

## **Carrot: Tops**

**City Beat – Spill It, April, 9-15, 2003**

Local duo wild carrot continues its rise as one of the top Folk acts in the region with the release of their first-rate new album, Hope. Since their last release, Defined, in 1999, the duo has reached many career milestones, including picking up a deal with Falling Mountain Music label out of Virginia, receiving numerous awards, and being named cultural ambassador to Chile, where they recently toured for two weeks.

The cherry on the top of the wild carrot sundae is Hope, their first studio album (Defined was done live, with no overdubs). The duo has stepped it up on every level, from production to presentation to writing. Where Defined had the couple in a pure, untainted setting, it was also mostly other people's material being re-interpreted. Hope has an engaging studio crispness and features gifted guest musicians, but it's still singer Pamela Temple's voice and Spencer Funk's acoustic guitar that remain the focus. They're not using drum machines and Hip-Hop samples or anything, but the studio setting makes the record more fully realized, not to mention even more radiant, than its predecessor.

The best thing about Hope is that it features mostly original songs, written mainly by Temple (with co-writing help from Funk on a few songs as well). On songs like "Tracks" and "Bitter Blood", Temple and Funk have made wild carrot the full package, able to stand nose-to-nose with any Contemporary Folk act going. Songwriting is the most vital aspect of Folk music, and Hope shows that wild carrot has the skills to rank with the best of 'em.

Wild carrot celebrates the new CD on Sunday at the Leo Coffeehouse (where the two first met over a decade ago) in the Old St. George church in Coryville, starting at 7pm. For more info go to [wildcarrot.net](http://wildcarrot.net).

– **Mike Breen**

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