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ENTERTAINMENT

Griffith's album soppy, awkward



Nanci Griffith
Late Night Grande Hotel

MCA
★ 1/2

• - bribe material, •• - nothing special, •••• - worth a listen, ••••• - quality music

Certain observers of pop culture are claiming that, like it or not, country music is making a comeback. Don't blame this phenomenon on Nanci Griffith, though. Albums like hers are

country the way it's meant to be: soggy, mediocre, redundant remnants of a dying musical genre.

Griffith turns out marvelous bits and pieces of lyrical poetry, but they wilt as her stilted, awkward singing style wastes a good voice and better songwriting. She sounds as if her native language were Portuguese, or perhaps she decided to record an album while waiting for a pizza. Most songs simply do not work well.

Her band, The Blue Moon Orchestra, strums along indifferently in the background, giving Griffith the barest of support when she requires it.

The result is a body of songs that fail to impart any of the loneliness, wandering or emptiness that Griffith wants us to believe she is singing

about. Griffith sounds more bored than anything else, and the album turns into the musical equivalent of a sociology lecture.

Nanci Griffith's attempt is an earnest one, and you don't want to dislike her. Hope for the best: Your mom might love this one for her birthday.

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