

The Slow Burn of a Natalie Edelson Song



DISCOURSE

with Bill Polonsky

Natalie Edelson's *Mayfly Days* is like solar power: It plays till the sun goes down.

This album doesn't bust out and land a big hit single: there is no short fuse. The songs in this collection have a rather quiet and relentless energy behind them.

Think of the log in the stove that burns all night with that slow steady burn.

Conservation of energy and nature is prevalent lyrically as well as musically. Edelson has a compositional technique that takes advantage of her snappy finger-picking style. A lot of the music is a variation of a cyclical style that is surprisingly groovy: that is to groove.

The sound is made lush by using varied arrangements; miking and mixing techniques balance the energy.

The close-miked *Openings and Endings* (and that hidden track thirteen) make for an extremely intimate performance. Both

songs are beautiful examples of Edelson's control of her two main instruments: her voice and guitar.

Edelson is not a screamer to be certain. Her voice maintains a breathy power able to punctuate subtle rhythms of the lyric while maintaining a rock solid cascade of notes from her guitar.

The album features some talented musicians who add their own unique footprints. Listen for Paul Stephens on bass and multi-instrumentalist Jay Burr.

Kim Barlow contributes background vocals that, in the headphones, spin around your brain giving the respective songs a nice little punch at the chorus. Ear candy perhaps, but I have a sweet tooth for such things.

The lyrical style that Natalie Edelson writes with seamlessly moves through time and space. Half focused train of thought and half first-hand observer, the lyrics read like a personal journal stuffed with scrapbook photos.



The songs on Natalie Edelson's *Mayfly Days* have a quiet and relentless energy.

This album is a journey through loves and losses: chapters of well-remembered and always reflective memories. That is the essential nature of *Mayfly Days*.

The heart, the embattled proxy of emotion, is well represented in a number of songs as a lone

hitchhiker and "a heart so full it belches". In *Great Whatever*, the gal's heart gets "turned on a spit".

These are not to be read as dark, brooding tracts of sorrow. They are honest and, more often than not, witty reminders of the

fragility of the human condition and the resilience of the individual to overcome and move forward.

These stories are sensual mouthfuls of wit, honesty and wisdom.

Could, "I'm still looking for the right wrong person who will make me feel like one transcendent part of the great whatever" be an example of postmodern folk music?

"What will it take to keep you here? Rock, paper and scissors?"

Self-realization becoming "the road less traveled is to be alone" and "your exit marks a footprint on my littered beach of time" as a certification of fate? Deep thoughts and questions asked by Edelson.

Edelson uses the word "incandescence" to describe the past in *Into Deep Blue*, the first song on her album *Mayfly Days*. I would go further and derive the word "incandescent" to describe the whole CD.

Visit Bill Polonsky's website at www.strangethingsdone.com.

Brand-Aid Prevents a Crashing Artistic Career

I just saw a car accident on my way to the local coffee shop. CRASH!

I saw the creaky car turn left unsuccessfully onto a busy street. He creaked out onto the road, in his low-ended car, and sped up when he saw, or didn't see a well-maintained car.

"Didn't he see her?" I discussed with another witness in the coffee shop. Many watched, others ignored and some judged.

Sounds like some of the arts event that I attend here in Whitehorse.

It got me thinking about choices artists make with their careers.

Here at SYANA we deal with visual, performing, media, film and theatre artists. We, as arts administrators, support and encourage artists in many ways. We want them to succeed. We share ways to succeed as an artist. Then it's up to them.

Brands.



I heard this word twice in one day at two of the many committee meetings that I go to.

What is that?

I first heard about brands from a mentor of mine. In a Vancouver restaurant she scribbled on the paper napkin with authority to show me what my brand is. Sharon Shorty, performer, writer and, of course, "Gramma Susie".

She assessed my main brand is, "Gramma Susie".

My lovable grandma character has a way of domineering, she can't help it.

However, if I wanted to amend this, I needed to take some action to change.

I have consciously sought to add more "Sharon Shorty" to my brand.

How did I do this? www.sharonshorty.com was a great tool. It didn't cost much, thanks to the sweat/love equity of my husband building my website.

I mention it as often as possible. It improves my ability to be booked now that people can find me.

I'm writing this column. I am willing to do media interviews, locally, nationally and internationally. I sit on local juries and national assessment juries. I've completed two storytelling residencies. I've taught workshops. I'm a board member and committee member in the Yukon. I hosted national television artist profiles. I regularly donate performances and workshops for organizations that I believe in (usually Aboriginal youth and Elders).

These are some of the activities of increasing my brand.

Another aspect included in your brand is professional ethics. This is how you are: reliable or unreliable, costly or inexpensive, available or unreachable, friendly or unapproachable, diverse or only one service?

These are all factors that are noticed and can make or break your brand.

Let's say you are a fine arts artist. You create a beautiful and sophisticated product. Now what? Do you shuffle around, projecting discouragement about your work? Do you have to sell it for rent money? This may be an artistic crash without the sound of ripping metal.

Like any car crash, it could be avoided with care and attention to your career. How many of us will watch, ignore and judge this kind of artist crash?

I choose to help this victim.

Sharon Shorty is the founding artistic director of SYANA Performing Arts. To participate in its activities, phone 668-2695 x2 or syanaad@northwestel.net.

Drive Away & Don't Pay for 3 MONTHS
See dealer for details. Offers Valid April 17 to May 13, 2006.

\$40*
instant rebate on a set of 4 BFGoodrich® All Terrain T/A® KO tires
*Off our current posted Best Buy prices. See dealer for details.

Drive Away & Don't Pay for 3 MONTHS
See dealer for details. Offers Valid April 7 to May 20, 2006.

Get \$25 off
when you purchase \$500 or more with your Tirecraft® TireCard. See dealer for details.

Available at **TIRECRAFT** We'll get you home

Yukon Tire Tirecraft
107 Industrial Rd
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2T7
867-667-6102

Tirecraft Dawson
Lot 3 Callison
Business Park
Dawson City, Yukon
Y0B 1G0
867-993-6102

tirecraft.com

Gifts For Mom

Art Melange Handicrafts By Mariana

Horwoods Mall

When is the best time to buy....

Whitehorse General Store & Midnight Sun Gift Shop
205 Main Street

- ~ WHEN the business has many unique opportunities and exclusive products
- ~ WHEN talented people are prepared to show you the path to success
- ~ WHEN the 2007 Canada Games is just around the corner
- ~ WHEN the busy summer season is about to start — instant cash flow!
- ~ WHEN you are looking for a lifestyle change
- ~ WHEN your creative passion needs to be unleashed

And most of all when this business has been a successful venture for the last 11 years and offers the new entrepreneur "you" a turn key opportunity.

Passionate, Dedicated, Creative, Hardworking persons should call
660-5678 Or 393-1950
For more information!
Courtesy to Agents

