

# kristy krüger

**Americana UK**, Liverpool, UK

(the largest resource for Americana in the UK)

April 26, 2006 - *Dark tales from Texan chanteuse*

There is one thing that you appreciate when you are reviewing, when you are itching to get to the first Built To Spill record in five years, when you want to just kick back and let the music flow over you, when things get in the way - what you want is records like this one that go their own way and make you forget all about indie-rock and gasoline rainbows. I imagine that Kristy dresses how she wants without reference to the vagaries of fashion - that's certainly how her music comes across. Strongly independent and original, she chooses a particular style because it suits her to, not because it will sell records. So what has she chosen then? She mixes up Americana with other forms of music; 'This is Now' vamps like something from the 'Chicago' soundtrack, only better, the cover of Depeche Mode's 'Never Let Me Down Again' recasts the song as a spooky hayride - she calls it Ameritronica (just call it good) - and 'Talk Radio' is a melancholy piece with tears of lap steel, a little like a female Jim White.

The glorious opening 'Gold Rush' shows that she can, if so inclined, do country rock as well as anyone including throwing in a memorable chorus, 'Black Hole' is unsurprisingly dark and skeletal, though the excellent guitar work is like bubbles of melody popping throughout the song. Her voice has a (cliché alert) timeless quality to it and whatever setting she places it into, it is up to the task of carrying off the songs and deadpanning the touches of dark humour. There is little other than her vocals on 'The Prospect of Gold' save some atmospheric shadings of guitar, her voice full of breathy bravado as it takes us through the song. Best of all is the almost staccato announcement of the waltz-like 'The Night You Never Came to Meet Me,' her voice like something leaking out of a hot valve driven radio as a white-walled roadsters pass outside - like a hot hand in the small of your back leading you to the dance floor, you are powerless to resist.

-**David Cowling**

**The Dallas Morning News**, Dallas, Texas

June 2, 2006

Kristy Krüger's roots are in folk and pop, but over the course of four CDs she's grown into one of the most eclectic singers in the Dallas music scene. Her new disc, *Songs From a Dead Man's Couch*, veers from old-time jazz-blues to a stomping hillbilly version of Depeche Mode's "Never Let Me Down Again" to a trippy-twang style she calls "Ameritronica." Imagine a female Tom Waits produced by Daniel Lanois and you get a general idea of the sound of *Dead Man's Couch*. Lyrically, it's an album full of vagabonds and fortune-seekers who keep getting more lost. As one character puts it, "You can't hit the bottom if there is no bottom."

-**Thor Christensen**

**The Dallas Observer**, Dallas, Texas

May 11, 2006, *Dallas Observer Music Awards Issue* – Named **Best Female Singer**

Forget the voice--Kristy Krüger is one hell of a kazoo player. When she lets loose live with the most underrated of all instruments on "Little Pollyanna," a standout track from her new album *Songs From a Dead Man's Couch*, she never ceases to impress. Her songwriting and production

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skills aren't too shabby, either...not to mention the fact that she also plays guitar, mandolin, keyboards, water glasses and harmonica. But it's her voice--a sweet, twangy coo combining equal parts Aimee Mann and Patty Griffin--that's the most impressive thing of all. Though she might have started out as an Ani DiFranco wannabe, the newly released *Couch* sees her adopting a sound much truer to her Texas roots, with a stellar cast of our city's finest (Salim Nourallah, Doug Burr, pedal steel player Todd Pertill, etc.) pitching in to help bring her music back home. Well-crafted songs like "Blackhole" and "Never Let Me Down Again" are far more likely to appeal to fans of Kathleen Edwards than fans of aggro-feminist folk music, and it's likely the new set of tunes might finally win her the attention she deserves--so don't be surprised if we're writing about how great she is again this time next year. And Kristy, if you ever need some back-up kazoo, you know where to find us.

–Noah Bailey

**Dallas Modern Luxury Magazine**, Dallas, Texas  
January 1, 2006, *The Radar Music*

**Pro-ditional Love** – *Kristy Krüger's dark Americana sounds are anything but expected*  
“Everybody cringes when they hear those words, ‘singer/songwriter,’” Kristy Krüger acknowledges over conversation and coffee at a local café recently. “I don’t know why they should...*everything* starts with the singer/songwriter, how else does a song get written?” she laughs. For many, the dreaded appellation evokes clichéd images of mawkish solipsisms sung to the tune of six-string strumming, or worse. In Krüger’s case, however, nothing could be further from fact. Her latest release, *An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy* is a genre-crashing wonder, a multi-layered work of aural art that holds up to, and actually *demand*s repeated listenings.

Krüger’s musical inclinations have caromed somewhat over the years, from early piano lessons, to jazz studies at Dallas’ Arts Magnet high school, to her rediscovery of songs and songwriting at USC, to years of restless coast-to-coast troubadouring post-graduation. Now with three CDs to her credit, and a fourth nearing completion, Krüger’s art continues to define her trajectory. “At some point I started writing songs, and realized, ‘man, I love writing songs,’” she says. “It’s like you get to be an actress when you deliver a story, you get to be a writer when you’re writing lyrics, you get to be a musician when you’re writing music - it was everything I loved rolled into one.”

For *An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy*, recorded in New Orleans, Krüger enlisted a supergroup session team, beginning with engineer/co-producer Andrew Gilchrist, of Ani DiFranco fame, Soul Asylum’s Dave Pirner played electric guitars, Brad Houser (New Bohemians, Critters Buggin’) added bass, and Drums and Tuba’s Tony Nozero guested on drums. Krüger herself co-produced and played everything else, including guitars, various keyboards, electronic loops, banjo and mandolin. The collection is characterized by alternate guitar tunings, Krüger’s intimate, almost breathless vocals and idiosyncratic phrasing, and acres of background voices, all hers. Painstakingly crafted, Krüger sometimes spent 16-hour days singing,

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building up countless doublings of herself on multiple parts. "I went a little wacko!" she admits, but some of the effects achieved are astonishing.

Although some artists like DiFranco, Rickie Lee Jones, Edie Brickell or Jane Siberry might serve as reference points, Krüger's territory is uniquely her own. The CD's title and artwork (an amazing pastiche of an anatomy textbook), hint at the unity of the 13 songs, and as she explains: "After I made the record, I listened to it for a month trying to figure out what I would call it. I noticed that each song represented a different aspect of being human...everyone has pride and an ego, feelings of hopelessness, desire, and times when they can persevere." Gradually she began to connect each song to a corresponding body part and the concept retrofitted beautifully.

Krüger's upcoming release, tentatively titled *Songs From a Dead Man's Couch*, is another step in her self-discovery, reflecting her newfound fascination with pedal steel guitar, which she's teaching herself, and her longstanding affection for artists like Hank Williams, Beck, Lucinda Williams and Emmylou Harris. For the moment she's labeling the new stuff "pro-ditional" (progressive and traditional) or "dark Americana," but call it what you will, the results will be unmistakably Kristy Krüger, and no one else.

**-Steve Carter**

**The Gambit, Weekly Alternative**, New Orleans, Louisiana  
August 3, 2004, *The Hot Seven (Best Bets of the Week)*

On "An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy," Kristy Krüger is cool. The Texan who spent a year in New Orleans sings, "I Got My Back" with the quiet confidence of someone who actually does, and throughout the album she's laidback, trusting her songs and voice. The album, produced by Dave Pirner and Andrew "Goat" Gilchrist, fleshes out her folk-based songs, and in the process, Krüger finds some rock-n-roll attitude. In "Coming 'Round the Mountain," for instance, a little Patti-Smith like swagger creeps into her voice. For someone who's often an acoustic warrior, this is unusual, as is avoiding the coffeehouse strum.

**-Alex Rawls**

**The Times Picayune**, New Orleans, Louisiana  
July 30, 2004, *Sound Advice*

Dallas singer-songwriter Kristy Krüger toured colleges and coffeehouses as a solo artist for years and logged additional years in Los Angeles pursuing a career in music. Her long struggle and journey of self discovery resulted in a backlog of insightful material that at times recalls Juliana Hatfield. Krüger showcases much of it on her current, third album "An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy." She recorded the disc at the Truck Farm Studio in the Bywater with longtime Ani DiFranco sound engineer Andrew "Goat" Gilchrist. Her backing band included Soul Asylum frontman Dave Pirner on guitars, plus Drums and Tuba drummer Tony Nozero and former Edie Brickell and the New Bohemians bassist Brad Houser. Each song is paired with a body part and the packaging evokes a medical textbook. But the real heart of "Anatomy" lies in Krüger's knack for memorable lyrics and melodies, her careful, evocative vocals and smart

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contemporary arrangements ranging from the alt-pop guitars of the opening "Monsoon" and "The Pursuit of Happiness" to the acoustic chill of the final "Alabaster."

**-Keith Spera**

**The Dallas Morning News**, Dallas, Texas

March 5, 2004 - *Spotlight*

Give Dallas-reared Kristy Krüger an "A" for ambition. Her new record, "An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy," is an elaborate concept album recorded with Soul Asylum's Dave Pirner on electric guitars. The disc comes with a 24-page mock medical textbook that pairs each of the 13 tracks with a part of the human anatomy. For instance, Chapter Seven: The Guts introduces "Vendetta," one of Ms. Krüger's many slices of psychedelic folk-pop.

**-Mario Tarradell**

**Quick, a product of The Dallas Morning News**, Dallas, Texas

March 24, 2004, *Krüger sings from new CD*

Dallas singer Kristy Krüger has a third independent album called *An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy*. It's a concept project about flesh, bones, and observations of life, she says. Dave Pirner of Soul Asylum helped out on the disc, which she made while living in New Orleans.

**Q: What's different about *An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy* compared to your other two albums, *Bachelor of Apathy* and *The Noise I Make*?**

A: I've grown since my first records. Now, it's really hard for me to actually listen to the first two. I listen to some of the lyric lines and think they're cheesy. This one is more observant.

**Q: What was it like to work with Dave Pirner of Soul Asylum?**

A: He was so nice. I was looking for a guitar player, because I'd just moved to New Orleans and he was the co-owner of the studio where I was working. Goat (Andrew Gilchrist, engineer for Ani DiFranco) suggested asking Dave. I asked and he was like, "Sure, I would love to play on your record."

**Q: When people listen to your music, what do you want them to take away from it?**

A: I do hope that listeners both male and female can relate to the overlying themes of desire, perseverance, pride and loss, which are all a part of the human experience, regardless of gender.

**-Lori Price**

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## PRESS QUOTES

In reference to Kristy's story and appearance on *This American Life*:

"Kristy is funny and charming. She has a great voice and I love so many of her songs. She was one of my favorite interviews this year. I just got back from giving speeches in North Carolina and people kept wanting to talk to me about her troll-voice story. America loves her. Way more comments about her than say, our coverage of Iraq."

-**Ira Glass**, Host of Public Radio International's *This American Life*

"Her voice has a timeless quality to it and whatever setting she places it into...like a hot hand in the small of your back leading you to the dance floor, you are powerless to resist."

-**David Cowling**, *Americana UK*, the largest resource for Americana in the UK

"She has grown into one of the most eclectic singers in the Dallas music scene...Imagine a female Tom Waits, produced by Daniel Lanois."

-**Thor Christensen**, *The Dallas Morning News*

"We can't get enough of the dark country-folk on Dallas singer Kristy Krüger's new CD...Krüger shines brightest on *Dark Stranger*, with its hypnotic blend of hard-driving country and transient electronica."

-**Hunter Hauk**, *The Quick*, a product of *The Dallas Morning News*

"Kristy Krüger has confidence and thoughtfulness and an artistic sensibility that reflects a caring, sensitive soul."

-**Eddie Brickell**

"...A heavy-lidded Dallas Americana songstress with the vox and gumption to remake **Depeche Mode's** 'Never Let Me Down Again' as a bluegrass rambler."

-**Chris Gray**, *The Austin Chronicle*

"Far from a typical self-released set...A startlingly mature work, full of whispered secrets and quiet affections."

- **Darryl Smyers**, *The Dallas Observer*

"A genre crashing wonder, a multi-layered work of aural art that holds up to and actually *demands* repeated listens."

-**Steve Carter**, *Dallas Modern Luxury Magazine*

"The real heart of 'Anatomy' lies in Kruger's knack for memorable lyrics and melodies, her careful, evocative vocals and smart, contemporary arrangements ranging from the alt-pop guitars of the opening 'Monsoon' and 'The Pursuit of Happiness' to the acoustic chill of the final 'Alabaster.' "

-**Keith Spera**, *The Times Picayune*

"I think I have a crush on Kristy. Infectious smile. The energy of a Mexican jumping bean. I've only met her twice and each time she stays with me like a great movie that you find yourself thinking about for days and days afterwards... not to mention her CD that I keep listening to on repeat."

-**Derek Sivers**, *CD Baby Owner/President*, the Internet's largest sole-independent music retailer

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“On ‘An Unauthorized Guide to the Human Anatomy,’ Kristy Kruger is cool. The Texan sings ‘I Got My Back’ with the quiet confidence of someone who actually does.”

–**Alex Rawls**, *The Gambit*, *Alternative Weekly Press*, New Orleans, LA

“Kristy’s the only female singer I’ve ever heard that reminds me of Johnny Cash.”

–**John Cross**, *fan*, Dallas, TX