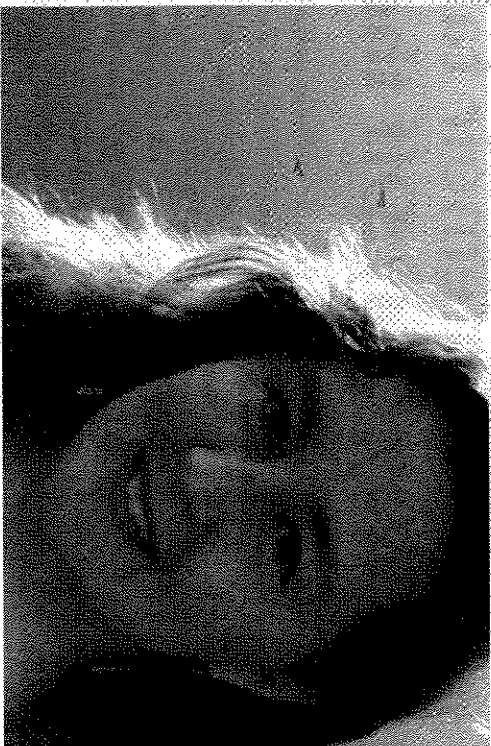




Chiem's Corner

MUSIC REVIEWS & EVENTS

Kate Chadbourne Brings Us To Realms of Silver



Kate Chadbourne

Kate Chadbourne will grace The Sherman Cafe with her presence June 11 at the "Somerville News Poetry and Music Series." Boston University instructor Tracy Strauss will read as the featured poet.

Chadbourne's art covers much ground. In a nutshell, she described it as "singing traditional Irish songs in Irish and English, composing original songs for voice, piano, and flute, improv[is]ing musical embellishment for storytellers as they spin their tales, writ[ing] and teach[ing] about Celtic languages and literatures, invent[ing] stories for

young and old, [and] shap[ing] sounds and sense into poems."

"Whether I am composing an original song or singing a traditional one, writing an essay or shaping images into a poem, what I most desire is that my efforts will result in some open space for the receiver, some fresh pasture of possibility," she said. Chadbourne released her self-titled, first CD of original songs in 2004. She said the pieces range in theme and image from a compassionate Medusa and an oracular taxi-driver to the sensuality of the sea and the wickedness of death-by-chocolate.

Each disk comes with a lovely 16-page booklet filled with photos (by Gregory Rick Chadbourne) and lyrics in exquisite colors. "Cafeteria Girl" puts you in another's shoes and mind. "Making Chocolate" takes you to the edge of decadent enjoyment as well as the crafting process—the stirring and moving of cocoa silk in a cauldron. These are the bookend songs between which the other 14 live.

Many of the titles give a taste of nuance and sensibility—"Stars," "Green Wave of Ocean," "Diver Drowned," "Madcap Taxi Driver," "Wizard's Horse," "On a Lark," are just some of the evocative titles.

As a whole, Chadbourne's music and lyrics embody water, whether that lies in the piano notes falling and tumbling like drops off the artist's skilled fingertips or in some other quality this critic can't articulate.

"The Coldest Room" strikes the ears with rippling chordal patterns splayed and the word "freeze"—a syllable and closed sound that stops the flow of music for a gentle pause before mov-



ing on to another "room."

Another standout is "A Shade Too Soon" which tells a story by dialogue and vision. The refrain is haunting; the layered vocals evoke the feeling of the open glass face of a wave before it splashes.

Technician and producer Rob Ignazio recorded the album at Porter Square Recording in Somerville. Other contributors are Matt Heaton (bodhrán and guitar), Booth Hardy (drum kit), Valerie Thompson (cello), and Chadbourne's cousin, Tom Anderson (bass guitar). A multi-faceted artist, Chadbourne also has a novel-in-progress, "All The Music In The World."

Chadbourne said she hopes her art will "inspire you to look through the dark window and see that what is waiting just outside is swift, beautiful, and yours to command: your own sense of wonder."

Chadbourne's CDs are available and further information about her work and gigs, which span from Mass. to Maine, can be accessed at www.realmsofsilver.com.