



Jeanne Jolly has taken her golden voice down a road to a sound we haven't heard yet - country. A Master of Vocal Performance in opera from the New England Conservatory in Boston and known to the public as a jazz artist, Jolly has taken a new and different direction entirely with her new EP – to us at least. Her performances as a guest singer with highly regarded trumpeter Chris Botti a few years ago proved that in a virtual sea of singers, she is more than a catch. But that was just jazz.

After living in Los Angeles for a few years, Jolly has chosen to make the music she adores the most. Growing up cultivating her voice she says she “always loved country, bluegrass, Americana, folk, honky tonk, rock, and roots music”.

Within her initial five country songs - now accessible online but later part of an album - Jolly shares a piece of her conscience and the experience of a broken heart, maybe a heart that was smashed to smithereens, and quite possibly a reawakening into a fulfilling existence. “Desert of my Mind” draws from a truly solemn and forlorn place in her memory, while “Don't Say I'm Sorry” assures us that she won't be licking her wounds for long.

The raw purity of what some would call “true” country is evident in each song, backed by sturdy country instrumentation- an imperative piece to the country music puzzle. Jeanne teamed up with an exceptional group of musicians for this project, a few currently recording in Nashville with the band Stonehoney. A fiddle here, a dobro there, twangy guitar - and the kind of piano seen in wild west saloons - joins with the sincerity and serene tone of Jolly's voice to make this effort a moving and genuine example of good real country.

But, it's not Hank Williams. It has a rock likeability which certainly leans toward the alternative country genre. Although Jolly has been singing since she could talk, this particular string of

songs is the product of a fledgling songwriter, a process to which she is relatively new. Fortunately she had Shawn Davis, also with Stonehoney, there to pen a significant amount of the lyrics. Jolly gratefully reported that “Shawn wrote solid and beautifully melodic songs to the sound of my voice in his head and wrote to the inspiration of what I wanted to sing about”. If writing songs and singing country music is a first step, this is a leap in the right direction. Regarding the EP Jeanne simply said “I’m just going with the sounds that I love – acoustic and pure – sometimes a little grit”.

Players: David Raven- drums; David Phenicie - bass; Micah Hulscher - piano, and pump organ; Phil Hurley- guitar, mandolin, and dobro; Shawn Davis - acoustic guitar and harmony vocals; Nick Randolph - harmony vocals; Renae' Truex – fiddle