Dori Freeman has sharpened her vision of Appalachian Americana over five studio albums. From the country traditionalism of her self-titled debut to the amplified folk of *Ten Thousand Roses*, it's a sound that nods to her mountain-town roots even as it reaches beyond them. Freeman continues creating her own musical geography with *Do You Recall*, the songwriter's most eclectic — and electric — record yet.

Like a counterpart to *Ten Thousand Roses* — the 2021 release that found Freeman trading the acoustic textures of her earlier work for a more expansive, electrified version of American roots music — *Do You Recall* nods to the full range of Freeman's influences and abilities. She still sings with the unforced vibrato of a classic folksinger, but she's more of a modern trailblazer than a throwback traditionalist, funneling her Blue Ridge roots into a contemporary sound that's both broad and bold.

"I grew up in a family that played a lot of traditional music, but my dad played a lot of other types of music for me, too," says Freeman, who grew up in rural Galax, Virginia. "I'd go fiddler's conventions, but I'd also watch my dad play jazz, swing, country, and rock & roll. He was a big fan of singer-songwriters. I think that variety has a lot to do with the way my own songwriting has developed."

After traveling to New York City to record her first three albums with producer Teddy Thompson (son of folk-rock icons Richard and Linda Thompson), Freeman chose to stay in Virginia for the *Ten Thousand Roses* sessions. She remained there for the creation of *Do You Recall*, too, tapping drummer Nicholas Falk — her husband, as well as a touring member of Hiss Golden Messenger — to produce. The two musicians worked out of a small, timber-framed recording studio in the couple's own backyard, tracking songs during the daytime hours while their daughter attended school. Grounded in sharp songwriting and layered with electric guitar, organ, pedal steel, percussion, and vocal harmonies, *Do You Recall* finds Freeman delivering tales about motherhood, marriage, and life in modern-day Appalachia.

The results are as stunning as they are diverse. On "Why Do I Do This To Myself," Freeman nods to the glory days of '90s country with a combination of pop hooks and amplified power chords. She gets psychedelic with "River Runs," lacing the folksong (which she wrote alongside Falk) with banjo, feedback, and hazy clouds of reverb. Her longtime champion Teddy Thompson sings harmony on "Good Enough," whose nostalgic keyboard textures evoke the garage-rock era, while her father contributes to "Laundromat" — in which Freeman nurses a broken heart by turning to the washing machine and running a load of colors, taking solace in life's more mundane tasks — as a co-writer. For Freeman, who penned every song on her previous albums without outside help, collaborating with other writers marks another milestone in her evolution as a singer, storyteller, and songwriter.

That evolution is highlighted by songs like "Soup Beans Milk and Bread" and "They Do It's True," two songs that ground themselves in Freeman's experience an an Appalachian native who's traveled the country for years, broadening her horizons far beyond the Blue Ridge. Both tunes explore the physical beauty, social challenges, and musical hallmarks of the area, and Freeman sings them with warmth and unflinching honesty. "I want people to associate different things with Appalachia than what's become the standard," she says. "You can't define this area as one thing. I know my perspective on it, and I love sharing that perspective and representing Appalachia in my own way."

*Do You Recall* offers a closer look at Dori Freeman's brand of expansive Americana. It's an album that both reaffirms her roots and reaches past them, exploring the sounds and stories that lay between traditional formats. Freeman does her best work in those grey areas, bringing her own color to a sound that's varied, versatile, and unmistakably her own. She's still proud of her Appalachian heritage. With *Do You Recall*, though, she's making her own traditions.