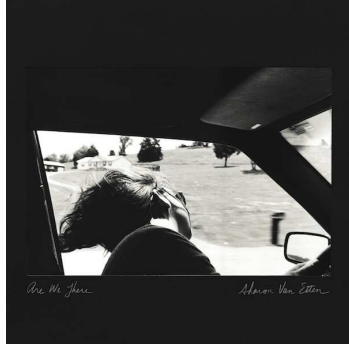




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SHARON VAN ETTEN (US)

Album: «Are We There» (Jagjaguwar, release: 23.05.2014)



For all the attention that was paid to her 2012 break-through «Tramp», Sharon Van Etten is an artist with a hunger to turn another corner and to delve deeper, writing from a place of honesty and vulnerability to create a bond with the listener that few contemporary musicians can match. Compelled by a restless spirit, Van Etten is continuously challenging herself. Now, the result is «Are We There», a self-produced album of exceptional intimacy, sublime generosity, and immense breadth.

<http://sharonvanetten.com/>

Most musicians are quite happy to leave the production end of things to someone else. It's enough to live your music without taking on the role of producer as well. Yet Van Etten knew it was time to make a record entirely on her terms. The saying goes «fortune favors the bold» and yet this boldness had to be tempered. For this, Van Etten found a kindred spirit in veteran music producer Stewart Lerman. Originally working together on Boardwalk Empire, they gently moved into new roles, rallying around the idea of making a record together in Lerman's studio in New Jersey. Lerman's studio expertise gave Van Etten the freedom to make «Are We There» the way she imagined. Van Etten also enlisted the individual talents of her band.



It is clear from the opening chords in the first song, «Afraid of Nothing», that we are witnessing a new awareness, a sign of Van Etten in full stride, writing, producing and performing from a place that seems almost mythical, were it not so touchable and real. Always direct, and never shying away even from the most personally painful narratives, Van Etten's songwriting continues to evolve. Many of the songs deal with seemingly impossible decisions, anticipation, and then resolution. She sings of the nature of desire, memory, of being lost, emptiness, of promises and loyalty, fear and change, of healing and the true self, violence and sanctuary, waiting, of silence. The artist who speaks in such a voice is urging us to do something, to take hold and to go deeper. Living in this way, the questions of life remain alive, as close and steady as breathing. Many of the ballads of old are as dark as pitch, and people for whom the issues of life and death were as vivid as flame wrote them. You could turn off the electricity, remove all the instruments and Sharon's voice and words would remain. They connect her to the mystic stratum which flows just beneath the everyday, which is rarely acknowledged as the forces of distraction sweep our attention away.



Band members: Sharon Van Etten, Heather Woods Broderick, Doug Keith, Zeke Hutchins Freeze

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