

Meg Hutchinson – “Com[ing] up full”



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“So much happens between the words that is not said. There is a tension between music and language.”

Massachusetts-based artist Meg Hutchinson said it is a natural fit for her to be the music feature at the Somerville News Writer's Festival Nov. 12, hosted by Jimmy Tingle at his legendary Davis Square theatre, Off Broadway.

“Love of language is where my songwriting started,” said Hutchinson. She said she wrote poetry and felt that it was somehow missing a dimension. “My songs are still about the words although I have to admit I am a musician.”

Hutchinson said she was excited to be asked to play at the upcoming festival because she would have attended anyway, and “Secretly, I want to be considered a writer.” She said her songs usually start with words — an idea or even just a line. “As songwriters, we have two mediums. When we get stuck, we can play a chord or two to get to the next step or capture the mood,” she said. Also, “So much happens between the words that is not said. There is a tension between music and language.”

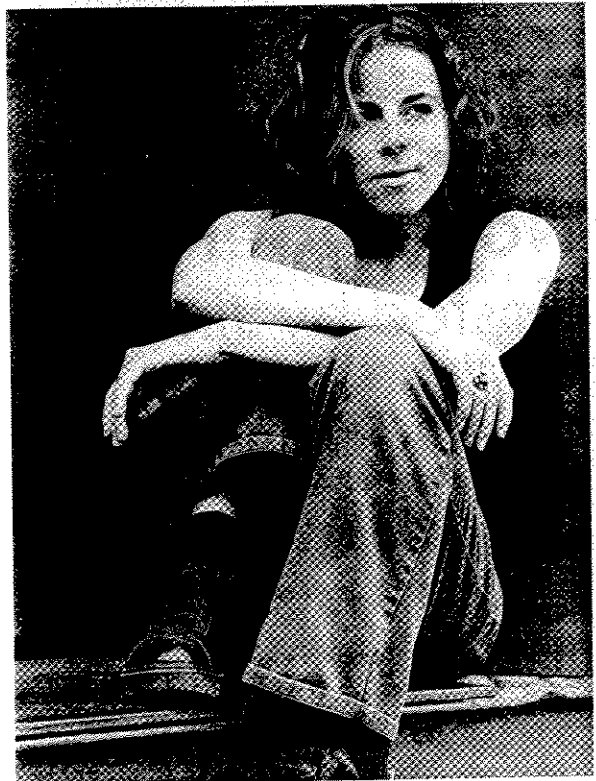
Hutchinson said she is looking forward to playing to an audience focused on lyrics at the festival. She said, “Sometimes audiences are too focused on entertainment. I wonder if there is a way to be of better service as an artist than just entertainment.

Performers have a lot of pressure on them to be funny and do a song and dance on the stage.” Hutchinson said “Performing in place where there is more focus on the craft of writing seems to be more genuine.”

In 2004 Hutchinson released “The Crossing” produced by Crit Harmon (Martin Sexton, Lori McKenna). The title track from this CD is a song about a bridge in Hutchinson's hometown that was built higher than the surrounding road. Hutchinson said that although there was a small sign to show the abrupt pavement end, one driving over the bridge would feel airborne, as if flying over the river. She said the songs on this album evolved from this concept of getting beyond.

Hutchinson recently returned from touring in the UK and is currently in the studio again working on her fifth album, also being produced by Harmon.

“Come Up Full” is a contender for the title of Hutchinson's album in progress. She said it is what she has called a recent song she wrote depicting lobster men pulling up traps on their boats in Maine — at times, so many come up empty and then one comes up full. She said this imagery aids the message of the piece, that “It is just when you are losing belief in something,



that something happens.”

In 2000 Hutchinson got her BA in Creative Writing, quit her job on an organic lettuce farm in the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts, and began to pursue her art full throttle. Since then, she has won a New Folk Award at the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas, as well as awards at the Rocky Mountain Folks Fest, the Telluride Troubadour Songwriter's Showcase in Colorado, The Chris Austin Songwriting Contest at Merlefest in North

Carolina, the Mountain Stage New Song Festival and in the John Lennon Songwriting Competition. Her work, “Against The Grey” was nominated for a Boston Music Award for best “Debut Singer-Songwriter Album” of the year.

Hutchinson's stated influences include poet Mary Oliver, David Grey, Patty Griffin, Greg Brown and Shawn Colvin among her influences. Her songs are upbeat in character and often portray a love of nature.