

## TRANSCRIPT OF CARRIE NEWCOMER VIDEO INTERVIEW

:28 As a singer/songwriter and performing artist, I've gotten to play so many interesting places and venues. I've gotten to work with artists and musicians, and poets and authors, theologians, activists. It's just been a really interesting ride.

1:05 "Roots"

I'm from the Midwest, and I have a very strong Midwestern sensibility to my writing. I've heard Barbara Kingsolver refer to us as 'polite firebrands,' which I really like. That idea that we're straightforward and honest, that we may even say radical things, but with a certain kind of good humor and kindness of spirit.

1:30 ["Songwriting"]

For me, songwriting isn't about being clever or flashy or fancy. It's about telling a powerful story, and telling it with elegance and clarity. I believe we all have affinities – things we were born to love. And for me, that's writing. I write a lot, and I'm just delighted that Rounder Records has released eleven of my albums.

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I do a lot of writing that isn't songwriting: poetry, prose, essay, short story. But it always comes back to songwriting for me. I love that little funky format. I mean when you think about it, you have a few verses, a couple of choruses, maybe a bridge to tell a completely powerful story. It's all about condensing to the essence of the thing. But it can't just be an outline, that doesn't move anybody. It needs to be poetic – every word has to count. It's also real time: if you lost your listener for one line, you've lost them for five lines. So the whole story needs to unfold in this really elegant fashion. The longest Scrabble game I've ever played in my whole life was with three other songwriters. I mean, think about it: "There's a better word. I *know* there's a better word!"

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["The Geography of Light"]

The Geography of Light is my eleventh album on Rounder Records. It was recorded at Airtime Studios, and produced by David Weber and myself. There's some incredible musicianship on this album. I love working with musicians that know that what you don't say is just as important as what you do say. The instrumentation is this combination of roots and classical instruments. It's a little more sparsely arranged than some of my other albums. I'm just delighted with it.

- 3:31 A lot of the Geography of Light is about trying to put into language and music all those things we experience and recognize, that have no language. I mean, how many words do we have to try to describe the quality of light? Glow, beam, shimmer, radiate....
- 4:10 It's about navigating that shadow and light in our lives, and all those gray spaces in between. There aren't any easy answers – but there's a lot of good questions.
- 4:24 The artwork for this album is so fun. Hugh Syme did the graphic design, and he really gave it this wonderful sense of magical realism. I think he was playing with that idea that we should expect miracles in the most common places.
- [“Activism”]
- 4:40 Every album tour since 1999, I've partnered with a particular health, hunger, or social justice organization. I give 10% of the profits of new album sales to that organization. For The Geography of Light, it'll be the American Friends Service Committee.
- 5:08 I have this belief that our most effective activism usually comes out of what we love. Anger and fear only get you so far, and then you burn out or you get overwhelmed. But when it comes out of what we love, when we focus on not just what we're against, but what we're for, then it sustains.
- “Venues”
- 5:30 My life and my work were not described on Junior High School Career Day. I love that I get to play so many different kinds of venues and places and musical situations. I've played in bars and I've played in churches, and I've played at bowling alleys and I have played at Carnegie Hall. I love being able to cross secular and spiritual lines. In recent years, I've had the great opportunity to work with several authors and theologians that I truly admire. Parker Palmer, Phillip Gulley, Scott Russell Sanders, Jim Wallis, and Barbara Kingsolver.
- 5:57
- 6:11 In the past year, I also had the opportunity to write for two theatrical productions; one for the Indiana Repertory Theater called “Bad Dates,” and the other one a collaboration with five other songwriters called “Wilderness Plots.”

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“Humor”

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You know, I think I look at the world just a little sideways. I laugh at myself a lot, and people are so funny. Humor is really an important part of how I write, and my performances. Email is this whole new form of communication that I don't think we've quite worked the bugs out of yet. “Don't Push Send” really grew out of hearing all these funny and horrifying stories that have happened to people with email.