

NINA JO SMITH BIO 2023

Short bio

Nina Jo Smith plays acoustic guitar and ukulele. She stole her mother's guitar at age 10 and never looked back. Walks, bicycle rides, eavesdropping and close observation populate her songs with real and imagined characters from places she knows and loves.

Long bio

Out of the Darkness

In the dark times. Will there also be singing?
Yes, there will also be singing. About the dark times.
(Bertolt Brecht, 1939)

Nina Jo Smith sends us a surrealistic urban postcard (from *Clarion Alley* in San Francisco's Mission District) and a love song to a time and place (*LA Man*, set during the Vietnam War). Traveling through her landscape, you'll meet a Confederate ghost-in-process (*Take Me Back to Tennessee*), a young Black birder accosted in Central Park (*Justice Sestina*, a poem) and *John Prine Last Night* (he forgot he was dead). And you never know who you'll meet on *Highway 33*.

These songs were written over the past ten years. We endured a President who crushed every point of light he could find and a pandemic that shut us inside our homes, if we were fortunate enough to have one.

Emerging from that time with damaged lungs, **Nina Jo** reconstructed her voice, resulting in a grittier tone but with increasing clarity of thought and feeling.

In order to find the light in the darkness, you have to find the light within, then turn yourself inside out — and join your light with others'. The underlying darkness lends depth and texture. It pulses in tension with the light — and that is what feeling is.

The title song, *Out of the Darkness*, by **Tom Prasada-Rao**, is an offering of hope in dark times. Together we can be a lighthouse to help navigate dangerous waters.

This is **Nina Jo Smith's** second studio album, released at age 70.

8/3/23