

Our Native Daughters released a new song, "Quasheba, Quasheba" written by Birds of Chicago singer songwriter Allison Russell as an attempt to reckon with the singer's ancestral roots in West African slavery. The singer traced roots back to an enslaved person named Quasheba and felt compelled to pay tribute in song. One must listen to "Quesheba, Quesheba" and other songs by Our Native Daughters, which capture your heart and soul. Our Native Daughters breathe new life into these stories of real people who endured pain and survived unimaginable conditions.

The sweet sound of Russell's voice pays tribute to the life of Quasheba with lyrics, "How does your spirit fly?" and "You kept the dream of hope alive. They burned your body. They cursed your blackness. But they could not take your lights." The story of this lone woman Quesheba's story is shared by this talented group who truly capture the essence of storytelling through music. This folk music is more than appreciated as it paves way to a new form of honesty and empathy much needed in this day and age.

This group has no fear and drives tis song with powerful lyrics, "Raped and beaten, your babies taken. Ain't you a woman of love deserving. Ain't it something you survived. Quesheba, Quesheba, your free now, your freen now. How does your spirit fly? You dreamt of home, your dreamt of freedom. You died a slave, you died along."

The album, *Songs of Our Native Daughters* includes musicians Rhiannon Giddens, Amythyst Kiah, Leyla McCalla, and Allison Russell in song and sisterhood to communicate with their forebears. These musicians reclaim, recast, and spotlight the often unheard and untold history of their ancestors, whose stories remain vital and alive today. The material on *Songs of Our Native Daughters* is inspired by New World slave narratives, discrimination and how it has shaped our American experience.

Giddens remarked in a press release, "Gathering a group of fellow black female artists who had and have a lot to say made it both highly collaborative and deeply personal to me. It felt like there were things we had been waiting to say our whole lives in our art, and to be able to say them in the presence of our sisters-in-song was sweet indeed. I see this album as a part of a larger movement to reclaim the black female history of this country."

In her [Turning Tables](#) essay for NPR Music, singer-songwriter Kaia Kater describes Giddens as a reckoner of truth and says, "Throughout her career Giddens has been reaching towards something more imperative than the honors and praise she's received. With every performance, she gently enters the listener's mind, whittling away at our fallacy of perception as reality."

What has defined much of Giddens' career is her drive to calibrate that inner feeling with the perceptions of the outer world; to actively defy long-held assumptions that American banjo and fiddle traditions were invented by, and belong to, white people only. "When I first got into string-band music I felt like such an interloper," she said in a keynote speech to the International Bluegrass Music Awards Conference (IBMA) last year. "It was like I was sneaking into this music that wasn't my own... I constantly felt the awkwardness of being the raisin in the oatmeal."