

Kim Beggs and Friends Offer Serious Reminders



Kim Beggs' latest CD, *Wanderers Paean*, offers us images and smells and feelings of yesteryear as only a gifted songwriter can.

This new CD from Kim Beggs is an interesting departure from her first CD, *Streetcar Heart*.

Wanderer Paean is a far more serious and mature mix of songs that showcases her love of that particular style of Americana Folk that harkens back to a simpler, harder life and where character

and situation clashed to create elementary truth from the most complex of emotions.

These songs are the musical equivalent of flipping through an old black-paged photo album with each song a photo, sepia toned with age, full of detail as only an old photo can be.

Each song, like those long

Politicians Cash In On Hate



Every time I read some article about the struggles gay people face south of the border, it brings home how tolerant Canadian society really is.

In a recent article I read, it exposed the fact that Karl Rove, one of the major architects of the Bush campaign for re-election, had a gay father. His father left the family to come out and yet Karl Rove remained very close to his father until his father's death.

It amazes me that a man like this can, on one hand, love his gay father and yet on the other create a campaign that targets the gay population as the enemy and creates a political campaign that uses fear of homosexuals as one of its predominant platforms in order to secure the Christian-right vote.

Vice President Cheney also has an openly gay daughter and yet he is part of an administration that vilifies homosexuality as aberrant and makes gay people the enemy against so-called "family values".

I have no idea how these two men can reconcile their actions with their conscience. I also have no idea how their gay family members can accept it.

I guess the reality is that what matters to this type of political animal is to win at all costs.

I can only begin to imagine what kind of self esteem Cheney's daughter must have knowing her father is the enemy of the gay community and that her life is considered by her father's administration to be wrong and immoral.

On a positive note, Canada has had little issue with electing gay politicians and now it is plausible that the next premier of Quebec will be a gay man.

Maybe if Americans see how Canada manages to not fall into anarchy because we treat everyone as equals it will have some impact on their paranoid policies.

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forgotten images, subjects staring out to the future, formally dressed, static, proud, vignettes of personal history communicating the fear and folly as well as the truth and beauty of the human animal.

Beggs is able to create an aura of tactile emotions that envelops each song. It is as if each song has its own atmosphere in which its inhabitants, for those brief moments, live and move about.

This quiet animation allows the listener into an emotional bubble, to breathe the same air and to discover personal and private moments as written by the author. This is the essence and strength of Beggs' writing.

In *Banks of the Yukon* and *Shipyards Song* we are able to participate in the cold of the season, warmth of the heart and smell the buildings long gone.

Lips Stained Red With Wine is a sad and beautiful walk through memories of one soul, cognizant of her past failings, but never forgetting the future has beauty unknown.

All heady stuff.

Though songs of desperation and melancholia, like *Heartache Shoes*, suffuse the CD there are true moments of musical joy.

The title song, *Wanderers Paean*, showcases another of Beggs' strengths: the ability to drive along a fine waltz and vocalize a fine "hoo hoo hoo" or a "yodleaahheehoo" or even an "eodelee aayday". These lines are full of hope and joy, conviction and sentiment as much as any of her fine lyrics.

Kim Beggs enunciation and wide, moist mouth combine to create an "eargasm" of tone surviving the harsh electronics of the recording process to envelop the ear.

The musicianship is deceptively simple and the use of vintage instruments in expert hands is only one of the musical treats that this album delivers.

I believe the albums timbre and tone is realized by its being recorded at Bob Hamilton's Old Crow Recording Studio. Being able to translate Beggs' ideas and vision to final product would be difficult if she had to travel out of the territory.

The small galaxy of Yukon

musicians who surround Beggs on each song reinforces this idea of a homegrown studio culture and is a tribute to an artist and her appeal.

Kim Beggs maintains a website at www.kimbeggs.com. Check it out for her current tour and get your friends and relatives in these areas up and out to see her.

Here is her schedule for the next week:

Oct. 27 Montreal QC: Yellow Door
Oct. 28 Perth ON: House Concert
TBA Wakefield QC: Blacksheep Inn
Nov. 2 Barry's Bay ON: House Concert
Nov. 3 Burlington ON: House Concert
Nov. 5 Oakville ON: White Oak Folk Club/Moonshine Cafe
Wanderers Paean is available at Rose Music.

Contact Bill Polonsky at strangethingsdone@hotmail.com for your own personal review in print.

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