

# PATTY LARKIN

STILL GREENER Still Green

*The road here leads from darkness to light, from a frozen winter where ice hampered every step, where halls were shadowed in sadness, to the sandscape of the seashore of Cape Cod.*

*These are 12 songs chosen from the dozens written over the last four years, months before the death of my mother and after the passing of my father. My father, the Catholic Buddhist, was my teacher. My mother, the artist, I talk to all the time.*

*So, here they are: songs from journals, digital recorders, cell phones, smartphones, scraps of paper, from memory and dreams, all etched into my skin. I have much to be grateful for. In the end, the dunes were my solace. I stayed in a shack with my family and wrote during the mornings, walked the afternoon, and felt new again.*

*With me I carried a quote by John Muir: "Throw some tea and bread in an old sack and jump over the back fence."*

*All this time. I'll see you there. Patty*



## BEGINNINGS

"**Still Green**", Patty Larkin's 13th album, plays out in Technicolor sound images, a kaleidoscope of sun and sea that travels from the fluorescent lit hallways of grief to the warm pull of love, family and nature. This collection of new songs chronicles Patty's search for relief, respite and solace during a time when she lost both of her parents, and witnessed a sister suffer a stroke after surgery. "The loss of my parents was difficult, but we all know or think we know that death is a part of life. What my sister, a jazz pianist, went through was shocking. It shook me to my core."

The album begins with *The Best of Intentions*, a song Larkin started before all of these life-altering events and completed after them. The song is a bellwether for the record, that raises questions of belief and redemption, and leaves them unanswered for the listener. "**The man in the hallway is cleaning up grief/ While travelers chase after time like a thief/With oversized bags, they wait for relief in the dawn/But The Best of Intentions all get up and leave before long.**" "It's not a quick answer for me," Larkin says. "I was raised Catholic, but once you start to ask yourself what you believe in, things get interesting real fast. What I want to walk away with and what I want to leave the listener with is a sense of hope."

## THE WRITING

While on tour, Patty was sent a book of Kay Ryan poems. What struck Larkin about the work was how lyrical and song-like the poems were. One morning in a hotel she read and reread *Green Behind The Ears*. Without thinking, she began to play the guitar and sing the words, resulting in the hypnotic gem on "Still Green." The honesty and longing of the lyric is reflected in the delicate kalimba sounds and muted guitar work. The chorus opens up all the feelings of the sweetness and frailty that life has to offer. It is a beautiful marriage of music and words. "**For it is hard to be green/and take your turn as flesh/So much freshness to unlearn**" Ryan writes, and Larkin sings.

During this period Patty sought refuge in the Outer Banks of Cape Cod's National Seashore in a weathered, primitive, one-room dune shack. She brought along an acoustic guitar that she rescued from the town dump. The large bodied blues guitar evoked the writing of *Down Through The Wood* and *It Could Be Worse*, the first of which makes reference to an oft quoted phrase by naturalist John Muir: "Throw some tea and bread in an old sack and jump over the back fence." If *Down Through the Wood* celebrates the gift of time, *It Could Be Worse* describes what happens next: "**Oh,we're here again/ Where conversation ends/Wondering why we've been/Without each other.**" In the Middle of nowhere, Patty began to find her breath again. From *The Best of Intentions* to the last strains of *Because of This*, she comes full circle, leaving the listener with a sense of hope, strength, and joy.

## RECORDING

When the recording process began, Larkin had nearly 40 songs to choose from. "Hearing the songs again I could hear the emotion in my voice, and in some of them, the anger," Patty says. "They were hard to listen to. Harder to learn and sing." She began to record in her studio on the Cape, weeding out what didn't fit, honing the rest. With basic vocal and guitar tracks in hand, Patty joined co-producer, Mike Denneen (*Aimee Mann*, *Howie Day*) at Q Division in Boston. "I brought up my old 1930's National Steel, 1860's Martin nylon string, baritone and electric guitars, mandolins, a looping device and gizmos. Mike got me playing the studio's grand piano, the Wurlitzer, and a cranked up Hammond B-3. What I like about working alone is that there's no embarrassment involved in trying something. I could do anything."

Patty was joined by upright bassist Joe McMahon, a jazz player with a passion for roots, rock and Dusty Springfield, and drummer Dave Brophy, a player steeped in the blues and roots, pop and hip hop. Cellist and Berklee College of Music professor Catherine Bent added lyrical cello lines to tracks. "I think that the musicians totally got me. They understood where I was going, and met me there. That's a rare state of grace and I am grateful."

Larkin's longtime friends, songwriters Jonatha Brooke, Merrie Amsterburg and Birdsong At Morning, added ethereal vocal harmonies and Merrie's husband, Pete, added the evocative electric guitar solo on *It Could Be Worse*.

## IN THE END

.... **Still Green** is a fresh approach to sound and life by a legendary singer/songwriter who is continually turning over the stone. One cannot always change what happens to us in life, but can still discover what grounds us, and what connects us to the natural world and those who remain in it. In the end it is, indeed, "Because of This."

## PATTY'S ROOTS

Patty Larkin grew up in a musical and artistic family in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Descended from a long line of Irish American singers and tale-tellers, her mother was a painter, her sisters both musicians. She learned at a young age to appreciate the beauty and magic of the arts. She began classical piano studies at age 7, and became swept up in the sounds of pop and folk in the 60s, teaching herself the guitar and experimenting with songwriting in high school. An English major, Larkin sang throughout her high school and college career, starting out in coffee-houses in Oregon and San Francisco. Upon graduation from the University of Oregon as an English major, she moved to Boston and devoted herself to music, busking on the streets of Cambridge and studying jazz guitar at Berklee College of Music and with Boston area jazz guitarists.

## AWARDS

Patty is the recipient of an Honorary Doctorate of Music degree from Berklee College of Music where she is now an **Artist In Residence**. Patty has earned 11 Boston Music Awards and has been honored by Boston's Mayor Thomas Menino with "Patty Larkin Day" in recognition of her philanthropic contributions to non-profit organizations.

## FILM/TELEVISION/COVERS

Evolution (Film/Dreamworks) "Regrooving the Dream"  
Random Hearts (Film/Columbia Pictures) "Good Thing"  
Sliding Doors (Film/ Miramax) "Coming Up For Air" and "Tenderness on the Block"  
Men in Trees (Television) "Wolf at the Door"  
Homicide (Television) "Open Arms"  
Cher "Good Thing"  
Holly Cole "I Told Him That My Dog Wouldn't Run"



## NOTABLE QUOTES

### WILD PERFECTION - Boston Globe

An uncommonly articulate guitarist, she has evolved into one of the finest self-accompanists anywhere in popular music.

### TOP 10 - New York Times

A virtuoso guitar player and mood-shaper... She is also a superb slide guitarist whose mature work is comparable to the best of Bonnie Raitte and Lucinda Williams.

### RIVETING - Chicago Tribune

Patty Larkin is one of the most gifted performers in music today. A remarkable guitarist, an imaginative and versatile vocalist, Larkin turns in a riveting performance.

### STRUM-BEAT - Guitar World

Larkin is genre-stretching string popping alterna-folk

### TRIPLE-THREAT - Billboard

An absolutely stunning guitarist, Larkin matches her instrumental chops as a vocalist and songwriter, making her a true triple-threat artist. **DROP DEAD BRILLIANT** - *Performing Songwriter* Imagine a drop dead brilliant guitar player, a richly textural singer, a commanding, poetic songwriter, a hilarious and personable entertainer. Now imagine these all in one person

## DISCOGRAPHY

### 25

2010 RNR/Signature Sounds

### WATCH THE SKY

2008 Vanguard Records

### LA GUITARA

2005 Vanguard Records

### RED=LUCK

2003 Vanguard Records

### REGROOVING THE DREAM

2000 Vanguard Records

### A GOGO/LIVE

1999 RNR/Vanguard Records

### PERISHABLE FRUIT

1997 High Street/Windham Hill/BMG

### STRANGERS WORLD

1995 High Street/Windham Hill/BMG

### ANGELS RUNNING

1993 High Street/ Windham Hill/BMG

### TANGO

1991 High Street/Windham Hill/BMG

### LIVE IN THE SQUARE

1990 Philo/Rounder

### I'M FINE

1988 Philo/Rounder

### STEP INTO THE LIGHT

1985 Philo/Rounder

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