

Bonnie Raitt's new album shows she has soul

By Brad Rich

Over the years, Bonnie Raitt has acquired the reputation of being one of America's best and most powerful interpreters of the blues. She's been described by at least one critic as having "more soul than any white female singer alive," and regularly delivers enjoyable, intense music.

Raitt's new album on Warner Brothers Records, *Sweet Forgiveness* is no exception. The album opens with a pulsating blues-rocker "About to Make Me Leave Home". Raitt's vocals are strong and supple, she rasps the lyrics from deep down inside. When she sings

"I ain't got the strength to turn a good lover loose

But I never met a man who could whoop it to me

Like you do."
you simply have to believe it.

"Runaway" is even better. Will McFarlane's electric guitar is strong, and Raitt's voice rings out like a bell. Dennis Whitted pounds fiercely on drums, setting a furious pace.

On "Two lives", Raitt excels. Her slow ballads often don't receive enough credit, but this one should. Michael McDonald and Rosemary Butler's backing harmonies are beautiful, and Raitt's acoustic guitar is a nice touch.

"Louise" at 2:43 is the lp's shortest cut. It is another slow ballad, but deals with a substantially different subject. The opening lines alone are clue enough:

"They all said Louise was not half bad

It was written on the walls and window shades"

Raitt's acoustic guitar is lovely, and her voice mellows out into a pleasant country twang. One of her more interesting tunes, for sure.

Side One closes with "Gamblin' Man", a medium-rocker written by Eric Kay, a regular contributor to Raitt's albums. Kay and Raitt have succeeded again, led by McFarlane's crying lead guitar.

Side Two opens with the title cut, "Sweet Forgiveness". The song begins as a rocker, breaks into a slower pace, then rebuilds and falls again. The tempo changes serve as excellent vehicles for some great high harmonies and some sensuous, slithering vocals by Raitt.

Next is "My Opening Farewell", by Jackson Browne. Raitt almost always borrows a tune from Browne, with whom she has toured in the past, and this one, from his first album is one of the best.

Sweet Forgiveness is a continuation of Raitt's evolution and improvement. Somehow, her vocals seem to be

getting even more powerful and emotion-laden, and her band seem tighter than ever before. This may be an album without a

weekspot.

Bonnie Raitt will be appearing in concert at Charlotte's Ovens Auditorium

tomorrow night, Wednesday, April 13. Tickets are \$5.50 and \$6.50. Do yourself a favor and get out to see her.



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