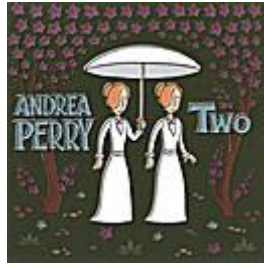


Mp3 Andrea Perry - Two



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Unequaled typical piquant impudent kinky pop full of rich and seraphic vocal harmonies, bouncing rhythms, and often dark lyrics. 12 MP3 Songs POP: Beatles-pop, POP: Quirky Two Songs Details: REVIEWS _____ Top Ten Albums of 2002, #6: "A dozen newly intriguing musical gems that feature intricate rhythms and deceptively spare arrangements. Her soft voice lulls you with its seraphicness, often masking the swirl of inner portent her lyrics convey. There is precision and confidence on each track, as Perry contributes guitar, keyboard and bass. She is a natural in finding the right amounts of nuance and musical texture, and writes honest, evocative songs that are a refreshing distance apart from the mainstream." -Gary Glauber, Pop Matters _____ "One of the primary reasons why the homogeneous state of mainstream pop/rock in 2002 proved so frustrating was because there still existed bona fide tunesmiths capable of writing the sort of gloriously memorable songs that, when you hear them years later, mark specific places or events in your life. Andrea Perry proved to be precisely that caliber of songwriter on her first album. Too bad, then, that so few people heard its overflow of pleasures. Those who were lucky enough to come across Saturday Morning Sweet Shoppe were cast into a Spector-centric universe where girl group pop never, in fact, went away. And in a just world, Perry - a Lesley Gore sound-alike with the decidedly mature compositional skills of Carole King - would have Top Ten singles with three-fourths of the songs on her even more winning sophomore record. Two offers all the same pleasures as its predecessor but is an even more artful, confident, and distinctive outing. This is most immediately apparent in Perry's assured production, which, while still humble in its do-it-yourself conception, is considerably more detailed throughout, particularly by way of its overlay of keyboard-generated parts and a cornucopia of self-harmonies (perfectly illustrated on the chorus of

"Make the World Go 'Round," which, cleverly, is a musical round). Two can be experienced to greatest effect, however, by letting the diversity of its songs pour over you, whether the swirling good cheer of "Bursting Through the Clouds," with its see-saw circus melody, the subtle funk touches (including a too-brief wah-wah solo) of "On No! The Day Is Dawning," or several enchanting lullabies: "You Broke the Spell" (which, contrary to its message, casts a spell), the hypnotically Baroque "Bye Bye," and "Higher," a gorgeously weary evocation of devotion. And in the culminating "Across the Water," Perry has conceived as stunning an epic, searching, Beatlesque piano ballad as has come down the line since Paul McCartney wrote a little tune called 'Let It Be.' Seriously." -Stanton Swihart, All Music Guide

"Come pick me off the floor and clear this dreary weather..." croons Austin's Andrea Perry by way of an introduction to her world. This thesis develops into an essay that keeps the listener on his toes: one cannot be sure whether to laugh, cry, celebrate, mourn. These songs are upbeat and positive, just as the works of The Smiths, The Cure and The Pogues are upbeat and positive; they pull you up and out of the gutter and offer sympathy or your recent binge. The music and lyrics are the work of an experienced songwriter who has lived what she teaches -- one who avoids clichés and speaks her heart, working elements jazz, new wave, classic folk (Neil Young, James Taylor), funk, punk and good old circus music into her paranoid, extroverted musical message. To Perry's credit, she plays every instrument on *Two* but the drums -- and unlike some artists, who claim to be multi-instrumentalists but are actually pretty half-assed at most of them, Perry plays them all well. She also produced *Two* which makes me wonder what wonder drug supplement she orders in her smoothies. Production-wise, this is no demo -- it's definitely ready for the big leagues. It's also very much a "true" album, designed to be listened to in sequence, rather than a handful of singles padded with filler tracks. The songs average a very concise three minutes thirty seconds -- you'll neither get bored nor long for more. My favorite track ("I Think Of Nothing") comes in at just under two minutes, which seems like uncommon restraint for a self-produced singer/songwriter. The variety of Perry's music suggests a Beatlesque approach -- free from unnecessary boundaries, but united by a common thematic element. It was Paul, John and George's voices -- never Ringo -- that provided this link in the Beatles' music, and I'm going to risk public flogging by suggesting that Perry's voice has the same type of power. It recalls the sadness of Nina Persson (The Cardigans), the fun of Bis's Manda Rin and the radio-friendliness of Tanya Donnelly; Perry could sing karaoke over an Air Supply or REO Speedwagon

single and I would still plop down the cash for the bootleg. Perry's confidence in her music definitely shows on *Two*. She does not rely on elaborate orchestration, glitchy drum machine loops, filtered vocals or any of the other tricks that FM radio currently pimps on its listeners. I appreciate Perry's honesty, and I believe that she follows the mantra of a true artist: continue doing what you believe and the world (or the people who count) will notice soon enough." -Dave Madden, *Splendid*

"Andrea Perry's second album, perhaps obviously given the title (though it's not always safe to assume such things), is quite simply lovely. *'Two'* maintains and often exceeds the high standard set by her accomplished 2001 debut *'Saturday Morning Sweet Shoppe'*. As with that record, which itself took a few listens to reveal its many depths, once the album's multifaceted arrangements unfurl you should be hooked. Andrea Perry's songs seem as contrarily sparse as the arrangements are oddly complex. However often you play the album the intimate yet spacious production continually exposes previously unheard nuances. An extremely adept multi-instrumentalist, Perry played keyboards, guitar and bass and that's apart from equally proficient talents as composer, arranger and producer. Proving she's not superhuman, she only relinquishes the albums' percussive chores to someone named SearCh, who following some elementary investigation can be revealed to be Chris Searles who performed the same task for Perry on her debut. Andrea's voice, occasionally kinky in inflection - though as often velvety smooth - is as integral a part of the album as any instrument. Her voice can be lush, warm, beautiful, vulnerable, eccentric and intriguing, as are the songs she's singing. *'Two'* is a difficult album to categorise, as Andrea Perry is an artist with whom it's not easy to find comparison. Originality is a rare thing indeed, but Perry definitely has it. Her avowed shyness can surely be the only reason she isn't more widely known and appreciated as in no way could her music be regarded inaccessible. In terms of recommendation I can put it no better than Andrea Perry does herself on *'Two'*, so if you're unfamiliar with her work it must be *Time To Say Hello*." -Geriant Jones, *Comes With a Smile*, UK

"Absolutely lovely and creative pop music from Andrea Perry. *Two* was recorded 'above Jeffrey's restaurant in Austin, Texas.' She may be an obscure, self-produced artist...but Andrea Perry possesses a wide variety of skills and talent that make her music extremely entertaining and worthwhile. On this album, Andrea plays bass, guitar, keys, and handles all the vocals. In fact, the only instrument she doesn't play is the drum set (more than adequately handled by the mysteriously credited SearCH). We have rarely heard a female

instrumentalist who matches the true creative spirit of this young lady. Her songs are wonderfully spirited...her playing tight and inventive...and her vocals are nothing short of astounding. While the influences present in her music are many...we are hard pressed to think of any single artist that Perry sounds like (?!?). A fine effort, featuring timeless tunes such as 'Bursting Through the Clouds,' 'I Think of Nothing,' 'You Broke the Spell' (wow!), and 'Across the Water.' Outstanding." (Rating: 5 out of 6)

-Babysue _____ "Witty and arty pop from the talented Perry, who does everything but play drums. Perry has a voice that sometimes betrays no emotion, sometimes is a bit girlish, and is sometimes sexy in an elusive way. Perry's songs are complex in how she puts together relatively simple instrumental passages into a denser whole. Her bass lines are wobbly and compelling and her modal guitar leads could have come off an ancient Sparks record or a more recent Sugarplastic platter. While she doesn't sound like The Sugarplastic or XTC, those artists are good reference points for the way she's able to blend some offbeat sounds with terrific melodies, using the inherent tension to make the melodies all the stronger. She combines this with clever and whimsical lyrics that are concise and satisfying. Here's a litmus test - if you like this opening couplet, from the pretty piano rumination "Across the Water" (where she combines keyboard sounds that remind me of Elton John's piano and the majestic organ of Procol Harum), this may be for you: "playing a child's game/playing it like a child". This opening is a portent for a warm and beautiful song. Some of her songs have a jaunty yet serene vibe that brings to mind a modern update on Margo Guryan's jazz-tinged pop. "Bye Bye" wisps in with the chorus which is varied by the brief verses - two melodies that counterpoint and intertwine, flowing into a middle eight that varies the melodic concepts previously heard. She juxtaposes the ascending and descending chord progressions - I'm (obviously!) not a musician, but it is so fascinating how Perry finds as many wrinkles as possible from a few series of notes. Brilliant. Perry comes off like a Californian Nina Persson vocally, and combines chicken scratch funk guitar with oddball leads that are reminiscent of Adrian Belew on "Make the World Go Round". And that only describes in part all the stuff going on on this track. The song percolates behind drummer SearCh's beatkeeping (part shuffle, part aggressive jazz). In addition to Perry's compelling lead, she also provides weaving backing vocals and counterpart lead vocals during the punchy middle eight. Perry's melody sounds like it's just hanging on, managing to keep up with the numerous rhythmic twists and turns. Yet again, brilliant. SearCh taps out a New Orleans jazz rhythm on "Light Up the Underworld" - boy, Perry should have

multi-tracked this part, this could have sounded like Carla Bley rewriting Fleetwood Mac's "Tusk". Perry's bass playing is equally critical, so rubbery and playful, while she embellishes with anything she can - dissonant guitars, electronic keyboards whooshes and squeals, etc. Perry's walking bassline and cooing vocals are accompanied by an appropriate melody in the verses of "Time to Say Hello". The verses lead into the clockwork rhythm of the chorus - this is one of the songs that reminded me of the Sugarplastic/XTC approach. If anything, this dissonant meets pretty approach works a bit better with a vocalist as pleasant as Perry. This song has stayed in my head since the first time I spun the disc. Normally, this is the part of the review where I acknowledge flaws in the disc, or areas in which the artist could improve to make the disc better. Here, I'm at a loss as to what Perry should change. Oh yeah - next time, print the lyrics in the disc booklet. I can't think of much else I'd change." -Mike Bennett, Fufkin

"Objectivity is a difficult task, made even more so when fondness for an artist might cloud one's perspective. Still, I am compelled to gush when speaking the praises of the chronically shy Andrea Perry, who might be one of the most pleasant musical surprises to come my way in many a moon. Two is the aptly titled sophomore effort from the multi-talented Perry, who delivers again on the promise first heard on her debut Saturday Morning Sweet Shoppe with a dozen newly intriguing musical gems. Perry's complex rhythms and deceptively spare arrangements fall a refreshingly far distance from the mainstream. Her soft voice lulls you with its seraphicness, at times hiding the swirl of inner portent her lyrics convey. This is impudent kinky pop with a difference that appeals even more because of that difference. In addition, Andrea Perry is a natural in adding just the right amount of nuance and musical texture - you get a voice slide here, an unexpected guitar fill there, even a xylophone when necessary. Perry knows how to structure songs. She has wonderful middle bridges, and never overstays her welcome (the longest song here is 4:28). She gets to the point and marries the music, its rhythms and its words. Her songwriting talents are only half the story here - as a performer she excels, whether on guitar or keyboards or bass or vocals (and believe me, she uses vocals as another instrument). The only thing she doesn't play is drums, and those are ably handled by the masterful Chris Searles. Spending her formative years in Austin, Texas as the daughter of two accomplished pianists, Perry grew up in a musical household (mostly classical, although the Beatles and some Danny Kaye children's albums also made the cut). Piano lessons didn't go well for her, the result of laziness and/or a learning disability. This, coupled with horrible stage fright and the rationale that the

Beatles had had no formal piano training, led to quitting. Instead, she played the way she wanted to, deciding by age 10 that she wanted to write songs and make records. As she grew older she went from a love of radio and its "top 40" music to a devotion to the album rock of The Clash, Talking Heads, David Bowie, Lou Reed, The Police, and The Pretenders and then onto classic rock radio through the remainder of high school. After graduation, Ms. Perry began to make her first four-track recordings, and solidified a conviction that this was what she wanted to do with her life. Her college career was peppered with musical milestones (University of Southern California - gets first keyboard; Hampshire College - gets a Strat and eventually learns to play guitar). She joined a band (The Ice Weasels) as keyboardist, along with Paul Melancon, Aaron Tucker, Montgomery Knott, Peter Altman and the late Billy Greene (to whose memory this new CD is dedicated). After college, Perry convinced Tucker, Knott and Altman to join her in testing Austin's thriving music scene. With new drummer Mike McElhaney rounding out the roster, the band Wax Elephant developed a strong following in the early '90s, but ultimately broke up. Since then, Ms. Perry found work writing for video games and CD-ROMs, and learned to play the bass, all of which has helped sharpen her creativity en route to this more recent solo career. Two opens with the misleading cheery bounce of bass and piano that helms "Bursting Through the Clouds". It's really more a plea for better times in the midst of dreary weather, everlasting rain and repetitious lonely days. Perry's sunny voice and surprising counter-harmonies handles it with aplomb: "Blown about in darkness / Lost forevermore / I don't know what's behind me and I can't tell what's in store / I just long to see the sun bursting through the clouds." Perry's use of unusual rhythms and complex song structure often conjures up understandable comparisons to XTC and Sugarplastic. Yet Perry at times runs even more contrary to expectations. For instance, strong bass propels the slightly jazzy funk of "Oh No! The Day Is Dawning", which at first seems more of a nightmare warning against some type of Armageddon, a call to watch one's back, slip out, protect one's self. Suddenly, near song's end, it's as if someone has let the air out of this balloon -- the song shifts gears as simple voice and organ declare the refrain "I've come to treat you well / now that we live in the same hotel". Sometimes her rhythms dominate the songs, as if the feel of the words convey more than the words themselves. Such is the case with "Time to Say Hello", which is a primer in how bass lines can dominate a song effectively. The bass walks down as Perry says "I know that you're ready, I know that it's time" and the catchy chorus reiterates the title. Similar is what Perry does with the short song "I Think of Nothing" -- complex rhythms and countering guitar serve as equal

partners to the conflict of the words ("find me a way to turn far away from you / I think of nothing but you, there's nothing"). In both of these examples, what could be a simple song is not -- extra touches, voices, sounds all complement the whole in a very impressive way. The stutter-step energy of "Make the World Go 'Round" is as close as Perry gets to a traditional love song, a lament about lost love and wanting it fixed: "Losing you by leaps and bounds / Your goo goo eyes are daggers now / And "I love you" is just a sound / Day upon day / Slow to anchor, quick to fly / Don't know what you're afflicted by / You close me off I don't know why / You turn away." Her vocal work is impressive here. A most infectious melody is at the heart of the pretty yet bitterseraphic "You Broke the Spell", another farewell in the face of a failure, realizing "all the money in the world won't put it back together now". Influences that were apparent on her first CD seem to have been joined by new ones (e.g., some Kate Bush in Perry's "Slide Out"). In particular, the song "Bye Bye" sounds as if it could have been sung years ago by the heralded pop chanteuse/songwriter Margo Guryan. A snare drum leads the parade of sounds and different textures (including xylophone) that comprise the enjoyable treat of "Light Up the Underworld", a call for magical protection before major party time. "Getting' to Know You" is another unique Perry twist on conventional love songs. Just when you think Perry is all about cleverness, she floors you with a gorgeous song of enormous emotional power. Such is the case with "All Alone", a quiet confession of being ripped apart inside and out that is perfectly captured: "I don't think I'm gonna sleep for awhile / I was thinking about the way you waved goodbye" and "I guess my skin will thicken, my heart will harden, the pain will soften, but now I can't imagine / All alone". Similarly, the piano-driven song "Higher" is another quiet reflective gem. The closer "Across the Water" shows that Perry's lack of piano lessons hasn't hurt much in the long haul. This is a beautiful song of piano and organ (a la Procol Harum) and expressive vocals that starts slowly, but builds a head of steam as it closes out the proceedings. I can't say enough about the inimitable Andrea Perry. Her songs have an honesty and confidence, her words are evocative, she is calculating and precise in her arrangements and production (Andy Sharp helped with the mixing), and she performs well on each instrument track after track. There is not a bad song here (nor was there on her first CD) and the complexity of the songs demand repeated listens. While stage fright continues to prevent her from developing a following through live performances, this kinky perfectionist of a singer/songwriter deserves a larger audience. My suggestion to you: go to her website and sample some of these wonderful tunes. She's different from most -- hear if you like that difference. I know I do. Andrea Perry's Two remains

uniquely original at a time when legions of soundalikes seem to rule the media airwaves. And while my objectivity might be a little skewed, viva la difference!" -Gary Glauber, Pop Matters

"After thrilling with her debut Saturday Morning Sweet Shoppe , Andrea Perry returns to prove that release was no fluke. Perry continues on a path proving that she's one of pop's original voices at work today with Two . Disjointed rhythms, an almost whispered vocal, and a seemingly effortless way with melody Perry weaves in and out of arrangements that are full of surprises. Light Up The Underworld isn't a song as much as it is a few songs. The tribute to Perry's talent is that you never get the sense of someone saying "hey, look what I can do!". Two remains an album - as in a set of songs - probably more so than Saturday Morning Sweet Shoppe. There's a stronger consistency here. Sure, there doesn't seem to be much Perry won't try, but she finds her voice most successfully in letting her bass and piano parts bounce along with her vocal as in 'All Alone' and the opening 'Bursting Through The Clouds.' To keep a playful variety in the mix, the sly funk of 'Oh No! The Day Is Dawning' and the exotic groove of 'I Think Of Nothing' add much. Perry is an artist with a strong signature sound. So strong that some may find that it isn't up their alley. With Two , this should be a pretty overwhelming minority." -Claudio Sossi, Shake It Up

"Andrea plays all instrumentation on this album, save drums. That is taken up by SearCh who adds a lickety-split style that in its horizontal motion keeps this album moving forward. Perry sings in a charming, heady voice reminiscent of Kate Bush. Some songs feature piano or keyboards, others guitar. Plushly upholstered in multi-tracked vocals singing poignant personal poetry, Two is number one material" -Thomas Schulte, Womanrock.com

"Considering how much distance pop music has traveled in the half-century since Elvis Presley burst onto the cultural scene, it's remarkably frustrating to consider how limited women continue to be within the field. While artistic freedom would seem to produce infinite breeds of female performers, the sexism embedded in the marketplace make all but a few of them invisible, leaving little but that which reinforces the notion that women are weak and submissive, from the sniveling of Tori Amos to the whorish posturing of Britney Spears. But travel a bit afield and you might bump into singer-songwriter Andrea Perry, a native of Austin, Texas who, in her own quiet way, does her best to smash up the system. Being a female who operates under the heading of singer/songwriter may not sound that revolutionary, and it might instead

conjure up the familiar and insufferable image of a girl with an acoustic guitar strumming dully in a coffeehouse while crooning her ever-so-confessional poetry on top. Yet once again, Perry nimbly sidesteps that cliché and offers up something altogether different on her second album, the modestly titled *Two*. Sounding as if it were recorded in an enchanted forest (it was actually done in a restaurant in Austin, although many people mistake one for the other), *Two* presents Perry's unique aesthetic in highly economical terms, offering a dozen songs in a retro-sized 40 minutes. In other hands, such a move might seem like writer's block, but in Perry's case, it comes across as modesty and taste, an impression confirmed by the nature of the songs themselves. Despite her idiosyncrasies - and there are many - Perry is at heart a pop songwriter, and a very fine one at that. Though some tracks inevitably shine above others, all 12 display an assured sense of craft. The hooks are always repeated the right number of times, and the bridges always come just before repetitiveness sets in. Like the Beatles, perhaps her biggest point of reference, Perry is able to marry simple joys with depth and sophistication. The opener, "Bursting Through the Clouds," is radio-friendly enough to sound like a hit single from an alternate universe, but its magnificent chord progression signals that its author is capable of not just grabbing attention but sustaining it. An even more daring balancing act comes in "I Think of Nothing," which chugs along in a disorienting 5/4 while an ethereal melody floats above. The accomplishments of *Two* are rendered all the more remarkable for the degree to which Perry is responsible for its sonic details. She plays guitar, bass, and keyboards and produces as well. She excels in all these areas, but the production is perhaps most striking. The pristine sound allows Perry's many nuances to get the attention they deserve, and Perry's liberal use of double-tracked singing gives her voice the honey glaze it sounds as if it were designed for. And though Perry's life has been littered with frustrated attempts to learn new instruments, she sounds rather comfortable with each one she employs. Drummer Chris Searles, the only other musician on the album, is as sympathetic a partner as Perry could ask for, always keeping busy without intruding. Together, they swing and groove easily, giving the otherwise mellow songs the thrust they need to keep from stalling. For all its other admirable attributes, what makes *Two* so charming is Perry's attitude. In the liner notes, she writes that the album is dedicated to a deceased former bandmate, and even a cursory glance at her lyrics shows an ample amount of sad subjects, but her music clearly reveals an underlying and irrepressible joy, the *sine qua non* that lets Perry rise above the Sarah McLachlans of the world. She doesn't always keep this adequately tempered, and if she has a weakness, it's that she can be a shade

too fey for her own good. From a strictly commercial standpoint, she may also be too subtle and elegant to break through in an increasingly clamorous and unlistenable pop milieu, but that's a strike against the music business, not Perry. In a better world, Two might very well be a hit record, but in this one, however many or few people are able to hear it should consider themselves quite fortunate indeed." -Brian James, Delusions of Adequacy _____ "Oh

goody! Andrea's back to delight us with her happy brand of happy music! Two finds seraphic Andrea return with even more delightful journeys into what I suppose is 'twee' pop of the terminal kind. Which is good, mind. As usual, one will detect the odd reference to all things XTC by that token also find the likes of Sugarplastic and Martin Newell sandwiched in-between somewhere. Naively imaginative in both melody and lyrics, Two will appeal to the children in us, and the adults wouldn't find it a chore either!"

-Kevin Mathews, Power of Pop

_____ "Andrea Perry writes songs that sound timeless. There's a Tin Pan Alley feel to her structure at times, and when that's combined with her jaunty electronic pop style the result is an oddly appealing set of songs. A lot of the time I'm absolutely convinced a song won't work. Perry has this clunky way of starting songs that lends a sense of unease to the proceedings. A little suspense, if you will. That she pulls every song off with with aplomb is not the point. That this stuff sounds gorgeous (the production is sharp but not sterile) isn't the point. That Perry has one of those immediately endearing voices also isn't the point. All those (and more) are the reason this album is so enchanting. All I can say with certainty is that this album knocks me out." -Aiding and Abetting _____

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