

Mp3 Virginia Barrett - Show Me The Way



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American singer/songwriter Virginia Barrett fuses her engaging lyrics and melodies with the ethereal, folk-trance sound of traditional mbira pieces, the ancient, sacred instrument of the Shona people of Zimbabwe. 15 MP3 Songs FOLK: like Joni, WORLD: African Details: The mbira is an ancient and sacred instrument of the Shona people of Zimbabwe. Traditionally played to honor and invite ancestor spirits to take possession of spirit mediums, it is the center of Shona spirituality. Virginia Barrett has been deeply touched by the meditative, ethereal sound of the mbira; her engaging melodies and lyrics spring forth from the muse of the mbira like treasured gifts. A poet at heart, Barrett brings her passion for beauty and expression to her finely crafted, often narrative lyrics, sung with a sweet intimacy imbued with honesty and truth. Barrett fell in love with the mbira after hearing Shona inspired music by the original JAKA band from Santa Fe, New Mexico, led by Dan Pauli. After dancing to JAKA at shows for two years she made the instrumental plunge and bought an mbira the summer of 2001. She received one lesson, learning a traditional, four phrase piece, and then headed off alone to the Colorado woods for a week of camping. "That's when the true relationship began," explains Barrett, "I simply went under the spell of the mbira and have been there ever since. I played that one song over and over until my thumbs were sore and then I made up my own song with just one line of lyrics...but hey, that was a start." The following May, Barrett attended the five day annual Zimbabwe music camp Tumbuka, held on a ranch outside of Santa Fe. There she met Ambuya Beauler Dyoko from Zimbabwe, one of the leading female mbira players and singers, who was in the States giving workshops. "I felt a connection with her right away and by the second day of camp I had asked Ambuya Beauler if I could come study with her in Zimbabwe." Beginning October 2002, Barrett spent six months in Zimbabwe living and learning from not only Ambuya Beauler but other master mbira players including: Cosmas Magaya and his son Muda, Fraderick Mujuru and Tute

Chigamba. All the songs on her debut CD, *SHOW ME THE WAY*, were directly inspired by her time in Zimbabwe. "The collection plays like a travel log of my life there...simple but profound happenings like sitting under a great shade tree with Ambuya Beauler watching the neighbors pass by; the sudden death of a young nephew and the birth of another; folk beliefs I learned; and experiences with traditional healers..." Underlying the thematic thread of everyday Shona life in *SHOW ME THE WAY*, is Barrett's characteristic exploration of the human condition. Her lyrics, some in the rhythmic Shona language (liner notes with translations) deeply touch the emotions, challenging injustice and embracing universal feelings such as sorrow, longing and love. Barrett's ongoing search for the spiritual in contemporary life shines through brightly. Promoting her CD beginning the summer of 2004, Barrett has been warmly received at several Colorado venues, including the first annual Acoustic Grass Roots Festival in State Bridge. She will be touring Ireland the months of September and October after which she will return to Zimbabwe for a few months to soak up more of the vibe. She plans to continue touring parts of Europe the spring of 2005, after which she will return to the States for the summer festival season.

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