

## Mp3 Lisa O'kane - Am I Too Blue



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A terrific new voice that hits you right in the mid-riff with a collection of finely crafted songs, three of which reached the #1 spot on the European Independent Country Chart since June 2002. 12 MP3 Songs

COUNTRY: Country Folk, COUNTRY: Modern Country Details: Growing up in California's majestic Yosemite Valley in the town of Fish Camp (population 36), where she and her two siblings were the only kids around, Lisa O'Kane loved singing and listening to old Hank Williams and Bill Monroe songs on her mom's radio as much as she enjoyed clambering over rocks and streams. Saturday nights, she went square dancing to a traditional jug band with a washboard and standup string bass. It was a life of simple joys and hard realities. Since "citified" by life in Los Angeles, the self-described mountain girl reconnects with those rustic roots on her debut album, "Am I Too Blue," a collection of 12 beautifully sung ballads, modern bluegrass, and country-rockers. Produced by Ed Tree and recorded at Dusty Wakeman's Mad Dog Studios in Burbank, "Am I Too Blue" represents a bright new stage in O'Kane's colorful life. It kicks off with her spunky co-write with Ken O'Malley, "Romance Finance," and includes lively romps through Monroe's "Old Cross Road is Waitin'," Williams' "My Sweet Love Ain't Around" and K.T. Oslin's "Wall of Tears." But the bulk of the album is comprised of ballads - O'Kane's specialty. In a sweet soprano brushed with melancholy and lightly sanded around the edges, she sings of loss and yearning with affecting conviction on Lucinda Williams' "Am I Too Blue," Mark Fosson and Tree's "Little Black Cloud," Richard Ferris' "Lovin' You Again" and Sandy Denny's "Like an Old Fashioned Waltz." When she laments the bridges burned in John Prine and Gary Nicholson's "All the Way With You," it's obvious she's survived a lot of fires. "I think I've always picked songs that I identify with," she acknowledges. "I have a friend who complains, 'You always pick these sad songs and you're such a happy person.' I said, 'That's because singing sad songs makes me feel better.' 'I've just always sung," she continues. "I was always in some

kind of band, I was always involved in some kind of production or choir, no matter what." But after singing and playing classical violin throughout childhood and supporting herself after college as a singer in a country band, she essentially gave up music for a while to have her two little girls. She stuffed those dreams behind the crib and dollhouse while raising her children. She didn't reclaim them until four years ago, when she spontaneously sat in with a band at a local pub on her birthday. After she sang Aretha Franklin's classic "Chain of Fools" and Rodney Crowell's "Ain't Living Long Like This," the bassist told her she was too good not to be performing. "That hit something in my soul and that's when the whole thing started. I knew I had to do it." Four months later, she asked Tree to produce her album. They spent a year gathering material and "listening to hundreds of demo songs" before commencing production. Tree played guitar on all the tracks, and called in some of L.A.'s most in-demand roots musicians: bassist Taras Prodaniuk (from Lucinda Williams' band), organist Skip Edwards (Dwight Yoakam), fiddler Scott Joss (Merle Haggard), electric guitarist Billy Watts (John Trudell), drummer Dave Raven (Surfaris), mandolinist Tom Corbett (John McEuen), and top-drawer backup singers Teresa James and Kellie Coffey. "One day," O'Kane recalls, "Ed said, 'Let's write something - tell me about where you come from, what you did.' So I started talking about Yosemite, the valley, and how I thought the story of Cinderella screwed up all women forever. That's my theory. That guy on the white horse is just not comin' - at least not very often, and rarely. And yet any time I start thinking about Cinderella I start crying." That emotional session resulted in "The Valley," a moving O'Kane/Tree co-write that brings the album to a graceful close: The first thing I remember I was standing by the river Looking up at Bridalveil Falls Pretty as white lace the spray kissed my face My world was inside the walls Of this valley when I was so small... I always come back here to find myself" Writing that song, like recording the album, helped O'Kane reclaim her spirit. "I am not a city girl," she declares firmly. "I've been citified, but I'm a mountain girl. I go back to Yosemite every summer with my girlfriends and their children. Gameboys are not allowed. I show their children how to hop rocks and get the bugs beneath the rocks. "When you stay true to yourself, then the unexpected starts happening." # # #

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