

Mp3 Jeni Hankins & Billy Kemp - Sweet & Toxic



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Jeni Hankins Billy Kemp write original songs in the Traditional Country and Appalachian style. 6 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Traditional Country, COUNTRY: Country Folk Details: "If you liked the movie 'Walk the Line' . . . you'll love the music of Jeni Hankins and Billy Kemp. Our own Johnny and June, or maybe Porter and Dolly." (Steve Key, Songwriter and Promoter) "Jeni and Billy have such a great handle on that old style of stuff . . . it's incredible. Theyre the real deal." (Michael Patrick Smith, Artistic Director, The Living Room Company) Jeni Hankins was born in the coal mining town of Richlands in Southwestern Virginia. She spent summers with her MawMaw up around the Jewell Ridge Coal Camp and spent the school years moving with her family from city to city, from Boston to Nashville, Las Cruces to Omaha. Billy Kemp is a Baltimore native who grew up dreaming of hills and hollers while learning to play guitar on the front steps of a little white church in Oella, a Baltimore community of mill workers transplanted from Appalachia. Together, Jeni and Billy share a love of songwriting and, in particular, a love of country music with its stories of true life blues and unexpected grace. The duo traces their influences in the music of traditional country artists Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash, Willie Nelson, and Hazel Dickens, as well as in the music of Appalachian Ballad and Old-time singers Ginny Hawker, Texas Gladden and the Carter Family. Jenis haunting and mournful vocal style is complimented by Billys edgy instrumental work. His flat-pick and fingerstyle playing combines syncopation and melodicism to convey the mood of the songs. He also adds character to the performance with his aggressive and reckless harmony vocals. Jenis dark and striking lyrics draw you into captivating narratives of heartache and hard living. Images of coal crowns, trash trailers, and glass and gasoline recur, and Jesus and the Great Speckled Bird are never far off. Billy comes to the duo after a fifteen year career as a producer of Americana and Roots music. He has worked with singer-songwriters in the greater DC metro area including Grammy Nominated artist

Debi Smith of the Four Bitchin Babes and Nashville songwriter Margie Plant who has seen artists such as Emmylou Harris record her songs. Billy also composed the theme for Maryland Public Televisions Regional Emmy Award winning program Outdoors Maryland and has taught for the last ten years as an adjunct faculty member of the University of Maryland at Baltimore Countys Music Department. He also spent six years in Nashville working as a session musician and touring with Country and Gospel artist Terri Gibbs and Country artist Tommy Overstreet. He played on the Grand Old Opry for a year as a guitarist in Jeanne Pruitts band. He has played numerous folk and bluegrass festivals sharing stages with Jim Jesse, Jimmy Martin, Eddie Adcock and the Osborne Brothers. Billy has also performed at nationally known venues such as the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, the Fox Theatre in Atlanta, the Lonestar Cafe in New York, the Kennedy Center and the Birchmere, opening for artists Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, Kathy Mattea, Janis Ian, and Joe Ely. Jeni comes to the duo with the stories passed down by her grandmothers and great aunts stories of miners, homesteaders, moonshiners, preachers, fallen women, rough men, and ill-fated lovers. She has studied ballad singing with Sheila Kay Adams and recently discovered the ballad style of West Virginias own Molly Andrews her long lost aunt once removed. At the John C. Campbell Folk School, she studied clawhammer banjo with David Brose and autoharp with Mountain Laurel champion John Hollandsworth. Pulitzer Prize poet Paul Muldoon and North Carolina poet Tony Abbott both mentored her in poetry writing. She has been writing and performing in theater, choir, and musical ensembles since she was at her MawMaws knee.

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