



March 2008

## Tift Merritt

**Another Country** ★★★½

FANTASY

**Sweet Southern depression from a French flat. Croissants optional.**

While the mellow beauty of *Another Country* may seem destined to soundtrack a lazy Sunday brunch, don't be misled by Merritt's lovely voice and graceful country-pop melodies. Written in Paris, the North Carolina native's third album unveils deceptively sharp tales of hearts in distress, implying fierce emotions just under the surface. The breathtaking "Keep You Happy," for example, dances along an abyss of loneliness with haunting results. Merritt could afford to be less careful—"My Heart Is Free" proves she can up the energy level without sacrificing any integrity. *JON YOUNG*