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Melissa Ferrick: Still Right Here

 By [Jedd Beaudoin](#) 12 September 2011

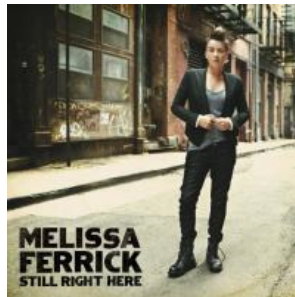
It seems improbable that Melissa Ferrick's been making albums for nearly 20 years and perhaps even more improbable that she sounds as fresh and fearless today as back then. *Still Right Here* is Ferrick's first studio outing in five years, but she's hardly been standing still in that time -- the 10 songs here are filled with reminders of her ongoing intentions to suck the marrow out of life. She's offered that she formed a kind of mission statement for the record, evident in the opening title track that was written for a close friend of the artist who walked away from a serious car accident.

From there, the record is filled with numbers such as "One of a Kind", "Seconds Like These" and "I Will Back You Up", each a reminder that optimism does not necessarily equate naivety, nor does it have to come off as a babbling brook of platitudes. Moreover, these are streamlined studies of love and friendship, reminders that, despite the world being a frightening place filled with conflict, we don't have to face it alone. And, to Ferrick's credit, not a moment of that sounds at all daft.

The quieter, more basic material such as "Singing in the Wind" and "Checking In" are especially intriguing, the essence of each laid bare for the listener to full appreciate, while more, ahem, driving pieces such as "Headphones On" (with venerable guitarist Kaki King) and "You Let Me Be Me" (with Ani DiFranco) provide the album's requisite obvious good vibes.

Perhaps what is most remarkable about *Still Right Here* is that Ferrick remains sincere without being painfully earnest, or perhaps just that her words come from a place that's real—a place not burdened with clichés or sage like expectations. No matter, it works. It also helps that although the album carries with it an overarching theme and mood, and neither becomes suffocating along the way.




Still Right Here is relentless in its positive energy and all the more rare for it. Moreover, it's a testament to an independent artist who's making meaningful music that carries with it the kind of gravitas and joy as it did when Ferrick stepped up to the mic for the first time all those years ago. It's



Melissa Ferrick

Still Right Here

(Mpress; US: 13 Sep 2011; UK: Import)

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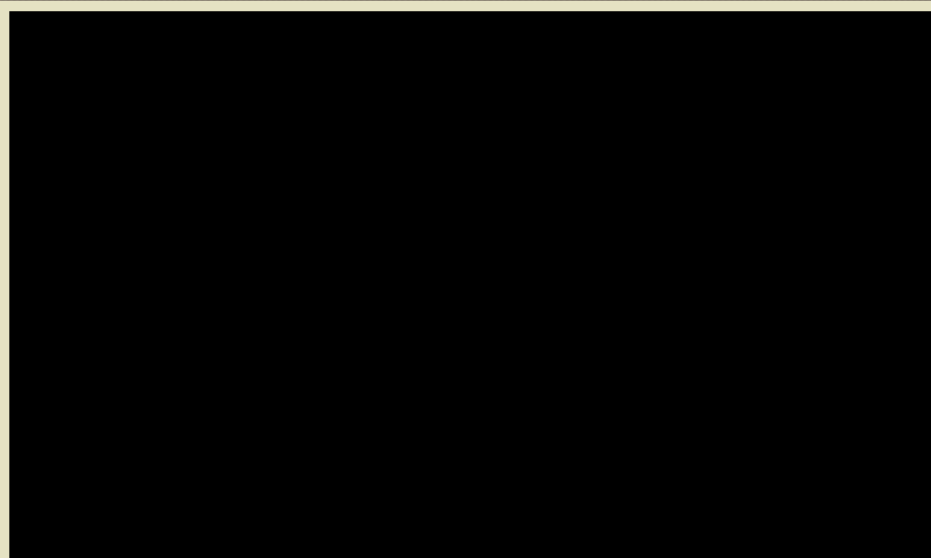
an important record that doesn't drown in its own importance, from an artist about whom one can easily say the same. That rare combination—and the zeal with which this recording is carried out—is both commendable and rare. It's probably safe to say that Melissa Ferrick will still be here for some time to come, and that, alone, is perhaps some of the best news we could hope for.

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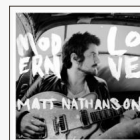
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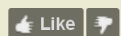
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