



The Nields - XVII is the Nields' 17th album, is both their most personal and their most community-minded. Well into their third decade as a musical partners and -judging by this sublime album- at the very top of their game, the Nields turn to meditations on time, and turning points, their roots and community – both musical and personal – but they also express joy in the present, faith in the future, and a whole lot of hope and promise. The Nields' albums are often an eclectic mix of ideas and music styles, but clear themes emerge. *Love and China* (2002) was about the fragility of love and relationships. *The Full Catastrophe* (2012) explored the messy experience of raising a family. XVII has the

Nields looking out from midlife, focusing on themes of time, love and community. The primary inspiration behind XVII was Nerissa and Katryna's hero, Pete Seeger, who died in January of 2014. His love of sharing music and his passion for justice had been a part of their lives since before they were born (their parents fell in love at a Pete Seeger concert). His death affected them profoundly. Pete is clearly on the album in songs like "Joe Hill" and "Wasn't That a Time," but the entire album is infused with his spirit. It's there in the Nields' delight in sharing music and in using it to build a community. And it's there in the title XVII: when compared to a career and life like that of Pete Seeger, they're not even out of their teens.

The songs on XVII are about the lessons we hope to learn by midlife: accepting the passage of time and the choices we've made, and being thankful for the moments of grace. They are about knowing where we're supposed to be, and recognizing that there are many things we may never understand. They're about having faith in something bigger, be it God, humanity, love, or all of the above. Although many of the songs on XVII have the Nields looking back at their lives and their career, it's also an album about enjoying the moment: "What a world we get to live in when there are wonders such as this" ("Normandies"), looking ahead to what's next: "I know the only way is forward; I don't mind what might have been" ("Treasure"), and embracing in the people around you: "Someone needs to ask for help tonight, and someone wants to lend a hand. We're all of us, on the bus, sharing our way to trust, we all just walk each other home" ("Dave Hayes"). Written by Nerissa, but with significant contributions from Katryna, the songs show a confident songwriter trusting her voice, willing to take leaps, and able to write songs that are deeply personal. "Nerissa wrote my favorite songs she's ever written and they were more fun to sing than anything I've ever gotten to sing." The songs give Katryna room to stretch her voice, from intimate whispers to full throated soaring. The sisters' vocal interplay and intricate harmonies—the duo's hallmark—are as thrilling as ever.

"I feel like when Pete died," Katryna recalls "all musicians thought 'How do I carry on this tradition that he gave us and how do we nurture that.' The greatest thing you get to do as a musician is create a community; that's the gift that Pete Seeger gave us more than anything else. It's our job to just keep singing and to keep encouraging others to keep singing, too."