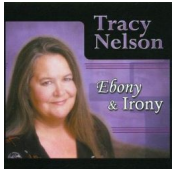


Tracy Nelson – Ebony And Irony (2001)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 27 October 2011 18:27 - Last Updated Monday, 15 July 2013 13:51

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01. *You Will Find Me There* 02. *Strongest Weakness* 03. *Got A New Truck* 04. *If You Knew How Much* [play](#) 05. *Last Chance* 06. *How Much Truth* 07. *Still Not Out Of The Woods* 08. *I Must Be Crazy* 09. *Even Now* 10. *Quicksand* 11. *Strongest Weakness (Alt. Take)* 12. *Silent Trail* [play](#) Personnel: Tracy Nelson - Vocals (Background) Marcia Ball (Piano) George Bradfute, Bob Britt, Mike Henderson (Guitar) Steve Conn (Accordion) Brian Fullen, John Gardner (Drums) Terry Hanck (Saxophone) Byron House, Michael Rhodes Bass Darryl Jones, Steve Aaron, Vickie Carrico, John Cowan, Alice Newman, Richard Parks, Terry Tucker - Vocals (Background) Andrew Love, Wayne Jackson (Horn) Jim Pugh, Reese Wynans (Organ, Piano) Andrea Zahn (Fiddle)

Tracy Nelson is the voice of experience, and quite a voice it is: her rich, throaty delivery rings the rafters without apparent effort, whether she's belting the gospel-flavored "You Will Find Me There" or growling the bitterly resigned Mose Allison tune "How Much Truth." Nelson's good in a way that's never ostentatious; she's capable of letting these songs speak for themselves, interpreting them in often surprising ways. This unassuming quality only contributes to *Ebony & Irony*'s overall excellence, as Nelson plunges through the country-ish "Got a New Truck" (with a smashing piano part courtesy of Marcia Ball) and a stunning rendition of David Egan's "Even Now," before taking a sharp left turn into the rollicking "Quicksand." Nelson's detailed liner notes describe this, her 20th album, as the record she's been trying to make for the last 30 years. Though it's in the nature of the artist to never be satisfied, one could argue that she's succeeded with this release. Heartfelt, sincere, technically excellent, and brimming with honesty, *Ebony & Irony* is Nelson's finest effort yet. --Genevieve Williams ---Editorial Reviews

With over 30 years in the biz, and 20 albums to her credit, Tracy Nelson is one of those

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hard-workin' mamas who won't quit until the earth is shoveled up over her. Late of the group Mother Earth (which she founded) from the 60s, Tracy continues to blend soulful rocknroll with country riffs and blues sense into Bonnie Raitt-style vocals. Power and sensitivity, on equal ground. Difficult ground to make successful music on. But when you've been doing it steadily since 1966, you know how it's done.

The 12 tracks and 44 minutes tend to collect up songs for their vocal value rather than any thematic association. She'll go from the gospel-pop-ringing opener 'You Will Find Me There' to Helen Reddy's horn an' bass 70s reign that sparkles in 'Strongest Weakness,' the single (better be!), and the single best.

Tracy's also of the old school as far as songwriting. She doesn't Do it all herself. Instead, she writes and co-writes a total of 2 cuts. The rest of the time, she's using the likes of Will Jennings (Titanic theme) and other songwriters; like Joe Cocker, not squeezing out songs just for self-expression. She's using the tunes that sing to Her. For all songwriters out there everywhere, Tracy, thanks for doing that.

Then there's Tracy Nelson, the ol' jazz queen. With 'How Much Truth' she dips into that Lena Horne side of her, with that wavering voice. Black or white, it's hard to tell. But the deep, colorful interpretation is right on. It was 'a huge leap for me,' she says. 'I've always admired this song, and Mose Allison, who wrote it.' Reese Wynans on piano and Byron House on bass sure help back up the little lady.

In 1974 Tracy was nominated for a Grammy for her duet with Willie Nelson, 'After the Fire Is Gone,' which was a track from her album on Atlantic Records. 'I didn't record in the 80s because there was no place for me to go and when I started again in the 90s, all Rounder Records wanted was blues records.' Well, she's back now, combining as many styles as will fit on 1 cd.

Okay, it's not for everyone. Even Tracy jokingly(?) opens up her cd booklet by stating, 'For those over 35, we've put these on the website at TracyNelson.com with larger print and song lyrics.' Now, this May be a cd for the older crowd who likes a comeback queen, but it's also for new kids just discovering the Origin Decade that was the 1960s. If you think Beatles and Stones are it – TN is one stop you shouldn't miss either. --- Ben Ohmart, musesmuse.com

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