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## Julie Christensen *Weeds like Us*

### Great Plains Soul

(by Josef Woodard)

Julie Christensen belongs firmly in the ranks of artists with deep roots in the spirit of "Americana," going back long before such a genre was thusly known. Those roots are clearer and stronger than ever on her powerful new album *Weeds like Us*, her sixth album overall and third for Household Ink Records. Within this cohesive collection of tracks, the singer belts out bluesbasted and soulful tunes and nestles into folk and country material with grit and wisdom. She even cleanly expresses the pop side of her musical being. Christensen does all this with a potent genuineness which bumps her latest album up a level, wielding a renewed musical mission statement.

A quick gander at Christensen's long, winding and heartfelt road in music touches on the landscapes - cultural and actual - which helped shape her "Great Plains Soul" vision. Born in Iowa City and raised in Central Iowa, she spent some years in Austin, Texas and wound up in Los Angeles in time to soak up -- and also influence -- the rich post-punk and roots-revival scene there. Her musical path included a co-leader role in the seminal, SST-signed country-punk band Divine Horseman, working on her ne'er released album for Polygram with Todd Rundgren, and a significant stint as a background singer with Leonard Cohen during his fertile late '80's-early '90s period. Her close link to Cohen's world was revived last decade with work on high profile Cohen tributes around the world, and a featured spotlight in the documentary *I'm Your Man*, singing his classic "Anthem." Along the way, she has also sung with the varied likes of Van Dyke Parks, Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, PiL and guitarist Robben Ford.

But her "roots" system has always grounded her music, and reaches naturally to the surface on her new album. *Weeds Like Us* is a hard-won and triumphant project, grown from lost seeds. Originally, Christensen had been working on an album to be produced by her friend and colleague, the late, great Kenny Edwards (colleague and bandmate of Linda Ronstadt, Karla Bonoff and countless L.A. alliances). After recovering from his passing, of cancer, in 2010, Christensen regrouped in mid-2011 with producersongwriter-multi-instrumentalist Jeff Turmes, whose haunting gothic-folk title song, "Weeds like Us," is one of the anchoring pieces of the song set. She pays tribute to Edwards with his tender song "On Your Way to Heaven," which is graced with a harmony vocal by Teddy Thompson.



Enhanced by musical input from longtime Christensen allies Greg Leisz, Turmes, Don Heffington, and Debra Dobkin, *Weeds like Us* is a musical journey with heart and chops, from the rollicking opener "Restless" to the closing, everyday survivor's benediction of "Broken." From the down 'n' dirty business of Jim Lauderdale's "Slow Motion Trouble" to the rugged country-rock waltz of her own "My Lucky Stars," the record showcases what makes Christensen so versatile and true.

*Weeds like Us* announces a strong new phase in the ongoing saga of Julie Christensen, Americana artist to the marrow.

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**Julie Christensen's** background includes two world-tour stints singing with the great Leonard Cohen, and co-fronting SST post-punk proto-Americana rockers Divine Horsemen in the 1980s. Her brand of "luscious Americana Art-Pop" is showcased in her upcoming release "Weeds Like Us" on Household Ink Records out of Santa Barbara. "Weeds" is a collection of songs for the unlucky, brave, and tough produced by Jeff Turmes, of Mavis' Staples' band. She has been accompanying herself on guitar lately, surrounded by her many musical friends and allies, and is looking to book concerts, house concerts, festivals and listening room situations throughout the U.S. and Europe.

2012 Selected Performance Alley Artist at International Folk Alliance Conference in Memphis  
2009 Performance Alley Artist at International Folk Alliance Conference in Memphis  
2008 Premiere Showcase Artist at Far-West Conference in Phoenix

**"--one of the truer singers you'll ever hear — straight up, no mannerisms, perfect taste; listen to.. her piercing new *Something Familiar*, and recognize how she could sing with both Leonard Cohen and Chris D. "--Greg Burk L.A. WEEKLY**

"Simply put, this gal's voice can raise every single hair on my body— and all at the same time! Be it R&B, pop, rock, she can sing it all, and with style, too." -- LA Weekly

"From the heart-wrenching title track, which serves up an aching dose of harsh reality, to the cascading piano that drives the plaintive "Something Pretty," *Where the Fireworks Are* is a collection of songs spanning the emotional spectrum. It provides an evocative musical chariot for Christensen to weave her vocal magic." (Brett Leigh-Dicks) VC REPORTER

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<http://www.facebook.com/JulieChristensenMusic>

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<http://www.sonicbids.com/juliechristensen> --my electronic press kit

<http://www.myspace.com/juliechristensen0>

[www.householdink.com/juliechristensen.htm](http://www.householdink.com/juliechristensen.htm)

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