

## Tracy Chapman – Tracy Chapman (1988)

Written by bluesever

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## Tracy Chapman – Tracy Chapman (1988)



01. *Talkin' bout a revolution*
02. *Fast car*
03. *Across the lines*
04. *Behind the wall*
05. *Baby can I hold you*
06. *Mountains o' things*
07. *She's got her ticket*
08. *Why ?*
09. *For my lover*
10. *If not now...*
11. *For you*

Musicians: Tracy Chapman – acoustic guitar, percussion, rhythm guitar, vocals Ed Black – steel guitar Paulinho Da Costa – percussion Denny Fongheiser – percussion, drums Jack Holder – organ, dulcimer, dobro, piano, electric guitar, Hammond organ, sitar Steve Kaplan – harmonica, keyboard Larry Klein – bass David LaFlamme – electric violin Bob Marlette – keyboard

Arriving with little fanfare in the spring of 1988, Tracy Chapman's eponymous debut album became one of the key records of the Bush era, providing a touchstone for the entire PC movement while reviving the singer/songwriter tradition. And Tracy Chapman is firmly within the classic singer/songwriter tradition, sounding for all the world as if it was recorded in the early '70s -- that is, if all you paid attention to were the sonics, since Chapman's songs are clearly a result of the Reagan revolution. Even the love songs and laments are underscored by a realized vision of trickle-down modern life -- listen to the lyrical details of "Fast Car" for proof. Chapman's impassioned liberal activism and emotional resonance enlivens her music, breathing life into her songs even when the production is a little bit too clean. Still, the juxtaposition of contemporary themes and classic production precisely is what makes the album distinctive -- it brings the traditions into the present. At the time, it revitalized traditional folk ideals of social activism and

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the like, kick starting the PC revolution in the process, but if those were its only merits, Tracy Chapman would sound dated. The record continues to sound fresh because Chapman's writing is so keenly observed and her strong, gutsy singing makes each song sound intimate and immediate. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine

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