

Mikki Brisk

Country-Flavored Folk Singer-Songwriter

Debut Album *Distance and Miles*

"You don't know what you have here."

These are among the first bold words on *Distance and Miles*, a debut album of startling honesty. The same words could be said about the album's singer-songwriter, Mikki Brisk. She's a secret she's largely kept to herself. The words match the direct and forthright stance she displays on the CD cover, both declaring herself to the world. She seduces with a voice as sweet as the sourwood honey of her native Georgia, equal parts crystalline pure and golden huskiness. A voice pollinated with heartfelt emotion and sweetened with experience. In that voice, you can soar to the heights of hopefulness and freedom, and plumb the depths of heartache and longing.

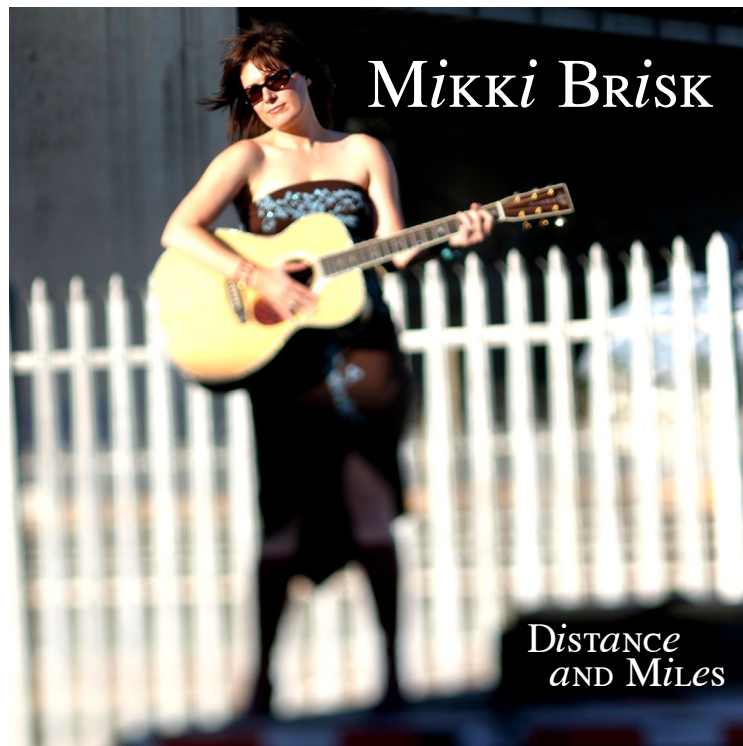
With a stunning breadth in her writing style, with story songs and breakup songs, drinking songs and road songs, Mikki crafts lyrics that put one wholly in the mind of a heartbroken – but not broken – woman. Smothered with standout melodies and layered atmosphere like a healthy dose of southern gravy, many of the songs hew closely to the confessional and female empowerment messages of Shawn Colvin or Melissa Etheridge. As an artist, Mikki could most closely be compared to Mary Chapin Carpenter or Rosanne Cash. But instead of being the offspring of Johnny Cash, Mikki could be the bastard love child of Merle Haggard and Emmylou Harris. (To which she replies, "I wish!") Produced by Los Angeles-based honky-tonk hero Chad Watson, and featuring some of the city's finest session musicians, *Distance and Miles* makes good use of the typical instruments of folk and country music – acoustic guitar and bass, harmonica and accordion, mandolin, fiddle and pedal steel – but often in unexpected ways.

With that voice and those words, all her own, she continues to declare and reveal herself, song by song, until the end of the record, with its closing refrain, "I go walking with my red boots on," this time matching the CD's back cover. By then, you've been on a musical journey, of distance and miles, with a bright new guide star in the musical universe.

Mikki Brisk is a poet first, a songwriter pure and true. What kind of music does she write? Alt-country, acoustic rock, contemporary folk – what some are starting to call Americana. But *American* might be a better description. Since its birth, America has come to embrace its character as a melting pot of people, styles and flavors. And the interesting thing is that, in addition to music, Mikki loves to cook. Maybe it's the Deep South in her, a food-based culture that runs in her blood. So it's probably no surprise that her music is a full-course meal.

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All songs written by Mikki Brisk
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Mikki's music cooks. Start with a base stock of country and simmer with a dollop of folk for flavor. Chop up some off-Nashville alt-country and driving roots-rock. Spice with a dash of bayou, Southwest, and horns-tinged bluesy soul. Set oven to "confessional female empowerment" and roast. Serve hot.

All of her homes and travels have given Mikki a pretty good understanding of what the country has to offer. This understanding, these travels, inform her songs – from the opportunities offered and promise sought in "The Last American," to the Southwestern and Cajun inflections in "Desert Song" and "Me and Matthew." A pure country weeper like "We Don't Matter" can only come from her Georgia blood, and "I Really Need" has the flavor of whiskey, true to the spirit of honky-tonk ballads of times gone by. There's maybe even a little Hollywood in the declaration of independence that is her closing song, "Red Boots."

Distance and Miles is more than simply the name of Mikki Brisk's debut CD, more than the literal lines on the map she's drawn as she moved around the country. It's a description of the creative and emotional journey she's taken to be able to tell her stories, to find her voice, and to put her heart and her soul on the line through her words and music.

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Distance and Miles Song Listing

<i>Song Title</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>In Her Own Words</i>
The Last American 5:52	A soaring anthem to heartland optimism, to America's "can-do" – or can-don't – spirit.	"It's about being born in a great place and... not quite getting it. Being born here doesn't make us <i>entitled</i> . It makes us blessed."
Every Time's Like Every Time 3:37	A folk-pop rap whose upbeat tone contrasts its resigned message of a once-good thing going bad.	"A ditty about something we're all probably familiar with as we go through our routines of life... Let's call it 'predictable disappointment.'"
We Don't Matter 5:04	An old school country weeper, a melancholy "tears-in-your-beer" honky-tonk song.	"I suppose it's about resignation... about believing that life is never going to be anything more, but wanting more in a very bad way."
Come Back Again 4:09	"Woman-on-the-verge-of-a-nervous-breakdown" manifesto that devolves into a flourish of 60's-pop-influenced trippy schizophrenia.	"This song's about obsession. Trying to get that monkey off your back, whatever you're addicted to – be it a person or another bad habit."
The Fall 4:59	A wistfully romantic but intimate longing for the true love that never was.	"This is one of my favorite songs to play live, because by the end, I've been in tears a few times. And that's an awesome place to get to when performing."
It's Time 4:40	Country-jazzy cool, a sad accepting chanteuse torch song (but after the torch went out).	"It's about being in a bad place but believing that you can find something better and so much bigger than where you are."
After the Fall 5:40	A hopeful folk-country "ghost-of-a-lost-love" ballad, a woman empowered finding closure.	"Obviously a bookend with 'The Fall'... This song makes me smile because it's like getting a fresh start, when everything looks good."
I Really Need 3:04	A boozy, lusty declaration of sexual independence. Has the flavor of whiskey, an ode to Want with a capital "W."	"I remember when I wrote this, I got Melissa Etheridge's voice in my head and, before I knew it, her voice was singing this song. It feels raw and completely lacks pretension. Someone asked me if this was a 'rebound song.' It isn't. It's just about sex. I mean, it is what it is."
Me and Matthew 4:15	Driving, Cajun-influenced open-road outlaw story song, a wanderlust tale with the emphasis on lust.	"There's a little 'Thelma and Louise' in this one. I suppose it's about a lack of direction, and a little bit of 'This guy's not the best thing, but he's the best thing right now.' I mean, I haven't been running around with anybody who's been robbing convenience stores. As far as I know."
Desert Song (Magdalena, Mexico) 4:21	An arid, haunting lament sung in echoed longing by a lovelorn soul. Evokes a forgotten cantina baked by a Mexican sun in total eclipse.	"It's about <i>really</i> being in the wrong place. You know, it's a bad situation when your environment is just completely wrong, and you're waiting and hoping for somebody who's just not there for you."
One Year After 3:36	A memorial day requiem of longing and melancholy, of love and innocence lost, yet finally accepting and hopeful.	"This song is about not being able to forget but being better for it."
Red Boots 4:27	A soulful and confident female empowerment anthem, the ultimate healing "movin' on" song.	"I think this is about being able to face up to all the people who've completely screwed you over in life, and yet realizing they do <i>not</i> control your destiny."