

## Mp3 Jenifer Jackson - Birds



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Twelve gentle yet probing folk-rock tunes - a strong emotional underpinning softly tugs listeners through a myriad of feelings -- melancholia, resignation, learnedness; akin to a female nic 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Pop, ROCK: Acoustic Details: Regular readers of this column might have noticed my affinity for female singers with wispy, breathy, high-pitched voices. Maybe it's a result of my childhood exposure to Astrud Gilberto and high school obsession with the Cocteau Twins, who knows. But it undoubtedly helps explain why I adore Jenifer Jackson's new CD. Jackson, a New York City-based singer/songwriter, is the daughter of legendary jazz radio DJ Julian Jackson, and her vocal style owes a lot to the school of jazz vocals exemplified by Gilberto, Blossom Dearie and Chet Baker: clear, vibrato-free and with a spun-glass delicacy that gives the lightest songs on the album, like the early-Joni Mitchell-style "The First Day of Winter," a shivery beauty. Imagine if Mazzy Star's Hope Sandoval or the Softies' Rose Melberg could actually sing properly. Musically, however, Birds has only a few jazzy elements--a Milt Jacksonish vibes solo here, a bossa nova beat there--in its mostly folk-rock-based, largely acoustic songs. "Trouble Fire," with its expressive harmony vocals by Alibi fave Josh Rouse, and the pure-country "What You Said" are more indicative: droning Hammond organ, slippery pedal steel, shimmering overdubbed acoustic guitars and brushed drums dominate these 12 songs. Producer Brad Jones gives the album a hazy, miasmic quality, especially on the near-psychedelic "Mercury, The Sun and Moon," that adds an ethereal edge to even the earthiest and most plainspoken songs. The results suggest what Hazeldine would have sounded like if they'd brought their moody, dark pop instincts to the foreground of their songs, or perhaps an alt-country Michael Penn. Dreamy and sensual and surprisingly substantial, Birds is an unexpected, genre-mixing surprise. --stewart mason

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