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Caroline Herring's *Lantana* Reestablishes Singer as Preeminent Storyteller
Austin Music Award Winner for *Best New Artist* Returns with Album that Re-images the Gothic South

Nashville, Tenn.—Caroline Herring confidently returns to the forefront of the American roots music scene with her new album *Lantana*, due March 4th, 2008 on Signature Sounds Records. The Mississippi-born, Atlanta-based singer/songwriter took the producing helm for the first time on the new record, co-producing with long-time collaborator Rich Brotherton (Robert Earl Keen).

Intimate, powerful and honest, *Lantana* is a masterpiece of understated intensity and in many ways an artistic re-birth for Herring. After making a name for herself in Mississippi as band member and co-founder of the now renowned Thacker Mountain Radio music series, Herring moved to Austin, TX. Herring quickly took the town by storm, releasing the critically acclaimed debut album, *Twilight*. She won *Best New Artist* at both the 2002 SXSW Austin Music Awards and also from the Austin American Statesman. Herring soon after released an equally impressive follow-up, *Wellspring*.

Though Herring had established herself as an authentic, original voice, Herring paused to focus on marriage and motherhood as she continued to tour and play festivals nationally and internationally. The insights she gained over these few years are profoundly apparent in the songs of *Lantana*. Herring's songs represent the experiences of women who have not only faced the challenges inherent in a rural South childhood, but also the heartrending and often complex experiences of adult women who feel pressured to choose between tradition and career ambitions. The songs show that the results can be both awe-inspiring and sometimes even devastating.

"I just got to the point where I knew I had to write songs again," Herring says of re-launching her career. "Music is my life-blood, even as the career of the singer/songwriter is most unusual, especially in the South where the jobs of women are often mother first, wife second. There's a line in one of my songs about a woman who lives in a backroom and begins to disappear. I didn't want that to be me."

With a new batch of songs in hand, she returned to Austin to record *Lantana* with Rich Brotherton, who had produced *Wellspring*. The album is made up entirely of Herring originals, save her artful interpretation of two traditional songs. Because Herring had the chance to sit with the songs for a while, she developed clear ideas about the overall feel of the album. *Lantana* is clearly grounded in the acoustic traditional sounds of her early work. With Brotherton behind the soundboard, his and Herring's collaboration made for a quiet masterpiece.

In many ways *Lantana* is Herring's re-imaging of the Gothic South, with a rich alto voice that soothes the listener even as she addresses difficult subjects. Herring has a journalist's eye for detail, a poet's sense of scale and language, and a life-long Southerner's understanding of the issues that shape the culture below the Mason Dixon line. Herring tackles poignant themes of womanhood in "Fair and Tender Ladies", "Stone Cold World" and "Song For Fay." Herring also expertly throws her hat in the ring of the long-standing murder ballad tradition, this time representing Susan Smith in the song "Paper Gown." Herring's commitment to uncovering the truth in her songs led fellow artist Dar Williams to call Herring "the elusive real thing."

There is no artifice on *Lantana*. It's an album full of delights, lyrically and musically. And just like Caroline Herring, her new album is the real thing.

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