



**“Her lyrics are dense and elemental, thick with imagery of sun, moon and sky. Millan’s voice is intimate and still like country air, while biscuit-box beats, electric guitar and New Orleans brass build on a bluegrass foundation... She comes over like Tammy Wynette crossed with Parker Posey – an indie queen with a Kentucky twang.” – *Uncut***

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Tom Waits has inspired countless records. King Tut’s influence, on the other hand, has generally been restricted to the Bangles. At least until now. “It’s from a Tom Waits interview that I read, where he had a couple songs that were quite old on his new record that was coming out,” Amy Millan says, explaining the title of her new album. “He said mummies were buried with honey because it never went bad. So when the archeologists pulled them up, there was all this honey that was still fine. So he said, that’s kind of how I think of the songs. That they’ve been buried for a long time, but they’re still sweet.”

Amy Millan is not, to our knowledge at least, an ancient Egyptian queen. Nor are her songs, so far as we know, edible. But on all other accounts the above bit of folklore is the story of the 12 songs that make up her solo debut, *Honey From The Tombs*. Little reminders of your impossibly romantic early 20s – preserved, aged, then dug up and discovered to have lost none of their original sweetness.

Most were written before 2000 (before Millan joined a little band called Stars), then recorded over the last three years with the assistance of friends old and new (including producer Ian Blurton and the boys and girls of Crazy Strings and Broken Social Scene). And they owe as much to nights spent spinning alt. country tales in Lithuanian bingo halls to her current status as indie pop star (pun intended).

“I wanted to make a record that had a thru line between pop music and old, country music. And I was constantly in a battle with myself because I had these two different kinds of songs that I would write,” Millan says over coffee in Toronto.

“I finally had someone say to me, ‘It doesn’t matter. The thru line is your voice.’ And it was just finding those years to have the confidence to not care what other people’s opinions were and that I was going to make a record that I wanted to make.”

That record, like 93% of all records worth a damn, is one that strives to find a thru line between past and present. Ultimately it comes back to our old friend timelessness. To the idea that whether it’s 2006 or 2036, when our flying cars finally get here, we will still need songs about skinny boys, heartbreak, whiskey, youthful confusion and the North Dakota sun.

“They’re all about little deaths,” Millan says. “Whether they’re your friends or your old lovers... they’re little photographs and little deaths. Like *Losing You*, that song, I’m sure when I’m 72 I’ll still relate to it. Whenever you’re with somebody and you fall in love with them, you think they’re the one. That’s why you do it. That’s why you go head first.”

Lovers change, but love endures. King Tut’s brand of rule may go out of style, but honey will forever remain a delicious snack.