

Record Review: Martina McBride, 'Timeless'

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(RCA Nashville)



Martina McBride not only has one of the most outstanding voices in country music today, she has guts.

That's because few — if any — country superstars still at the top of their game would roll the dice with such a record as "Timeless."

Shortly after Faith Hill released a weak attempt with what was marketed as her roots album, McBride put out the real deal — covers of 18 stone country classics from the likes of Hank Williams ("You Win Again"), Ray Price ("I'll Be There," "Heartaches by the Number"), Ernest Tubb ("Thanks a Lot"), Buck Owens ("Love's Gonna Live Here"), Loretta Lynn ("You Ain't Woman Enough"), Tammy Wynette ("Till I Can Make It on My Own"), Johnny Cash ("I Still Miss Someone"), Lynn Anderson ("[I Never Promised You a] Rose Garden") and former San Antonio DJ Charlie Walker ("Pick Me Up on Your Way Down").

While traditional country fans will find no surprises with these familiar gems, the uninitiated will discover powerful lyrics still relevant from a time when country wasn't candy-coated, pain hurt and not everyone lived happily ever after.

The musical arrangements stay true to the originals yet are fresh and organic thanks to a group of musicians who obviously shared McBride's passion for paying homage to traditional country music.

Best of all are McBride's crystalline vocals, which blow the dust off these classics for interpretations that should make believers of contemporary country fans.

This pioneering effort is one of the top albums of the year, as well as a milestone for McBride's career.

—*John Goodspeed*

Online at:

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/entertainment/music/stories/MYSA102605.0P.record.martina.4685f79.html>

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