

SHIRLEY GRIMES'S «LOVE SONGS»

release: january 2015

Booking from
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Deeply personal, wonderfully accessible, truly beautiful

Shirley Grimes's new album *Love Songs* is at once deeply personal and totally accessible. Three years after her previous release, *The Long Road Home*, Shirley Grimes has crafted the perfect sequel. Last time around, she retraced her footsteps to her native Ireland both musically and emotionally, and allowed herself to explore the many roads that ultimately took her home. With *Love Songs*, Shirley retains the roots-oriented instrumentation that thrilled her fans and focuses on what she found at the end of her last journey.

Shirley says that she had some initial doubts about calling the collection *Love Songs*. "I was afraid that the title would lead people to think that it's some sort of eighties compilation album," she laughs, "but it's actually my mission to restore meaning to the word 'love'. The songs are not about the sentimental love expressed on greeting cards but something deeper and truer – something that I have best been able to experience with the passing years: the love for my children, my partner, my friends, my past ... my life."

The new album is an important milestone for an artist who has taken her followers through a range of styles over the years. "Musically, there are slight changes with *Love Songs*," Shirley says, "but the instrumentation is basically the same as it was on the last album and I'll be touring with the same rhythm section (percussionist Samuel Baur and bassist/mandocellist Wolfgang Zwiauer) and a fiddler."

Shirley says, "It's touching because I've dragged my fans through all my phases, from jazz-based folk to rock and the whole way back and so many of them have stayed with me." This time, her audience will be on familiar ground. Percussionist Samuel Baur expressed it perfectly, saying, "With the previous album we came home. Now we're going to build a house on the foundation we laid last time."

Shirley anticipated her return to the studio with undisguised enthusiasm: "The studio is for me. In the studio, I'm serving myself and what I want and what I think should be there. I love it. For me it's a cooking pot and I have all the ingredients. I can take whatever I want from the shelf and I'm extremely inspired."

The tour in support of *Love Songs* gives the songwriter and the musicians the chance to share the intimacy of music directly with the audience. As Shirley points out: "The stage is creative in a different way. We are all committed to maintaining the life and the inspiration and the feelings every night. That's also fun and rewarding but while the studio is for me, the concerts are for the listeners and that's as it should be."

With *Love Songs*, Shirley Grimes confirms that *The Long Road Home* wasn't an ending but a new beginning.

"With the last album, I was turning around and having a look at what had happened in a huge part of my life I had ignored and which I finally confronted. The result was that I know who I was and I know who I am now. I can express that with far greater clarity – and affection – now than ever before."

And we are all richer for it.

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