



Susan Alcorn

Soledad

Relative Pitch Records RPR 1032 ****

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Susan Alcorn (pedal steel guitar) and Michael Formanek (b). Rec. October 2012-April 2013

It's wholly fitting that this questing US pedal steel guitarist has chosen to interpret the nuevo tango of Astor Piazzolla on her latest long-player. The late Argentinean composer presided over a revolution in traditional music by emphasising elements of improvisation, dissonance and counterpoint, while Alcorn seeks the total liberation of her instrument, away from the stifling confines of country accompaniment, by incorporating free jazz and classical composition into her extraordinarily singular designs. The deeply affecting takes on *Soledad* are stocked full of such images, from Ornette's 'Lonely Woman' ('Adios Nonino') to Wagner ('Invierno Porteño') and Vitali ('Tristezas De Un Doble A'). Such allusions, uncovered during the careful translation process, weave between the sonorous mercury glides and soft percussive phrasing coursing through these five exquisite pieces. *Soledad* ranks right there alongside Alcorn's very best work, echoing the ecclesiastical tenderness and far more secular sorrows of previous low-key gems such as *Uma* and the appositely titled wonders of *And I Await The Resurrection Of The Pedal Steel Guitar*.

by Spencer Grady

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