think that you may know just who I am / but you're not even close." Hendrix recorded The Art of Removing Wallpaper in Austin with musical cohort, co-producer and business partner Lloyd Maines, along with longtime band members Glenn Fukunaga (bass) and Paul Pearcy (drums). Hendrix and Maines have worked together since 1997, when the Lubbock-born guitarist (Joe Ely, Jerry Jeff Walker) and Grammy winning producer

(Dixie Chicks) was won over by the songwriting on one of Hendrix's demo tapes and soon after by her stylistic range and work ethic. While the demands of running a label could easily distract even the most dedicated of artists, Hendrix is committed to further mastering the fine art of not being sidetracked by, as she calls it, "the part that's not art." "I keep the business separate from my music, and luckily I have a good team that helps me keep them separate," she says. "I'm fortunate that my business runs off my fan base. I see my fans as my own A&R team across the country, and I believe that if I stay inspired then they'll remain interested in what I do. So for the most part, I keep my goals strictly musical: for every record to be something more than the last, and to better myself as a musician so I can always play to the best of my ability, whether it be in front of 15,000 at a folk festival or 70 people at a smaller venue. "Everything else," she adds with a grin, "is just more wallpaper."

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