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**WOOD, WIRES & WHISKEY**  
COUNTRY, FOLK & BLUES REVIEWS

**JUN 2006**

## **Melissa McClelland**

Thumbelina's One Night Stand

By Kerry Doole

Here's an example of being able to judge an artist by the company they keep. Canadian notables making cameo appearances here include Greg Keelor, Justin Rutledge and Sarah McLachlan, while McClelland's band includes Paul Brennan (Odds), Rick May (Mae Moore) and guitarist/producer (and fiancée) Luke Doucet. The young Toronto-based songstress has certainly earned the respect of her peers, and this superb album — her third — deserves to boost her commercial profile. It's impossible to pin down stylistically, as it segues from roots-y rock ("Passenger 24") to country ("Taxi Ride") to chamber pop ("Solitary Life") to folk (a cover of Randy Newman's "Dayton Ohio") and blues ("Go Down Matthew"). McClelland's crystal-clear voice is also a little chameleonic, suggesting Kathleen Edwards on "Passenger 24" yet possessing decidedly Feist-like phrasing on "Iroquois St. Factory." Strings and horns are employed judiciously and imaginatively, as are Doucet's production choices. On her 2004 album, *Melissa Was Stranded in Suburbia*, but here she references High Park on the lovely "Goodbye to You" and hones in on urban denizens with the social satire of "Price to Pay": "College Street is full of creeps, trophy girls, expensive teeth." The hauntingly melodic "You Know I Love You Baby" would seem to have real airplay potential, but there is nothing calculated-sounding about this fine effort from a far from tiny talent. (Orange)