

# Mp3 Eileen Hemphill-haley - Porch Songs



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Folk-rock songs rooted in life experiences; the kind of stuff that makes you want to stop and think, and then sing along. 14 MP3 Songs ROCK: Folk Rock, FOLK: Modern Folk Details: She was born down south, lives out west, and has a mind that wanders to wherever a good story lines up with a strong melody. As an artist, Eileen Hemphill-Haley tends to focus on the inevitable effects of human nature, how personalities repel, enhance or enliven one another -- what she calls "the reactor fuel of relationships." She then belts out her views in a musical style best described as "story-oriented folk rock." What does that mean? It means characters in action in her songs, making themselves seen and heard in the imagination. A perfect example of this is EH-H's folk-rock anthem "Durango" -- a story about two people traveling around the west, not even knowing how lost they truly are, until they are trapped together in a huge storm. Another example is "Broken Arrow", a lament of unrequited love, told from the point of view of someone who is unable to return the level of passion received. Another rich story is found in "Tennessee Peaches", which recounts the horror of a war long ago, told by the ghost of one of the soldiers who perished in the fighting. The fourth daughter of a career Army officer and Irish-American housewife, EH-H was raised in an environment of constant change, moving from one town to another, being inadvertently immersed in different American subcultures with every new assignment. It was a life that helped her develop a keen sense of observation about the world around her, as well as a basic appreciation for everyday people, and the diverse ways Americans live out their lives. And being raised in a large family surrounded by women, she learned the value of speaking up and not being afraid to express original views. With guitar in hand, she has managed to take expression to a new level, and make it an art all her own. Listeners agree that the lyrics and melodies of EH-H's songs are equally compelling, and that the lovely combination of hook and wit is so inviting that it naturally makes people

want to sing along. Although the alternate tunings may make the songs a challenge to figure out on guitar, they are no less a hoot to sing along with at home, in the car, or wherever her CDs may be playing. A major theme in her music is the woman as hero, a person who either rises above or does not permit herself to be a victim. But this is sung in the voice of a feminist who clearly loves men. "Thanks to some incredibly wonderful men in my life, including my husband, son, and close friends, you can certainly detect the respect I feel for most men in my songs. But as a writer I also strive to be a voice for the women and children in our society who have had to suffer the worst of the lot, and have been denied a voice of their own." This theme as the "woman as winner" appears in the wised-up narrator of "Jagged Line" who states she will no longer tolerate someone who insists on breaking the law; and in "Left Him With a Lie", in which someone prefers to pack up and move out rather than be subjected to one more untruth; and "Faith in the Ties that Bind", another wise-up tale in which the protagonist discovers the grace and strength necessary to finally let go. In the end, the secret to Eileen Hemphill-Haley's songwriting is that there ARE no real secrets. "I want my songs to be interesting and original," she says, "not obscure. Songs are a form of literature; short stories or prose set to music. Nobody wants to finish reading a story, and then have to wonder what in the world it was about. I want my listeners to understand my message, and feel involved. Otherwise, what's the point of playing for an audience?" It's not that metaphors never appear in her writing, however. "Oh yeah," she says, "Love the metaphor. Just got no use for mystery." ===== Insights to the songs: DURANGO Here's a story two people out wandering through the west, too focused on their work to even realize how lost they really are. They happen to become trapped in a storm together, and by the time the weather clears, well, everything is different. BROKEN ARROW Ah, "unrequited love", aka "why love really sucks sometimes." Rejection is brutal enough when you're the one who has to take it , and even worse when you're the one who gets to dish it out. How exactly do you tell someone their love isn't good enough for you? TENNESSEE PEACHES About 150 years ago in southern Tennessee, in a beautiful little place called Shiloh, Confederate and Union soldiers clashed in some of the most horrendous and bloody fighting of the entire Civil War. It's a sad fact that more Americans died in those two days of fighting than in all the previous conflicts in U.S. history combined. Some of the fighting took place in a lovely little peach orchard, and as it was the first week of April, all of the peach trees were in full bloom. Thanks to the cannon and gunfire the blossoms rained from the trees and covered the ground, as well as the bodies of

the fallen soldiers. To those who were fighting that day it almost looked like it was snowing. Here is that story told from one soldier's point of view. FROM THE PORCH There is nothing better than hanging out with your friends at the end of the day on somebody's porch. In hectic times it's the thing everyone looks forward to; an escape back to the same place where the conversation is easy and unfettered, the laughs rich and raucous, and the silences comfortable. It's the long, fading twilight, coming on to the cool of night, and it can't be beat. JAGGED LINE What to do with someone you love who can't stop ruining his own life -- and yours? This is a story about two people who obviously have a long history, but for one of them that history has become unbearable. When at last she understands that he is not going to let her help him, she realizes it is time to help herself. IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME Just a reminder that perhaps the kindest -- and most important -- thing you can do for someone you love is give that person your undivided attention. FAITH IN THE TIES THAT BIND ("Gus") Sometimes it's hard to let go of a relationship, even when you know it's never really going to work out. But the protagonist in this story is a Westerner who knows that some wild things cannot, or should not, be tamed. It's better to wise up, and let go. WHERE'S CHARLENE The conflicted feelings of someone who is absolutely wild about someone who is, well, absolutely wild! He is certain she would be his if he could just find the right way to tell her. But when she comes near, his eloquence instantly vanishes, and he has none of the words to make her stay. LEFT HIM WITH A LIE The big liar and the little wife. For some time he had assumed his antics were too clever for her, but when he comes home one night armed with an iron-clad alibi, he finds there is no one left to tell it to...she's gone. QUIT HAUNTING ME Just because a love is over doesn't necessarily mean it will go away. The memories of it hang around like a ghost in an old house, unwelcome, refusing to leave. THAT WICKED WOMAN This is a lament about someone so hurt by a relationship that he can't seem to bring himself to try again. And oh by the way, if there's anyone who knows a wicked woman when she sees one, it's another woman. MAMA LION This is an observation about the inherent protective nature of mothers for their children. Pick any mammal, human or otherwise. A mama will kick ass, metaphorically and otherwise, to protect her baby. ABBEY Sometimes you don't know a good thing when you've got it. After it's over and you get it all sorted out, maybe you'll decide you must go back and try again. The problem is, will the other person let you? TELL ME YOU LOVE ME Everyone needs to hear sweet things from the one they love. And sometimes you need to hear it RIGHT NOW!

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