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Carolann Ames – Laurel Canyon Road

by Shawn Underwood
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Everybody's Someone In A Honky Tonk. Anyone who's reading this blog probably knows the David Allen Coe song, *You Never Even Called Me By My Name* (written by Steve Goodman), about the perfect country western song. This tune, from the latest Carolann Ames release, may not be the perfect country song, but it has the perfect country song title. The song's not bad either, with a (perhaps cynical) woman's perspective on partying. With the references to tattoos, wife beaters, Frye boots, and Rebel wine, it's cross-gender as well.



Lest you think Ms. Ames is just a female version of Hank III or JTE, overall the word I'd have to use to describe the music on this, her third album, is pretty. Not in a lace and pop star way, but in a good old fashioned country sense with singing and playing like you got from Nashville a couple, or more, decades ago. *Blessed Is the Love That Abides* and *Not Sorry Anymore* are perhaps the best examples of that classic country feel.

Several of the songs have a hint of Celtic influence in them, like my favorite on the album, *Back To Santa Rosa* and the title track, *Laurel Canyon Road*. By the way, it's not *that* Laurel Canyon Road, but rather one in North Carolina that serves as the proxy for a song about strip mining. It's also worth noting she does a stellar cover of Neil Young's *Love Is A Rose*, much more up-tempo and a dance floor number versus the simpler style of the well known Linda Ronstadt cover.

With her wonderful voice and an outstanding band I'm looking forward to future releases from Carolann Ames just to see where she takes her musical explorations. In the meantime, *Laurel Canyon Road* is a great throwback to when country music was about the music.