



NEW RELEASE

BLACK HEN MUSIC

Mary Kastle Beneath the Folds

Vancouver's **Mary Kastle** has found a muse in her Rhodes piano. Since acquiring the vintage instrument in the spring of 2008, she's lovingly hauled the soulful piece to live performances and features it prominently on her latest and first full-length album ***Beneath the Folds***. ***Beneath the Folds*** is both a throwback to the days of Motown, and a unique spin on contemporary jazz and roots music making for a bold and enticing debut.

Produced by Juno award winning guitarist **Steve Dawson**, ***Beneath the Folds*** is Kastle's first release on **Black Hen Music** and features some of Vancouver's finest jazz talent including Kastle's longtime collaborator on drums, **Paul Elias**, renowned jazz bassist **Andre Lachance**, enigmatic guitarist **Jeff Younger**, **Karen Graves** on saxophone, **Kent Wallace** on trumpet, **Steve Dawson** on guitars and pedal steel, and the lovely **Alice Dawson** singing backup vocals on "Beneath the Folds".

"A little bit of folk, a little bit of jazz and a lot of soul," is the way Kastle describes the musical mix on an album that includes reggae, bossa nova, swing, gospel, and a pinch of piano bar vibe from her years of playing jazz and pop standards in lounges. With the groove as her signature, Kastle's versatile palette has evoked comparisons to other soulful songsmiths such as Norah Jones, Stevie Wonder, and Tori Amos.

Consistent with the writing on her two previous EPs ***Fresh Air*** and ***Another Swing***, Kastle's propensity for exploring themes around self-expression and inner growth comes through loud and clear on ***Beneath the Folds***, but with a newfound directness. "Early on in the writing process, a close friend challenged me to be more direct in my songwriting, both lyrically and musically. The result was a shift in my approach and a deeper appreciation for what I had to offer as a musician. Some of the first songs that came, like "Drop Your Cover," are about letting your guard down and just being yourself. I found the blues and some really old-school gospel forms to be quite conducive to expressing those ideas."

Kastle's inspired mix of new and old musical forms also coincided with a major shift in the world around her. "Bush was leaving office and Obama was coming in, and there was a lot of hope and disappointment being felt simultaneously. Around me people were losing their jobs and many of the women I was observing were struggling with tough decisions like striking a balance between career vs. family. This is reflected in the subtext in songs like "Beggin'," "Julia," "Fortress" and "False Alarm." The stories are personal, but they also mirror big-picture political and social shifts."

With songs for the ages and her Rhodes in tow, Mary Kastle will be bringing ***Beneath the Folds*** on tour this summer and beyond .

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