

## Mp3 Bethany Yarrow - Rock Island



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WITH HER INCREDIBLE VOICE AND MUSICAL STYLE BETHANY HAS BROUGHT FOLK INTO THE 21st CENTURY."The overall effect is mesmerising, drawing you into an eerie world where things glimpsed out of the corner of the eye move noiselessly in the shadows"-AmericanaUK 12 MP3 Songs

ELECTRONIC: Trip Hop, FOLK: Folk Pop Details: "Yarrow's ultra-modern musical argument on the album Rock Island is a convincing one. She re-articulates, revises, reshapes, and remodels folk music in the image of today's "folk" styles -- through the sounds, dynamics, and textures of the people's vernacular given the way music is heard and experienced today. In so doing, she is closer in feel and intent to the historic "folk" traditions than many folk revivalists who claim to read some of these same songs through rarefied ideologies. Yarrow paints the hallowed pearls of Celtic and American song lore with huge rhythms, samples, taut melodies, crunching bass lines, snaky guitars, and seductive, hypnotic loops. This is not some gimmicky attempt to fuse tradition and technology... She offers a hearing in how they transcend time and context, how they seem to inform the current age from their ghostly presences in the collective historical past, and how they communicate their metaphorical truth as relevant in any age.... There are taboos that get celebrated here, as Ms. Yarrow is nothing if not political, and addresses issues of race and class throughout the set. The murder ballad "Pretty Polly," is lacerated with samples of a fire-and-brimstone gospel preacher just under a tranced-out, dub-heavy rhythm...The tension and feel of suffocating dread permeates the track. No longer a fable, it becomes a near slice of life portraying violence against women. The title track, a version of "Rock Island Line," features a backbone slipping, hip-hop rhythm, Chandler's ethereal dulcimer, and the sample of Leadbelly wafting though the proceedings. Yarrow's singing, with its bluesy-gospel and rockabilly inflections, echoes the bluesy 1957 Johnny Cash version -- albeit in a more sultry, steamy manner -- it seems to bubble up from the swamp...

This is music that carries its messages and metaphorical contexts through the centuries and decades -- into the heart of our fractured era -- and attempts to weave voices, ancient to future, together in defiance to what would separate and fragment them. Rock Island fulfills the promise of great folk music: it seeks to foster the commonality and truth of shared experience -- of the song to be sure, but also of cultures thrown together in a confusing, bewildering time. 4 stars! -- Thom Jurek, All Music Guide "...The outstanding CD, Rock Island, is a collection of traditional folk songs brought back to glorious, pulsing, dramatic life by an artist whose delicate voice breathes from the depths of a gothic spirit. This CD is magic. I was listening to musical history as it was happening. Nothing in the traditional folk world could have prepared its fans for the likes of Yarrow, yet she's one of the best things that ever happened to the genre. Lost in these swirling remakes, I could hear the intent and purpose of the original songs being pulled into the present on a dark wave. You can't help but listen. For all its delicate nature, Yarrow's voice is powerful. Her amplified deep breathing on the opening track made my skin tingle in response. In "Pretty Polly," a ballad of betrayal and murder, the haunted vocal sounds like the ghost of the dead woman is singing. And the music will lure fans of any genre. She opens some tracks with Celtic crooning that dissolves into hip-hop - with a cello. She offers electronica/new age/pop with a grinding groove that would make bodies on a dance floor melt together. Old spirituals rise from the ground. The vibe settles in deep. There's pulsing, dangerous life in this music. I can't imagine what path Yarrow will take on her next CD, but I'll wrap myself in a long velvet cape and follow her anywhere." - Jennifer Layton, indie-music.com

"Bethany Yarrow is a musical medium. Serving as an intermediary between modern audiences and the ghosts of American folk and blues singers, Yarrow is sharing some powerful messages in her trip-hop songs. She calls the re-recording of traditional slave lullabies, prison songs and murder ballads "deep folk music," but these refreshing arrangements cover the gamut of rock, pop, trance, funk and gospel. Many critics have compared her voice to PJ Harvey and Dido. In truth, her pipes sound like a unique mixture of Odetta and Snakefarm. Her debut CD is a triumphant proclamation; every bluesy track demands attention and leaves the listener feeling slightly haunted." - Siren Song Magazine "I LOVE the new CD! Stunning is the best word I can come up with.... a magnificent recording!" -- Ron Olesko, WFDU, Bergenfield, NJ

"Bethany Yarrow .... has drunk deep at the well of Sarah MacLachlan, but having done so.... she concentrates on weaving strange kabbalistic sounds that echo unnervingly across the grounds at night. The overall effect is mesmerising, drawing you in to an eerie world where things glimpsed out of the

corner of the eye move noiselessly in the shadows...." - Americana UK "This new album combines trip-hop rhythms with traditional songs .... The players are superb, and Bethany Yarrow's singing is spellbinding. -- Paul Stalmer, KDHX, St. Louis "..It's quite an impressive record and the renditions of several of the classics (Rock Island and Another Man in particular) are incredible. We need more records like this!" --Barry Weber, WRST-FM, Oshkosh, WI "I found the CD fascinating.... Lots of people record these old songs.... but Bethany has used a little wizardry here and there to transform them. I found myself listening to them as though for the first time! It might not have worked so well except that, with her voice, she could get away with just about anything..." --Arthur Elliott, Radio 99.7FM, Brisbane, Australia "The way that Bethany is arranging these traditional folk tunes is wonderful. Really! She manages to retain the song's integrity and still make it sound contemporary, cool and with a groove that keeps on going." -- Gene Shay, WXPB, Philadelphia, PA "...I was lucky enough to snag an advance copy... and glad I did! Take traditional folk songs and put them behind club/house/trip-hop beats and you have something unique... I've played two cuts, Rock Island and Black is the Color and both times got called to find out who was singing..." -- Carolyn Van de Wiele, WFHB, Bloomington, IN \*\*\*\*\* Beautifully produced by Kevin Salem (Mercury Rev, Bad Brains, Chocolate Genius) and Knox Chandler (David Gahan, Siouxsie the Banshees), Bethany Yarrow's debut cd, ROCK ISLAND, mixes the gloss of pop production with banjos, dulcimers, harmonicas, slide guitars, gospel choirs, and the sampled ghosts of some of the great blues singers of America. In unexpected ways, the CD borrows from the deep river of American song and creates a gorgeous and totally contemporary sonic landscape with Bethany's haunting voice at the forefront. "Folk music may be in my blood, but I spent a lot of time running away from it," says Bethany. "By the time I was 14, I had green hair, eleven piercings, was listening to hardcore, and spent my weekends at Danceteria and my Sundays down at CBGBs.... Singing these old tunes was the last thing I thought I'd end up doing." But folk music is in her blood indeed, (her father is Peter of the legendary folk trio Peter, Paul Mary) and sometimes there is no escaping it. So last year Bethany decided to return to her roots and the music she grew up with by recording a CD of traditional American songs. "I guess you can run, but you can't hide..." she says. " So, I've been re-recording traditional slave lullabies, prison songs, and murder ballads, turning them into a kind of grooving electronic pop that I call 'deep folk' music, as in 'deep house' or 'deep soul'. These may be old songs, but this CD doesn't really sound at all like your typical folk music, and that was kind of the point." Bethany's brand of folk has

certainly struck a chord across the country. Reviewers have been knocked out by her "fascinating" and "dramatic" interpretations. Her voice has been called, "mesmerizing", "intense", "powerful", "spell-binding".... "A cross between PJ Harvey and Annie Lennox... Dido and Grace Slick..." It's a seemingly strange combination of sounds that somehow all comes together, and in re-inventing these deeply American songs, Bethany has not only taken them into the future, she has made them deeply her own.

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