



By **Hal Horowitz**  
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## Amy Cook: *Summer Skin*



Amy Cook  
*Summer Skin*  
(Rothhouse/Thirty Tigers)  
Rating: 3 out of 5 stars

It takes a unique talent for Lucinda Williams to expressly request you be the opening act on her tour, so it's no surprise that Austin based Amy Cook deserves the attention. Her previous release was helmed by Alejandro Escovedo and for this one veteran producer Craig Street is aboard. Top notch session musicians including guitarist David Garza and Me'Shell N'Degeocello on bass along with a few namedropping guests such as Robert Plant and Patty Griffin help flesh out these eleven often moody, reflective tunes, making this her most accomplished album to date. The bittersweet acoustic title track is a perfect end of summer farewell, filled with a melancholy look back and hope for a future renewal. Cook's voice shifts from gutsy to innocent, sometimes in the same song, and the gruff underlying Crazy Horse crawl of tracks like "Break Your Fall" and "Sun Setting Backwards" provides heft and drama for music that, similar to Williams', grows on you with repeated plays.