

# New release proves Tracy Bonham's talent

**SOUND ADVICE**  
**MARCUS AMAKER** Staff Writer  
**"THE BURDENS OF BEING UPRIGHT"**  
 Tracy Bonham  
 ★★½ (out of four stars)

When Tracy Bonham exploded on the music scene with the hit "Mother Mother," the first thing many critics said was that she was "just another Alanis Morissette."

While it may be true that Island Records were looking to capitalize on the recent success of female singer-songwriters by her, Bonham's "The Burdens of Being Upright" proves that she can stand on her own.

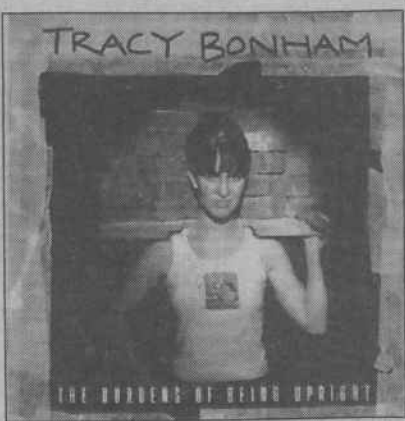
Clocking in at just over thirty-five minutes, "The Burdens of Being Upright" is a roller coaster ride of emotions.

Virtually every song on the album could be a single because of Bonham's knack for writing extremely catchy and melodic songs. This album is much more polished than her independent release

"The Liverpool Sessions", leaving no doubt that she wants to reach a Top 40 audience.

"The Burdens of Being Upright" is the kind of CD that grabs your attention and doesn't let go. From the harder-edged "Bulldog" to the softer "Every Breath," each song has an addictive chorus that will leave the most skeptical listener humming for days.

A native of Boston, Bonham has expressed her admiration for another talented artist, Liz Phair. That influence is heard throughout the album, especially on the song "30 seconds", one of the highlights. In fact, "30 seconds" sounds so much like Phair, you'd think that there was a misprint inside the CD.



However, this doesn't mean that Bonham lacks originality. Her use of the violin is a welcome addition and adds a musical flavor not found in many of today's popular artists.

Instead of using the violin in its classical form as she learned at the age of nine, Bonham uses it much in the same way as other artists use the guitar. One "The One" she lets her violin roar in the background, providing an alternative to the loud guitars.

On "Brain Crack," her violin acts as the perfect combination with the lyrics "have you ever heard the sound of you head on the ground." One only wishes that she would have used the instrument more often throughout the

album. While "The Burdens of Being Upright" contains some solid rock songs, like "Navy Bean," most of the album's material comes in the form of slower tunes such as "Tell it to the Sky," "One Hit Wonder" and "The Real".

Of these songs, "One Hit Wonder" is the best. It addresses those who believe the stereotype that women are one-dimensional human beings, only worthy of a man's desire. It's unique instrumentation and deadpan lyrics make it one of the best songs on the CD.

If there's a problem with this album, it's that Bonham too often relies on repeating a catchy line or hook to carry a song. This provides for an enjoyable listen initially, but it never ends up challenging the listener.

"The Burdens Of Being Upright" should give Tracy Bonham several hit singles. It follows the familiar "alternative" music formula seen on MTV and heard on popular music stations. If that is your favorite type of music, then this is the album for you.

## WUSC TOP TEN

- |                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Frente          | "Shape"                           |
| 2. Various         | "Stealing Beauty"<br>• Soundtrack |
| 3. Uncle Mingo     | "Little Baby Brother"             |
| 4. Ween            | "12 Golden Country<br>Greats"     |
| 5. Soul Coughing   | "Irresistable Bliss"              |
| 6. Patti Smith     | "Gone Again"                      |
| 7. Connells        | "Weird Food &<br>Devastation"     |
| 8. DJ Spooky       | "Songs of a Dead<br>Dreamer"      |
| 9. Four Piece Suit | "Ready to Wear"                   |
| 10. Ash            | "1977"                            |

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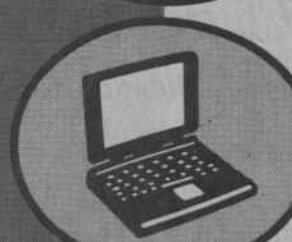
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