

## Mp3 Anne Hills - Bittersweet Street



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Anne Hills is such an exquisite singer that it's understandable that people might be swept up in the pure beauty of her voice and thereby overlook her writing. That would be a mistake. For me, Anne's writing is as direct, melodic and deep as any work bei 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, POP: Folkly Pop Details: "One of the most glorious voices in all of contemporary folk music." -- Chicago Tribune "Bittersweet Street," Anne's debut release on Redwing Music, is the second album to focus on her own original songs. Visiting such diverse subjects as the Civil War, love lost and found, alcoholism, a yard of dreams and the dreams of the exiled, she reaches to the heart with a poet's evocative palette and a singer's love of melody. There are few artists who have the full range of musical gifts possessed by singer and songwriter Anne Hills, and fewer still who have worked so hard and so successfully to hone those gifts. She has been the recipient of numerous honors including the Wold Folk Music Association's 2002 Kate Wolf Memorial Award. The Kerrville Music Foundation named her their 1997 Outstanding Female Vocalist of the Year, and her duet childrens recording, Never Grow Up, released in 1998 with Cindy Mangsen on Flying Fish Records, was chosen for the coveted 1998 Parents Choice Award. The regular appearance of her solo recordings on best of lists around the country, and the demand for her at festivals, concerts and seminars on songwriting, prove that Annes star is shining as brightly today as ever. The new millennium found her an award-winning poet (Atlanta Review), and she began work as lyricist for jazz-artist Peter Erskine. (Their collaborative works were performed by choirs from around the world at a Hilliard Ensemble workshop in Germany.) In 2001, she has reunited with long-time friend Tom Paxton to release Under American Skies on Appleseed Recordings, and they continue occasional duo touring throughout the U.S. and England. In the spring of 2003 she and bandmates Michael Smith, Steve Gillette, and Cindy Mangsen released their self-titled quartet debut, Appleseed Recordings Fourtold. That same summer she

participated in the final Pete Seeger compilation *Seeds*, and her lyrical work expanded into the UK folk scene, co-writing two tunes (including the title cut) with Bill Jones for her *Two Year Winter* (on Compass Records). Then, in January of 2004, Appleseed Recordings delighted fans with the release of an historic Chicago concert recording (engineered in 1985 by WFMT's Rich Warren) of the group *Best of Friends* (Paxton, Gibson Hills). Though collaborative work is the keystone in Annes career, it is her singing and interpretive gifts that have received the most attention. 1998 saw the release of Annes performances on two of the most talked about compilations of the year, placing her voice along side Bruce Springsteen, Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, The Roches, Ani DiFranco and The Indigo Girls on *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* (The Songs of Pete Seeger) and *Whats That I Hear?* (The Songs of Phil Ochs). Other projects include the occasional winter tour with Priscilla Herdman and Cindy Mangsen (*Voices of Winter*, 1998, *Turning of the Year* in 2000), which was featured in the arts section of the January 1998 Sunday New York Times, and her performances with the legendary songwriter Michael Smith. Anne and Michaels duet recording *Paradise Lost and Found* was released in the fall of 1999 on Redwing Music label. That same year she won a Second Prize International Poetry Award from the Atlanta Review in 2000. A year earlier, in the fall of 1998, Anne released *Bittersweet Street* also on Redwing Music. It was her ninth release, and the second album to highlight her own compositions. Covering such diverse subjects as the Civil War, alcoholism, a yards winter dreams, and exiled refugees, Anne continues to touch the heart with a poets evocative palette and a singers love of melody. Its not surprising that Annes songwriting, and the albums featuring her writing (*Bittersweet Street* and 1995s *Angle of the Light*), have continued to win her new and ardent fans. In 1994, her song *Follow That Road* was chosen as the title cut for the 2nd Annual Marthas Vineyard Songwriters Gathering recording on Rounder Records (produced by Christine Lavin). Anne was born in Moradabad, India, the third daughter of educational missionaries. Raised in Michigan, she attended Interlochen Arts Academy where she formed her first folk trio. She was also the female vocalist with the Big Band that turned out future jazz greats Peter Erskine, Bob Mintzer and Chris Brubeck. She moved to Chicagos fertile folk scene in 1976 and co-founded the folklore center Hogeye Music, still a force in the Chicago music scene. Her first three recordings, 1982s *The Panic is On* (with Jan Burda, produced by Bob Gibson), 1984's *Dont Explain*, and the Chicago Folk Christmas album, *On This Day Earth Shall Ring*, were released on her own Hogeye Records label. By 1983, she had joined forces with folk luminaries Tom Paxton and Bob Gibson to tour as a trio, while developing her own style of

songwriting and performing. As Annes touring schedule and prominence grew, Flying Fish Records added Hogeye Records to their growing catalog. Shortly after the release of her second solo recording *Woman of a Calm Heart* (produced in Woodstock by Artie Traum and Scott Petito, featuring a duet with Livingston Taylor), Anne began her occasional but very fruitful musical partnership with Cindy Mangsen and Priscilla Herdman. This culminated in the first trio recording *Voices* (1990, Flying Fish). Anne followed the trio recording with *October Child* (1993), produced by jazz drummer and former classmate Peter Erskine (Weather Report, Yellowjackets). It features the songs of Michael Smith, arranged by Vince Mendoza and played by session masters Bob Mann, Jimmy Johnson, the late Carlos Vega, Jim Cox and soloist Paul McCandless. Cindy Mangsen and Anne collaborated on *Never Grow Old* (1994), a traditional music project that received an Honorable Mention in the Folk category of the Indie Awards (NAIRD, now AFIM). It garnered praise from the radio community, which was thrilled to have the collection of trios and quartets that included a star studded list of guests such as John Hartford, Tom Paxton, Laurie Lewis, and John Roberts and Tony Barrand doing turn-of-the-century folksongs. It caught the attention of All Things Considered host Noah Adams, who invited Anne, Cindy and Steve Gillette to share songs from the project for a special Thanksgiving segment on the syndicated NPR news program. On the heels of that recording, Anne released *Angle of the Light* (1995) on Flying Fish/Rounder. This was followed in 1997 by the trio recording *Voices of Winter* on Gadfly Records, (the title cut written by Anne) which appeared on many best of the season lists and played extensively on radio nation wide. Also that year, Anne came out with her first childrens book (illustrated by Michigan artist Liz Paxson) based on her song *Dreamcatcher*. Annes commitment to social justice (graduating on Mothers Day of 2005 with a Masters in Social Work) and to children keeps her busy with benefit concerts and community service projects. In September of 1997, The Carole Robertson Center for Learning gave her its Award for Outstanding Service and Loyalty. Located in Chicago, the Center aids families and children in need and is named for the four girls killed in the 1963 Birmingham, Alabama Baptist church bombing. Earlier that year Anne had produced *Part of the Village*, the second in a series of benefit recordings (*That Kind of Grace*, released in 1995, being the first and done with friend David Roth). Both enlisted the help of a variety of fellow artists performing and contributing royalties and profits to the Centers Vision Fund. Throughout her career, Anne has taken time to do occasional theater projects such as *Quilters* (Buffalos Studio Arena and Chicagos Northlight, 1985-86), *The Courtship of Carl Sandburg* with Bob Gibson (in 1984 at Chicagos Apollo and Northlight

and Lansings Boarshead) and co-writing the music with Jay Ansill for, as well as performing in, Lovers (Philadelphias Arden Theater 1995). When shes not out touring, Anne resides in Bethlehem, PA with husband Mark Moss, editor of Sing Out! magazine and their daughter, Tamlyn.

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