

Emmylou Harris - Hard Bargain (2011)

Written by bluelover

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1. *The Road* 2. *Home Sweet Home* [play](#) 3. *My Name Is Emmett Till* 4. *Goodnight Old World* 5. *New Orleans* 6. *Big Black Dog* 7. *Lonely Girl* 8. *Hard Bargain*

[play](#)

9. *Six White Cadillacs* 10. *The Ship on His Arm* 11. *Darlin' Kate*

Emmylou Harris – Acoustic guitar and vocals Jay Joyce – Electric guitars, Acoustic guitar, Hi-string guitars, Bass guitar, Synthesizer,

Piano, Omnichord, Ganjo, Mandolin Giles Reaves – drums, Wurlitzer piano, Djembe, Picked piano, Pump organ, Vibraphone,

Synthesizer, Marimbula, Moog bass, Rhodes, Organ, Piano. Shaker

After she first came to the attention of discerning music fans with her contributions to Gram Parsons' first solo album in 1973, Emmylou Harris spent over 20 years as one of the finest interpretive singers in American music, approaching material from a variety of composers with a thoughtful intelligence that matched the natural beauty of her voice. Then after breaking new creative ground with 1995's *Wrecking Ball*, Harris set out on a surprising new creative journey -- while previously she wrote songs for her solo albums only on occasion, now her compositions began to dominate her recordings, and Harris has revealed that she's as gifted a tunesmith as she is a vocalist, writing with a clear eye and an unforced lyrical and melodic beauty that's a fine match for her voice. Harris wrote or co-wrote 11 of the 13 songs on 2011's *Hard Bargain*, and the album is full of cleanly drawn stories of people struggling to rise to the challenges of life, ranging from characters who are homeless ("*Home Sweet Home*") or wrestling with the aftermath of tragedy ("*New Orleans*") to Harris' own memories of touring with Parsons ("*The Road*") and a scandalous murder that galvanized the civil rights movement in 1955 ("*My Name Is Emmett Till*"). While *Hard Bargain* is an album full of sad stories, it's admirably short on melodrama, and Harris keeps these songs sounding honest, heartfelt, and tuned to the realities of American life. Musically, *Hard Bargain* sounds full but uncluttered; outside of Harris' voice and acoustic guitar, the accompaniment all comes from producer and multi-instrumentalist Jay Joyce and percussionist and keyboard player Giles Reaves, and they create musical backdrops that are evocative and carefully crafted without calling undue attention to themselves or blocking the path of the melodies; Joyce and Reaves, like Harris, are here to serve the songs first and

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foremost, and they do so splendidly. If Hard Bargain doesn't feel as striking as Wrecking Ball or Red Dirt Girl, one imagines it wasn't intended to be; there's a modesty in this set of songs that jibes with their quiet eloquence, and just as Harris' vocals are always full of striking beauty without diva moves, this cycle of songs isn't flashy so much as it's honest and moving, capturing the rhythms of life with an uncanny accuracy. At the age of 64, Emmylou Harris has made an album as fresh and distinctive as any in her catalog, and Hard Bargain is a reminder that her evolution into a songwriter is one of the most pleasant surprises in a career that's produced rewarding music for nearly 40 years. ---Mark Deming, AllMusic Review

"Są legendarne wokalistki country i jest Emmylou Harris" - napisał kiedyś jeden z krytyków muzycznych o Amerykance, która na scenie country i folku jest prawdziwą instytucją i żywą legendą. 63-letnia dziś artystka po kilkuletniej przerwie powraca ze znakomitą dziełem, które w większości wypełniają zupełnie nowe piosenki. Spośród 13 piosenek 11 zostało napisanych przez Harris, zaś dwie pozostałe to covery. Brzmienie utworom nadał Jay Joyce (Cage The Elephant, Patty Griffin). Właśnie jedną z jego kompozycji, "Cross Yourself", zinterpretowała Emmylou. Druga przeróbka to "Hard Bargain" Rona Sexsmitha. "Nagraliśmy wszystko w zaledwie miesiąc, co jest dla mnie nietypowe. Ale byłam dobrze przygotowana. Towarzyszyli mi tylko dwaj muzycy - Jay Joyce, który był także producentem, i Giles Reeves" - opowiada artystka. Emmylou napisała dwie piosenki ku czci osób, które odegrały ważną rolę w jej życiu. "Darlin' Kate" honoruje jej zmarłą w 2010 roku przyjaciółkę Kate McGarrigle, zaś "The Road" partnera sprzed lat, Grama Parsonsa. Wersja limitowana nowego dzieła 12-krotnej laureatki Grammy zawierać będzie DVD z wywiadami i wykonaniem sześciu piosenek. --- warnermusic.pl

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