

## **BURNT TOAST & OFFERINGS - FISH RECORDS REVIEW**

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Fish Records

Over the past 8 years or so we've carried Gretchen's previous albums, and they all remain discs that we still listen to today; and it's easy to see why they have such appeal - she's a superb songwriter (a couple of her songs have been Grammy nominated) who marries strong story songs with hook laden melodies - the perfect combination. 'Burnt Toast and Offerings' is no exception, and it highlights and reinforces her strength as a writer of smart personal songs full of detail and emotion.

Her vocals are smooth and effortless, and while there's plenty of feeling in the songs and the delivery, it feels natural and unforced - she may not have the most distinctive voice in the country/folk field, but the way she sings makes her stand out as one of the very best at delivering a lyric.

Acoustic guitar is present on all the songs, but what makes the disc so accessible is the overall presentation and production, she uses a wide range of instrumentation including piano, bass and accordion and all the songs have an easy, relaxed feel that instantly makes the listener feel comfortable.

There are many excellent songs here, with every single track standing up well, but the highlights include the superb descriptions of 'Summer People'; the painting of a small, run-down town in 'This Town'; and the two sketches of home life in 'Sunday Morning' and 'Breakfast at our House' are beautifully elegant.

Smart and very well written songs, instantly likeable arrangements/backing and a beautiful vocal style make her one of Fish Records' favourite artists - if you don't know her then this is a great place to start, those already familiar with her work will need no further introduction. Highly recommended.