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## Tired of the Rage, Tired of the Worry: Artist Carrie Newcomer Offers an Alternative Way To Hold These Troubled Times

The title track of Carrie Newcomer's newest album, *A Great Wild Mercy*, opens with a scene of a woman, holding a blue umbrella above her head. She steps out into the summer rain, looks up, and then closes it, preferring to let the rain wash over her.

"As I watched this woman smile and walk off into the rain, I felt like I'd just experienced a moment filled with longing, hope and even holiness," says Newcomer. "It's been a long hot summer for many of us, sheltering in place, then sheltering from the storms of our times. The song is about taking down the umbrella, looking up, and experiencing a feeling of something better, truer, more connected - a great wild mercy."

*A Great Wild Mercy* acknowledges our collective exhaustion of holding up that umbrella, as we continue to experience an ongoing deluge of information focused on fear, division and rage. In such challenging times, Newcomer sings about embracing the stories that heal us and letting go of the stories that have lost their usefulness. She reminds us that there is "news of the world" and "news of the heart" and that we are not alone as we lean toward an "ever present goodness" that has not disappeared from the earth.

"As one listener recently wrote, 'This song sings exactly what I've been struggling to say in my emails, my facebook posts and in innumerable conversations'," Newcomer relates. "'I am so tired of the angry and the ugly and the hurtful; I long for peace, kindness and compassion'."

Reflecting on the album, Newcomer recalls the author Rick Rubin's quote: "The things we believe carry a charge." The "news of the world" would have us believe we are small and without power in a time of climate crisis, economic and racial injustice, daily mass shootings and the politics of fear. But the "news of the heart" reminds us that hope emerges from daily action for good. Newcomer says, "I choose to believe that how we live our daily lives matters. This belief creates a charge in my own life and in the world I inhabit. If you ask most people if they personally know anyone who has braved great difficulties for what they love, nearly all of them will respond that they know many such people, and that they are also such a person. This is at the heart of *A Great Wild Mercy*. There is an ever present goodness threading through the natural world, evident in every act of kindness and love made visible."

"Mercy is an old-fashioned word, but it is full of grace and goodness. A Great Wild Mercy is untamable and cannot be placed in the small containers we often use when talking about what is Sacred. A Great Wild Mercy keeps showing up, like the creek that rambles through a valley, shining in the sun and moving quietly over the rocks. There is something good we can tap into, the true nature of love is sturdy enough to lean my back against when storms brew around me."

In the songs on ***A Great Wild Mercy***, Newcomer tells the universal human story of loss, resiliency, authentic living, spiritual connection, humor and attention to finding the extraordinary within an ordinary day.

The raucous track "Potluck," co-written with Siri Undlin of Humbird (single, Aug 28), uses the quintessential midwestern potluck as metaphor and celebration of authentic relationship, giving one another good-hearted grace and gratitude for whatever we can offer each other, "There's soup on the stove, the record sings / sometimes you gotta trust whatever people bring."

On the infectious track "Start With A Stone," co-written with celebrated songwriter John McCutcheon (single, Sept 25), we are encouraged to find this expansive, great wild mercy in the smallest, most simple daily experiences often found in the natural world. "Start with a stone, the humblest of things / from this relic of bedrock eternity springs / go back to the source, go back to your home / heaven is waiting, but start with a stone."

Carrie Newcomer's *A Great Wild Mercy* is the alternative vision for how we hold our troubled times. Fear and rage are powerful motivators, but they keep us stuck and afraid to take down our umbrellas. *A Great Wild Mercy* invites us to acknowledge the mystery of this world: "There's a big wide sky filled with stars / it feels so close but it feels so far." Newcomer speaks to our desire to take our first step into a deeper connection, to leave the unsustainable practices, crippling division and hatred behind. She puts music to the hope that very few have had the courage to speak so truthfully: that maybe finally setting down our walls will allow for a great, wild mercy to emerge and guide us back to each other. Her question to you and to us all, "Are you willing to take down your umbrella, are you ready to experience something true and connecting? Are you ready for A Great Wild Mercy in your life and in the world?"

This emotionally generous album features Newcomer's trademark evocative and poetic lyrics, her signature alto voice—dubbed as "rich as Godiva Chocolate" by The Austin Statesman—and lush arrangements fusing classical, folk, Americana and bluegrass influences. Contributing to the unique musical blend were bassist Paul Kowert (The Punch Brothers, Hawktail), celebrated guitarist and songwriter Jordan Tice (Hawktail), violinist Brittany Haas (Hawktail, Crooked Still, Dave Rollins Band) drummer/percussionist Jim Brock (Indigo Girls), vocalist Siri Undlin (Humbird) and Newcomer's long-time touring companion and collaborator pianist Gary Walters. Carrie Newcomer kicks off a busy national album release tour in September.