



## SUSAN JAMES

*Highways, Ghosts, Hearts & Home*

[susanjamesmusic.com](http://susanjamesmusic.com)

On three previous albums, Susan James filtered her Southern California sound through a prism of vague psychedelia. That was especially evident on her critically acclaimed double disc *Fantastic Voyage*, which found her wide-eyed narratives accompanying a set of adventurous instrumentals. James' latest offers her an opportunity to further test the standard singer-songwriter template by cushioning her sunny Americana in a fluorescent haze. "Airstream Girl," "Falling Waltz 2" and "Goin' to California" carry an amiable, easygoing attitude, with fiddles and banjos accompanying James' wistful vocals. That dreamlike quality is evident throughout, but never diffuses the music's impact. Quite the opposite: *Highways, Ghosts, Hearts & Home* is rich with imagery and as vivid as it is varied.

TIM MAHONEY

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