

**WILD CARROT - Hope**  
**Falling Mountain 1037**  
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There's the inevitable comparisons to other folk duos like Small Potatoes but wild carrot has a sound all their own, anchored in Pamela Temple's well-crafted songs, gorgeous soprano voice and Spencer Funk's amazing mastery of guitar and mandolin. A player like Spencer could easily overpower the songs with instrumental gymnastics but instead he lays back to let the lyrics carry the song, then comes forward when that right touch of beauty is needed. Don Porterfield joins in on bass, Chris Rosser adds vocals and percussion, plus there are others on violin, vocals, Dobro, banjo and more. And don't forget Pamela's guitar, concertina, penny whistle and bowed psaltery adding a nice bed to the mixes.

My favorites here are the story songs. We hear about Pamela's grandpa and great-grandpa, both preachers, in "Out of the Deep End" and in the wistful "Tracks", about a woman who always thought she'd leave town on the train that passes next to her home. "Running From Mercy" is one of a few covers (Rickie Lee Jones and Leo Kottke). You'll want to sing with the Have Mercy Choir on that one and if you aren't tapping your toes, you ain't breathing. "Lay Me Down" is a peaceful requiem for 9/11, while "These Songs" is their upbeat, award-winning song about a woman's introduction to folk music.

The CD booklet is gorgeously designed by Karen Anderson, with stunningly beautiful photos by Ron Hosenfeld. You can't just have a taste of wild carrot. Slowly savor their contemporary folk rooted in tradition and know you'll be coming back again and again.

– **Jamie Anderson**

