

RHIANNON GIDDENS

FREEDOM HIGHWAY



FOR SALE,

A remarkable smart healthy

Negro Wench,

About 22 years of age; used to both house work and farming, and sold for no fault but for want of emply. She has a child about 9 months old, which will be at the purchaser's option.

Aug. 12,

Enquire of the Printers.

1. AT THE PURCHASER'S OPTION 4:16

Music by Rhiannon Giddens (Children of Lyr Music [BMI])

Lyric by Rhiannon Giddens & Joey Ryan (BMG Gold Songs [ASCAP] / Joey Ryan Music Publishing [ASCAP])

I have a babe but shall I keep him
'Twill come the day when I'll be weepin'
But how can I love him any less
This little babe upon my breast

You can take my body, you can take my bones
You can take my blood but not my soul

I've got a body dark and strong
I was young but not for long
You took me to bed a little girl
Left me in a woman's world

Day by day I work the line
Every minute overtime
Fingers nimble, fingers quick
My fingers bleed to make you rich

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals, Minstrel Banjo
MALCOLM PARSON: Cello
HUBBY JENKINS: Mandolin
DIRK POWELL: Electric Guitar, Mandolin, Bells
JASON SYPHER: Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums

2. THE ANGELS LAID HIM AWAY 2:31

Mississippi John Hurt (Wynwood Music Co. Inc.)

Hey Mrs. Collins ain't it hard
See young Louis in that old graveyard
The angels laid him away

Mrs. Collins weep, Mrs. Collins moan
What made her son Louis leave his home?
The angels laid him away

Angels laid him away
Laid him six feet under the clay
Angels laid him away

Bob shot one and Louis shot two
Shot poor Collins, shot him through and through
Angels have laid him away

When they heard ol' Louis was dead
All the womenfolk they dressed in red
The angels laid him away

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals
DIRK POWELL: Acoustic Guitar

3. JULIE 4:28

Rhiannon Giddens

Julie, O Julie, won't you run?
I see down yonder the soldiers have come
Julie, O Julie, can't you see?
Them devils have come to take you far from me

Mistress, O Mistress, I won't run
'Cause I see down yonder the soldiers have come
Mistress, O Mistress, I do see
And I'll stay right here till they come for me

Julie, O Julie, you won't go?
Leave this house and all you know?
Julie, O Julie, don't leave here
Leave us who love you and all you hold dear

Mistress, O Mistress, I will go
Leave this house and all I know
Mistress, O Mistress, I will leave here
With what family I got left, they're all I hold dear

Julie, O Julie, won't you lie?
If they find that trunk of gold by my side

Julie, O Julie, you tell them men
That trunk of gold is yours, my friend

Mistress, O Mistress, I won't lie
If they find that trunk of gold by your side
Mistress, O Mistress, that trunk of gold
Is what you got when my children you sold

Mistress, O Mistress, don't you cry
The price of staying here is too high
Mistress, O Mistress, I wish you well
But in leaving here, I'm leaving hell

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals, Minstrel Banjo
DIRK POWELL: Fiddle
JASON SYPHER: Bass

4. BIRMINGHAM SUNDAY 6:13

Richard Fariña (Universal-Songs of Polygram [BMI] / Warner Bros. Inc. [ASCAP])

Additional Music by Rhiannon Giddens & Dirk Powell
(Crying Bayou Music [BMI])

Come round by my side and I'll sing you a song
I'll sing it so softly, it'll do no one wrong
On Birmingham Sunday the blood ran like wine
And the choirs kept singing of freedom

That cold autumn morning no eyes saw the sun
And Addie Mae Collins, her number was one
At an old Baptist church there was no need to run
And the choirs kept singing of freedom

The clouds they were grey and the autumn wind blew
And Denise McNair brought the number to two
The falcon of death was a creature they knew
And the choirs kept singing of freedom

The church it was crowded, but no one could see
That Cynthia Wesley's dark number was three

Her prayers and her feelings would shame you
and me
And the choirs kept singing of freedom

Young Carole Robertson entered the door
And the number her killers had given was four
She asked for a blessing but asked for no more
And the choirs kept singing of freedom

On Birmingham Sunday a noise shook the ground
And people all over the earth turned around
For no one recalled a more cowardly sound
And the choirs kept singing of freedom

The Sunday has come and the Sunday has gone
And we can't do much more than to sing you a song
Sing it so loudly, you better sing along
And the choirs keep singing of freedom

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals
DIRK POWELL: Electric Guitar, Piano
JASON SYPHER: Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums, Percussion
ERIC ADCOCK: Hammond B3
ROWAN CORBETT, JAMIE DICK, RHIANNON
GIDDENS, LALENJA HARRINGTON, HUBBY
JENKINS, AMELIA POWELL, DIRK POWELL, SOPHIE
POWELL, JASON SYPHER: Choir

5. BETTER GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME 3:23

Rhiannon Giddens & Dirk Powell
Spoken Word by Justin Harrington

Young man was a good man
Always went to school
Young man was a good man
Never played the fool
Young man was a good man
Never had no drama

Young man was a good man
Always took care of his mama

Young man was a good man
Hanging with his boys
Young man was a good man
Didn't know he'd made a choice
Young man was a good man
Only did it twice
Young man was a good man
But now he's paid the price

Better get it right the first time

Young man was a good man
Did you stand your ground
Young man was a good man
Is that why they took you down
Young man was a good man
Or did you run that day
Young man was a good man
Baby, they shot you anyway

We done seen it on the daily
Reposting obituary pages
Losing beloveds they wanna change the subject
It's nothing new for the blue
Is the who or the hue
It's kids watching they fathers die when they
pull up the tube

We know enough to be cautious but honestly it's
not simple
Told to reach for ya paper they think you strapped
with a pistol
I was chilling had nothing but good intentions
I knew to achieve success had to learn to finesse
the systems
It was GPAs and test scores I had to be the best for
College my only option my mama told me to
prep for it

So it was kinda tiresome stress red in my irises
Got an invitation to another function like finally
Had to pull up with the homies
Only pouring some soda
I keep a clear head I seen enough to know how
it goes
But I noticed it getting louder
Neighbors complain 'bout the noise
Before I knew it heard someone yell out "Run, it's
the boys"
I didn't know what direction I hit the curb and I run
Everybody loud ain't hear 'em tell me put my
hands up
Headed towards the lights someone screamed my
name from behind
I guess you better get it right the first time

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals, Harmony Vocals,
Minstrel Banjo
JUSTIN HARRINGTON: Spoken Word
DIRK POWELL: Electric Guitar
ALPHONSO HORNE: Trumpet
COREY WILCOX: Trombone
PATRICK BARTLEY: Tenor Saxophone
JASON SYPHER: Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums
DESIREE CHAMPAGNE: Rubboard

6. WE COULD FLY 4:53

Rhiannon Giddens & Dirk Powell

Mama, dear mama, look in yonder tree
See that pretty little sparrow, a-lookin' back at me
She can soar above the clouds, way up in the sky
She can fly away from here – why, o why, can't I?

Daughter, dear daughter, I'll tell you something
true
Remember Granny Liza? well every night –
she flew –

They tried to keep her down but there was nothing
they could do

She could fly, she could fly
She could slip the bonds of earth and rise so high
She could fly across the river
Her spirit in her hands
Searching, always searching for the promised land

Mama, dear mama, mama tell me more
I feel a trembling in my arms, I've never felt before
Daughter, dear daughter, listen what I say
Your granny always told me you'd feel that way
some day
Every time she looked at you she saw the
old-time ways

When we could fly, we could fly
We could slip the bonds of earth and rise so high
We could fly across the mountains
Together, hand in hand
Searching, always searching for the promised land

Mama, dear mama, come and stand by me
I feel a lightness in my feet, a longing to be free
My heart it is a-shakin' with an old, old song
I hear the voices sayin', it's time for moving on

She took her mama by the hand, they rose up
in the air
They held each other tight and then –
They flew away from there
They held each other tight and then they flew
away from there

They could fly, they could fly
They could slip the bonds of earth and rise so high
They could fly across the ocean
Together, hand in hand
Searching, always searching, for the promised land

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals
LALENJA HARRINGTON, DIRK POWELL: Harmony Vocals
DIRK POWELL: Acoustic Guitars, Electric Guitar

7. HEY BÉBÉ 3:19

Music by Rhiannon Giddens

Lyric by Rhiannon Giddens & Dirk Powell

Hey bébé, don't you turn away
Hey bébé, I got something to say to you
Hey bébé, you chase the blues away
Hey bébé, you know I love to dance with you

Hey bébé, listen to what I say
Hey bébé, I'm-a tell you something true
Hey bébé, I been waitin' for this day
Hey bébé, I think I'm in love with you
Man, you're so smooth when your hips start to move
I love to feel you hold me when you deepen
the groove
I get hypnotized when I look in your eyes
I feel my heart a-thumpin' and I can't help but cry –

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals, Minstrel Banjo
ALPHONSO HORNE: Trumpet
JASON SYPHER: Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums
DESIRÉE CHAMPAGNE: Rubboard

8. COME LOVE COME 5:20

Rhiannon Giddens

Come, love come, the road lies low
The way is long and hard I know
Come, love come, the road lies free
I'll wait for you in Tennessee

When I was four, my loving mam
Was cornered by the boss's man
She turned her head, and got struck down
They buried her in the cold, cold ground

When I was twelve, my father dear
Was strong of arm and free of fear
Until the day he raised his hand
Then he was sold to Alabam'

When I was sixteen, found my bloom
And found my man, we jumped the broom
We pledged each other the rest of our lives
And on Saturday nights we were man and wife

When I was eighteen, bugles called
And boys in blue came o'er the wall
I took my chance, and followed free
They led the way to Tennessee

So here I sit, in a tiny shack
With thirteen others at my back
I've sent you word, so all I can do
Is wait, and wait, and wait...for you

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals, Minstrel Banjo
ROWAN CORBETT: Harmony Vocals
DIRK POWELL: Electric Guitar
HUBBY JENKINS: Banjo
MALCOLM PARSON: Cello
JASON SYPHER: Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums, Percussion

9. THE LOVE WE ALMOST HAD 4:17

Music by Bhi Bhiman (Stringhopper Music [BMI])

Lyric by Rhiannon Giddens

My heart is in another's keeping
All but one small part
A piece that somehow found its way
To hide inside your heart

I can go a day or three
With not one thought of you
But then I see a crooked smile
That draws me back into –

The way you almost held my hand, dear
The time you kissed my cheek
The words that never left your lips, love
But I heard week after week
The waltzes that we left untaken
The glances drove us mad
The life we didn't live together
And the love that we almost had

I remember it so clearly
The day you first came in
The bright light in your eye
The brown velvet of your skin

The instant ancient understanding
Of what I already knew
That spark of useless fire
The pull that led us to –

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals
ALPHONSO HORNE: Trumpet
DIRK POWELL: Guitar, Piano
JASON SYPHER: Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums, Percussion

10. BABY BOY (FT. LALENJA HARRINGTON AND LEYLA MCCALLA) 4:29

Music by Rhiannon Giddens

Lyric by Rhiannon Giddens & Lalenja Harrington

Baby boy, baby boy, don't you weep
Baby boy, baby boy, don't you weep
You will be our savior – but until then –
Go to sleep

Young man, young man, I will watch over you
Young man, young man, I will watch over you
While you lead our people – to the promised land –
I will shelter you

Beloved, beloved, I will stand by you
Beloved, beloved, I will stand by you
When you leave this place – to do what you must –
I will always love you

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals, Minstrel Banjo
LALENJA HARRINGTON: Vocals
LEYLA MCCALLA: Vocals, Cello
JASON SYPHER: Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums, Percussion

11. FOLLOWING THE NORTH STAR 1:56

Rhiannon Giddens

RHIANNON GIDDENS: Minstrel Banjo
ROWAN CORBETT: Bones
JAMIE DICK: Percussions/Drums

12. FREEDOM HIGHWAY (FT. BHI BHIMAN) 4:47

Roebuck "Pops" Staples (Pops Staples Music [BMI])

March down freedom highway
Marching each and every day
March down freedom highway
Marching each and every day

Made up my mind, that I won't turn around
Made up my mind, that I won't turn around

There is just one thing
I can't understand, my friend
Why some folks think freedom
Is not designed for all men

There are so many people
Living their lives perplexed
Wondering in their minds
What's gonna happen next

Found dead people in the forest
Tallahatchie River and lakes
The whole wide world is wonderin'
What's wrong with the United States

Yes, we want peace
If it can be found
We're marching the freedom highway
And we're not gonna turn around

BHI BHIMAN: Vocals, Electric Guitar
RHIANNON GIDDENS: Vocals, Handclaps
HUBBY JENKINS: Mandolin
ALPHONSO HORNE: Trumpet
COREY WILCOX: Trombone
PATRICK BARTLEY: Tenor Saxophone
DIRK POWELL: Electric Bass
JAMIE DICK: Drums, Percussion
ERIC ADCOCK: Hammond B3, Wurlitzer
AMELIA, SOPHIE, AND INA POWELL: Handclaps



CO-PRODUCED BY RHIANNON GIDDENS AND DIRK POWELL

Recorded by Dirk Powell at the Cypress House, Breaux Bridge, LA

Horns recorded by Nolan Thies at Bunker Studios, Brooklyn, NY

Spoken word in "Better Get It Right the First Time" recorded by Gino Abel Terry at Sessions Studio, Greensboro, NC

Hammond B3 recorded by Eric Adcock in Lafayette, LA

Mixed by Dirk Powell and Rhiannon Giddens at the Cypress House

Mastered by Robert C. Ludwig at Gateway Mastering Studios, Portland, ME

Design by Jeri Heiden for SMOG Design, Inc.

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Management: John Peets at Q Prime South, Nashville, TN

Executive Producer: David Bither

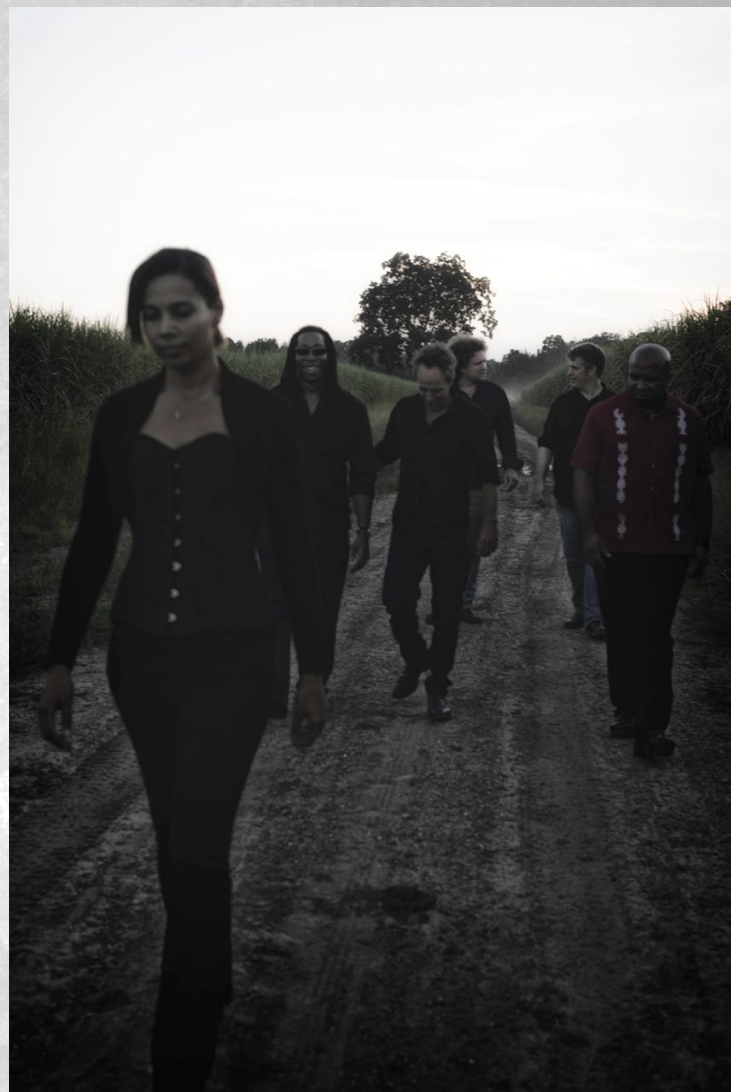
Acknowledgments:

I'd like to say thank you first to the ancestors who made themselves known in this process; to the voices that made themselves heard through my banjo, in the recording space, and through these songs. My eternal gratitude to my co-producer, Dirk Powell; your encouragement and shared vision has been an incredibly vital and indispensable foundation of this record, not to mention your mad engineering and playing skills. For us, there is no flag. Much gratitude also to the wonderful musicians who helped create and shape this recording: Jason, Jamie, Hubby, Rowan, Malcolm, Alphonso and his crew, and Des and Eric – you gave so much of yourselves and made this record so much greater for the gift. Thanks to my featured artists, Bhi, Leyla, my sister Lalenja, and my nephew Justin, for adding your unique voices in such a beautiful way; to Amelia and Sophie for lending your sweet voices and energy; and to Ina for innumerable cups of tea and coffee, and, at least once, a shoulder to cry on. And to Summer for being Summer.

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To all my family, thanks so much for being there. I love you all more than you will ever know.

And to Julie, and all her sisters, who lived through hell so I could fly...I feel it. And I will never forget.



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