

All Back to Vinyl Cat Power/Covers

Chan Marshall is one of the best interpreters of other people's songs out there and she's no slouch when it comes to writing herself as Unhate proves being the only original song on this long player.

The title of that track also appears on a free sticker with the album. Who doesn't love a free sticker in a record? I remember buying Appetite For Destruction by Guns N' Roses back in 1987 and out fell the skull sticker of the band, an unforgettable moment. As for the record itself there are a few pops and crackles, I'm not sure if it adds something to the atmosphere yet.

The album art is a denim shirt with a passport and pencil in the pocket, on the inner sleeve is Marshall wearing the shirt, she's grown her classic fringe back and looks every inch a real rock n' roll heroine. She looks like a brave woman here to give us a real shot of rock n' roll blues. There are a few songs on this record where I thought 'how is she going to do this?' Take The Pogues A Pair of Brown Eyes, nobody can do a Shane MacGowan song better than the London Irish punk icon but Marshall's version is a low-fi, subtle sea-shanty, I love it.

Another one she takes on is Iggy Pop's Endless Sea from his 1979 album New Values. Once again she takes it in a completely different direction, immediately locking into a groove, her soulful voice in complete control. Bob Seger's Against Wind

sounds nothing like the original track, it's impossible to make anything of the original arrangement but again, that's the point of covering someone else's work, Marshall makes the song completely hers, delivered here in her longing blues style.

From The Replacements to Billie Holiday the choice of artists and songwriters are diverse, Cat Power's genius is to deliver such a complete sounding record. Interpretation is an art form in itself, Chan Marshall has few rivals putting an album of cover songs together and making it sound like a classic.

