## Brigitte DeMeyer & Will Kimbrough - Mockingbird Soul (2017)

*01. Everything 02. Broken Fences 03. The Juke 04. Running Round 05. Mockingbird Soul 06. Rainy Day 07. Little Easy 08. I Can Hear Your Voice 09. Honey Bee 10. Carpet Bagger's Lullaby 11. Until Then 12. October Song* Chris Donohue - Acoustic Bass Will Kimbrough - Guitar, Vocals, Harmonica Brigitte DeMeyer - Vocals, Ukulele

Based in Nashville, although they've collaborated, both live and on disc, for some six years, Brigitte DeMeyer and Will Kimbrough have never actually recorded as a duo. That's put to rights now with Mockingbird Soul, their debut album. It's a stripped back 12-track collection of blues, gospel, folk, country and early jazz, all bar two co-penned by the pair, on which they're joined by Chris Donohue on acoustic bass and percussion.

It opens on folksy form with the close harmonies of the simple fingerpicked love song Everything. Shifting to the blues, Kimbrough takes the lead on Broken Fences, a lyrically Biblical toned song about restitution and forgiveness. Then, musically speaking, it's down to New Orleans for the back porch jazzy blues of The Juke, Kimbrough blowing harp as DeMeyer eases down her vocals over the greasy slide groove. A similarly moodily swampy vibe underpins Rainy Day, another DeMeyer lead vocal, here with Chris Wood from the Wood Brothers on upright bass. Wood's brother Oliver also gets a look in, co-writing and sharing vocals with DeMeyer on the delicate, breathily sung bluesy Carpet Bagger's Lullaby.

Elsewhere the Kimbrough-sung Running Round has a ragtime feel while Little Easy is a strummed close harmony ballad love letter to Mobile (and his mom). DeMeyer's sultry sounding Honey Bee harks back to the lazing 40s jug band jazz and, spotlighting Kimbrough's spare slide work, the plugged-in title track takes DeMeyer into gospel territory. I Hear Your Voice showcases Kimbrough's terrific fingerpicking, while DeMeyer gets a chance to break out her eight-string ukulele, accompanying herself on the slow step Until Then.

The closing track is the sole cover, with Brigitte DeMeyer and Will Kimbrough putting The Incredible String Band's October Song through an Appalachian filter, a great sign-off to a fine album of understated but expertly crafted musicianship. --- Mike Davies, folkradio.co.uk

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