Mp3 Esther Golton - Unfinished Houses



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Alaskan singer-songwriter creates unusual poetic texture with mountain dulcimer, flute, bass, drums, etc. Her voice draws you in like cold hands to the top of a woodstove. Includes songs by indie artists Danny Schmidt, Antje Duvekot, 3 Blind Mice. 13 MP3 Songs FOLK: Progressive Folk, FOLK: Folk Pop Details: About Esther Golton and Unfinished Houses Esther Golton is a clear-voiced Alaskan singer-songwriter who accompanies herself with a mountain dulcimer. She plays it in her own individualistic, non-traditional way, perching it on a home-made stand, crossing genres from gentle folk to pop to blues and jazz, coaxing out interesting chords, and meddling with texture in order to add dimension to her lyrics. Esther's debut studio production, Unfinished Houses, encompasses her varied life and musical experiences. Its unconventional. The dulcimer surprises you, sometimes playing jazzy chord progressions that seem impossible for a non-chromatic 4-stringed instrument. The flute improvs are both lush and spare. Her voice is vivid, pretty, and pronounced. The song content ranges from heartfelt stories to poetic soundscapes to quirky philosophical musings. The CD contains contributions from a variety of musicians including a moving harmony and layered guitars by Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman on Keli Mahoney... a song memorializing a well-loved Talkeetna bush pilot with whom Karen and Pete flew around Denali. Originally from the suburbs of Philadelphia, Esther attended Penn State to study agriculture and ended up with a degree in flute performance, jazz and composition in 1989. She subsequently hiked the Appalachian Trail, busked in Japan while teaching English there, worked on a commune called East Wind in Missouri, lived the "simple life" in the backwoods of Maine, then moved to Alaska in 1997. Esther spent a year with her partner in an old log cabin on an un-named lake in the bush before buying a small piece of property in the village of Talkeetna, where she built her own 12' x 12' cabin. This tiny unplumbed, 'unfinished house' inspired the song "All The Room I Need". "I needed to write a song to remind myself

over and over that I liked living this way," she laughs. Esther's performance career began with gigs around Alaska from 1998 to 2003. She was a member of two rock groups, and toured as a solo artist in and out of Alaska, peddling a home-produced concert CD called Talkeetna Roadhouse Live. Then her own creative goals got sidetracked by helping the music of others get heard. For over four years, she became passionately involved with Whole Wheat Radio, an interactive internet radio project featuring independent music. While still living a relatively simple life with wood heat and an outhouse, she and Whole Wheat Radio's Jim Kloss built a larger cabin, dubbed "The Wheat Hole", specifically to be able to present house concerts for traveling singer-songwriters, and webcast them live. Her cabins resonated with the music of the likes of Jack Williams, Mark Erelli, Peter Mulvey, Kristina Olsen, Johnsmith, Danny Schmidt and many more. The concerts were magical, and sometimes she joined the artists on stage. One day something shifted. She realized that while enthusiastically supporting other artists, she had let her own creativity and expression slide into near non-existence. She decided to take her own dreams more seriously, and determinedly traveled to 10th Planet Studio in Fairbanks to record Unfinished Houses in the spring/summer of 2007. Three unusual cover songs on Unfinished Houses are part of a side-project to learn and spread the music of great independent songwriters whose music is not easily found in regular media outlets. All are artists that Esther discovered via Whole Wheat Radio - Antje Duvekot, Danny Schmidt, and London-based 3 Blind Mice. It was a thrill to breathe my own interpretation into those songs, says Esther. Other artists I admire write so differently from the way I do. That can be freeing, and tremendously fun to arrange. The title track was written mid-project. "I wanted to name the album Unfinished Houses because I've now lived in so many of them," says Esther. "My cabin is still pretty rough inside and out, which is common in rural Alaska, actually. I was thinking about it, and it seemed a wonderful metaphor; our very imperfectness is the place from where we shine." And so has evolved another traveling folk singer-songwriter. Esther says, "I'm glad there are so many of us out there writing and singing. What a gift to humanity. Each singer-songwriter is like a tulip in a field of tulips. Every single flower has its own individual beauty, there's not one tulip you'd say should not be blooming. And who knows? I might just be the slightly crinkly flower that leaps out into your particular ears and a connection is made. That's the food for me." Thank you for your spirit of musical discovery and for being open to the unconventional. Its not what your house looks like, whether you have nice cabinets, or whether the windows have been trimmed, its what happens inside it. - Jim Kloss, Whole Wheat Radio -

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