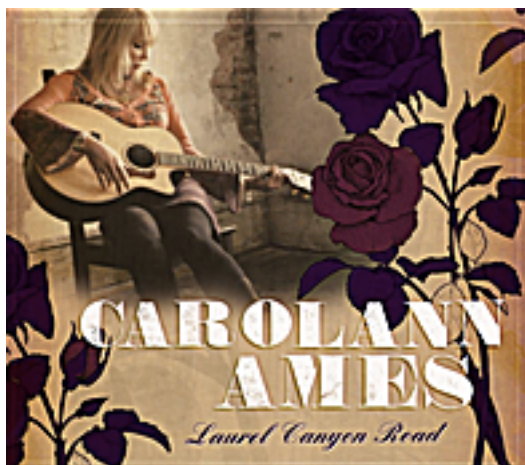




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## CAROLANN AMES – LAUREL CANYON ROAD



The Californian Carolann Ames "Laurel Canyon Road" has not yet won its spurs. But in 2009, her previous disc, "So Long Abilene" was nominated for Best Americana Album. Also five years before she won the Grand Prize in the John Lennon Songwriting Contest with the song 'West Virginia' from her album 'Shades of Indigo'.

The new album opens strongly with the melodic 'Bed of Roses', it's so great to hear a place to stretch out and enjoy Carolann's beautiful voice and the comfortable arrangement including acoustic guitars, a country fiddle and a discrete southern organ somewhere in the background. The title song of this album does not refer to the famous boulevard in LA, but to a street that bears the same name in North Carolina. This appears to be a place where the landscape is shamefully raped because of extensive strip mining. "So many tears were cried / Dynamited mountains in the dim light," Ames sings and you feel as if the entire region weeps too.

There are beautiful sounds in the swinging country 'Back To Santa Rosa' which looks back at a failed relationship. This theme is echoed in the haunting "Not Sorry Anymore," which once again invites us to sing along. I became immersed in the bluegrass flavored 'Sugar Creek' about the sweetness of first love, while in 'Love Remains Unbroken', hope prevails.

The only cover on this otherwise self-written album is, Neil Young's 'Love Is A Rose', which harmonizes perfectly with the other songs. Finally, we also have some words of praise for the country rockin' 'Everybody's Somebody in a Honky Tonk' (what a title!). This song is from a female perspective and includes the usual suspects of love hunting, as it describes the "cowboys, truckers, rednecks and bikers" gaping at the beautiful women on the dance floor, with their uncertainty drowned in liters of alcohol.

This album is not innovative, but for those of you who like good, classic roots / country / Americana with a nod to the golden '70s, you will surely highly appreciate this latest offering. Game, set, match ... Miss Ames!