

NO DEPRESSION

LIZZIE WEST & THE WHITE BUFFALO, *I Pledge Allegiance To Myself* (Appleseed). Lizzie West received acclaim for her 2003 disc *Holy Road*, originally a self-release before Warner Bros. reissued an altered version of it. Now on indie Appleseed, West, supported mostly by Anthony Kieraldo (the White Buffalo) on piano, performs music that encompasses a range of themes and styles. "Rope Me In And Smoke Me" is an expression of uninhibited sexuality presented in a jaunty neo-reggae style. The title track is one of several low-key anthems, while a few songs, such as "19 Miles To Baghdad", are obliquely topical. West writes disarming melodies, wraps her songs in beautiful, spare arrangements, and sings them with a beguiling voice that occasionally features tremolo effects redolent of Buffy Sainte-Marie. A couple of seven-minute covers, Bob Marley's "Stand Up, Stand Up" and Steve Goodman's "City Of New Orleans", are given sufficiently original treatments to justify inclusion.

— PAUL E. COMEAU