

## Mp3 Kelleigh Mckenzie - Chances



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Smart songs delivered with a clarion voice, irreverent banjo and distinctive fingerstyle guitar. A bewitching blend of earthy old-time, modern folk, wicked grooves and soulful foot-stomp blues. 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, ROCK: Americana Details: see me weaving blackberry vines, blackberry vines / into giant raven wings / I will fly and know these things, Ill know these things Thus goes O Mother, the first track from Kelleigh McKenzies stunning debut Chances. Sung in a clarion voice, full of determination and delicacy, the melody soars and swoops over McKenzies lone open-backed banjo and pounding foot-stomp. This is the sound of a spirited woman embarking on a journey with a faithful five-stringed companion, her music a bracing mix of earthy old-time, modern folk, wicked grooves and deep soulful blues. Borne upon this blend are lyrics that veer effortlessly from a graceful social consciousness to lusty romps and sinister seductions. A fearless exploration of opportunity and risk, Chances introduces a penetrating songwriter with a keen wit and innate sense of the dramatic. Im fascinated by the pivotal moments, says McKenzie, by what motivates us both individually and as a culture. Witness the emboldened lover in Call It A Day who discovers Im a raging flood babe and youre the dam / you want to hold me like the lion holds the lamb. Or the carnival barker of War For Sale, who exhorts the listener to privatize your worries away. McKenzies finely-honed songs are center-stage on Chances, intriguingly rendered with her expressive voice, irreverent banjo and distinctive fingersyle guitar. Swirling about this core are surprising arrangements and contemporary sonic textures that give the inherent rootsiness of her work a bewitching groove. Like her songs subjects, Chances presents a pivotal moment for McKenzie as well. At 43, shes walked an arduous road from the ecstasy of finding ones calling to the desolation of being stripped of the ability to fulfill it. Born and raised in rural Oregon, Kelleighs early years were steeped in music. The family turntable played everything from her parents Ella Fitzgerald to her big sisters Led

Zeppelin to her southern grandmas Carter Family. For as far back as she can remember, she felt a powerful urge to perform. Childhood piano lessons and dance classes led to the theater and although she was passionate about social justice and considered studying law, McKenzies serious clown tendencies won the day and she settled on Carnegie Mellons drama department. It was there that she picked up her first stringed instrument when cast in a play as a banjo-wielding character, and she was smitten. After graduating and subsequently eking out a living as an actor in New York City, McKenzies first songs began to emerge as she taught herself to play banjo and acoustic guitar. The exuberance and thrill she felt while making music ultimately trumped the drudgery of the actors life, she quit the theatre and joined downtown alt-country band Little Green. By the mid-1990s she had enough material to hit the citys solo troubadour circuit and quickly built a loyal following. With newfound companion multi-instrumentalist Jeff Michne at the helm, she began recording her debut. Then out of nowhere McKenzies hands, arms and upper body became wracked with a mysterious pain, leaving her unable to play, or do much of anything else, for years. I was devastated, she relates. I lived in crisis for a long time. But it ended up leading me to introspection and now I consider it a strange gift. During her nine-year sabbatical and gradual recovery in newly adopted hometown Rosendale, NY, avowed folkie McKenzie opened up to Michne faves Charles Mingus, Bill Frisell and Skip James; a harmonic complexity began to arise in her material, giving a perfect berth to the expressiveness of McKenzies voice and evolving lyrical depth. She re-learned to play her instruments without pain using a more deliberate, mindful approach and added a stomp box an amplified piece of wood on which the performer pounds out rhythm with his or her foot. I was aching to share the new songs, she says, so I played a few local open-mic nights and was astounded by the response. Soon McKenzies hip-swaying, riveting solo acoustic shows began to draw enthusiastic audiences and she and Michne knew it was time to get back in the studio and set about crafting her debut. They enlisted award-winning engineer/bassist Scott Petito (James Taylor, The Fugs, Rory Block, Leslie Ritter) to record and play on the project, and drummer Dan Hickey (They Might Be Giants, Joe Jackson, Rickie Lee Jones) joined them on three tracks. Michne and McKenzie co-produced and formed Zatchubilly Music to independently release the record. People who are interested in Emmylou Harris Patty Larkin Chris Whitley should consider this download.

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