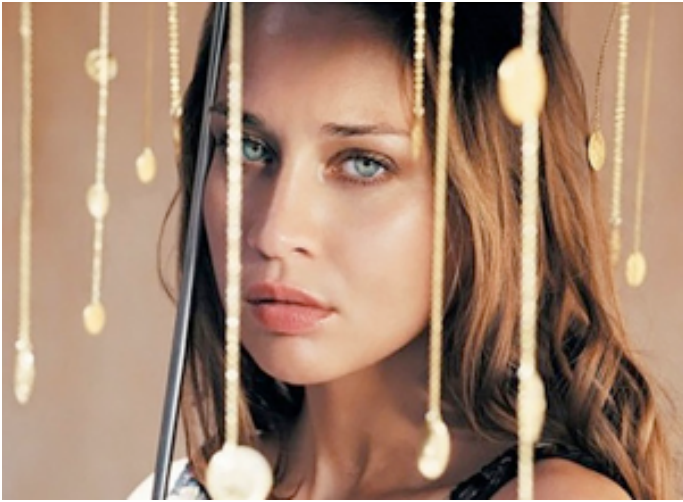




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WORTH THE WAIT! BY JON STEELY

Fiona Apple's fantastic new album is called "The Idler Wheel Is Wiser Than the Driver of the Screw and Whipping Cords Will Serve You More Than Ropes Will Ever Do." And the more you listen to it, the better it gets.

Fiona Apple became a household name in 1996, and she hasn't put out many albums since. Her approach to making art is pure and simple. She creates when she feels she has to -- when bottled feelings can't help but explode. If she doesn't feel it, she doesn't do it. Eventually, great songs appear.

Music critics are already calling "The Idler Wheel..." the best album of 2012. It's a raw blend of bare-bones instrumentation, Tom Waits-like percussion, stirring vocal phrasing, and moving lyrics glued to haunting melodies. These tracks are intense and beautiful expressions of pain and love. They get in your head and don't go away.

Fiona Apple is an astonishing artist who doesn't make the rounds often enough. Though she's not interested in star-sustaining machinery or topping the charts, "The Idler Wheel..." shows why she'll always have a yearning audience awaiting her return, no matter how long she stays away. Most of today's music serves as background, providing a soundtrack to our lives. I'd suggest taking the time to sit and let "The Idler Wheel..." be the main attraction.

Fiona Apple plays The Greek Theater on September 14.