

BUST

FOR WOMEN WITH SOMETHING TO GET OFF THEIR CHESTS



ALLISON MOORER

Mockingbird (New Line)

Allison Moorer is surrounded by "somebodies" on *Mockingbird*: her sister (Shelby Lynne), husband (Steve Earle), producer (Buddy Miller), and 10 phenomenal female songwriters. The tracks on this great covers album run the gamut here: June Carter Cash's "Ring of Fire" is slowed down to ballad tempo, Joni Mitchell's wise-beyond-its-years "Both Sides Now" is presented with strings attached, and Patti Smith's "Dancing Barefoot" sticks to the original's straightforward approach. Moorer also takes a stab at Cat Power's "Where Is My Love," Gillian Welch's "Revelator," and sister Shelby's "She Knows Where She Goes." It's on numbers like Nina Simone's "I Want a Little Sugar in My Bowl" and the brilliant cover of Ma Rainey's "Daddy, Goodbye Blues" that she shines the brightest. Moorer may have "somebodies" around her, but *Mockingbird* is a testament that she's a somebody in her own right.

[MICHAEL LEVINE]