

Miraglia's musings and Nothing Romantic

by Chiemi

Somerville artist Danielle Miraglia's got it going on with her re-release of *Nothing Romantic* on local indie label 7not. On April 13th, the Revere Mass. native played her second release party at Club Passim to a welcoming crowd of fans. For the past four years, Miraglia's music could be experienced weekly on Sundays at The Burren, where she hosts the Singer-Songwriter Series. She's also playing Toad May 24th with local artists Lisa Bastoni and Nashville's Mare Wakefield.

"I love being part of the scene here, having access to a stage where I can bring people up and have them perform," said Miraglia. She added, "Sometimes it feels like we musicians spend so much time over our own goals, and it's nice to be able to have something to offer back." I feel at home in this community of people." Since coming to the area to her first open mic at The Kendall Cafe in 1998, Miraglia has become an integral part of the



Somerville music scene. About four and half years ago, Miraglia took over the Burren's Sunday Night Singer-Songwriter Series, which had been hosted by her friend, Melissa Morris.

Miraglia's been performing music since a young age. When she was ten years old, she started her first band. At the age of thirteen, she began playing an electric guitar under the tutelage of friends, books and by ear. She has a panoply of influences — "classic rock, some heavy metal — Janis Joplin, Paul Simon, Dylan, Bonnie Raitt, Joni Mitchell..." She views Mississippi John Hurt as the man whose work has taught her about "feeling it" on "blues picking style" — "I don't think he was thinking about every note he was playing and I don't think any great blues player does." Of Tom Waits, she said, "Anything clever I ever thought Tom Waits has already said..." Miraglia ruefully smiled and disclosed her first band name, "Lindsay and the Nifty Can-Openers." She considers Prince (by whatever name he does or does not have) "the last living artist that can turn me to jelly."

"The 7not Records concept is really cool." According to Miraglia, the label is "really about the independent artists — not about trying to be flashy — Jason Kitayama [Somerville's 7not founder] wants to help artists that deserve a bit of a push." She is

especially excited about her re-release because of the vitality of the 7not support under it.

For Miraglia, who has released three albums, *Nothing Romantic* is the first one that she is "really happy with." It is the product of "lots of great friends coming in and contributing their art and personality to it" — Tom Bianchi (bass, harmonica, vocals), Kevin So (piano, organ, vocals), Paul Chiasson (percussion), Ruth Peterson (vocals), Lloyd Thayer (dobro, lap steel), Dana Colley (baritone saxophone), Chris Harris (drums) John Kleber (lead guitar) and Trevor Mills (mandolin). "I don't consider myself a producer," said Miraglia, yet that is just what she did in putting this work together, for the right sound and feel. She said "The making of {the CD} just flowed..."

Miraglia's voice is husky and sweet, coming across as emanating directly from an inner warmth — like smoke swirling from hot incense embers. The delicate guitar pickings of "Snow Globe," and Miraglia's striking lyrics and vocals strewn across them with (deceptively loose) precision hits the listener first. Next comes "Sell My Soul," with Miraglia's incisive pop culture imagery and music message. This is followed by a gentle dance, "Moment by Moment," that includes the subtle shades of So's piano, organ and vocals and mandolin accents by

Mills. "Say One Thing" has a fun, gritty feel — Chiasson's apt percussion punctuation with the wrappings of Bianchi's lively harmonica licks and bass strokes. "Better" then smoothens the mood. "You Don't Know Nothing" moves the listener to a conversation touching on Vietnam, feminism and the question of what credentials or experiences should or could enable folks to opine on certain topics. "Cry" is my favorite, with the aching clarity of Miraglia's lyrics and guitar line. The start of the song depicts like a seemingly dingy sapphire that the listener strains to see and understand while it casts sparks. It is polished with every measure until it shines a pure blue light by the final note. In the title track, "Nothing Romantic," Miraglia talks about a non-glamorous side to life on the road. One can get lost in the details of her descriptions, Bianchi's vocals and bass flourishes and Thayer's tender dobro, lap steel... "The Only Way to Win" exhibits a meld of clever words, truism and vocal harmonies with Peterson. Finally, "The Wind," ends the cd softly. There is a wistful bent, but always with a bit of interesting edge, which seems to be a core component of Miraglia's special style.

For more information, check out www.daniellem.com and www.7notrecords.com

Chiemi's
Corner

Music
Reviews
&
Events