

SPOTLIGHT



Michael Wilgoin

Karin Bergquist, Linford Detweiler

OVER THE RHINE

A veteran duo gets a boost from its fans and a helping hand from a new ally

AFTER TWO DECADES AND MORE than a dozen albums, *Over the Rhine* decided to take matters into its own hands with its latest, *The Long Surrender*—and into the hands of its fans as well. The husband-and-wife duo of Linford Detweiler and Karin Bergquist turned to listeners for financing, a notion sparked by their newfound teaming with veteran producer Joe Henry. “When we had the opportunity to work with Joe, it felt like an adventure was unfolding, and we wanted to invite fans of our music to be part of that adventure in real time,” Bergquist says. “The enthusiastic response from our fans was overwhelming.”

The twosome was uncertain how Henry’s production style would mesh with its trademark low-key style. “We couldn’t quite imagine in advance what a Joe Henry-produced *Over the Rhine* record would sound like,” Bergquist acknowledges. “We wanted to be a little surprised and completely open going in. But Joe quickly became a true and rare ally.” The album was recorded over five days with a studio crew that included musicians Jay Bellerose, Patrick Warren, Greg Leisz and Joe’s son, Levon. “We always ended in time to gather around and

share a meal and a good bottle of wine—or three—in the evening,” she recalls. “There were always old jazz records playing.”

The title of *The Long Surrender* alludes to the inevitability of change—the growing realization that loved ones will be laid to rest, and that our priorities will evolve as a result. “Suddenly so much of what we cling to can seem a little pointless,” Detweiler says. “And certain small pleasures take on new significance.” The title also carries an echo of *Over the Rhine*’s own long history. “It refers to the arc of a lifelong commitment to writing and performing, regardless of recognition,” Bergquist adds. “Learning when to work hard and when to let go.”

That commitment has been part of *Over the Rhine*’s mission all along. The couple met in college and found an instant connection in their music, one that’s served them well both personally and professionally ever since. “We had a vision from the very beginning to write, record and get our music into the hands of anyone who might be interested,” Detweiler says. “The important thing is that we want the freedom to do the best work we’re capable of.”

—Lee Zimmerman

JAN/FEB 2011
M MUSIC & MUSICIANS
 MAGAZINE

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