

Christa Couture

The Wedding Singer & The Undertaker

Vancouver-based alt-folk all-star Christa Couture is releasing her second full-length album, **The Wedding Singer & The Undertaker**. Couture's uncensored approach to song writing and her drive to express her own experiences results in an intimate, conversational collection of songs that represent the next chapter in this young songstress' life. Living through the precipitous passion of falling in love and the heartbreaking death of her infant son, Couture explores intensely intimate spaces with a frank confidence that avoids cliché and melodrama.

Musically, **The Wedding Singer & The Undertaker** is a big step for Couture. Her last record **Fell Out of Oz** was recorded live off the floor. This new album, her second collaboration with producer **Futcher** (Be Good Tanyas, Girl Nobody, Mike Clarke), features layers of guitar, horn and string arrangements. It stretches Couture, a devoted acoustic guitarist, back to her piano keys – the first instrument she composed on as a girl.

The opening track *Sad Story Over* immediately establishes Couture's evolved sound with a pounding quarter-note tack piano and driving drum beat that sounds like Sergeant Pepper meets Arcade Fire. A few songs later, the coyly titled *I Don't Play Piano* features an orchestral backdrop with a whimsy reminiscent of Joanna Newsom. This track reveals Couture's ineradicable sense of playfulness despite her recent tragedy.

Couture explains the album's title characters, saying, "they're not opposites. It's not happy or sad; it's that you can't have one without the other." Thus the album unravels like a Jacob's ladder – a joyful start paving the way for the brutal honesty of *A Grief as This*, which is, in turn, laid out as gently as a lullaby. The ladder flips again and brings the listener to an expectant track *The Declaration of Spring*, wrapping tender hopes in simple, natural metaphors, buoyed by water percussion, upright bass and airy vocal harmonies. Near the end of the album, the alt-country seared *Oh Yes Oh Yes* balances an emotional vulnerability with sultry invitation.

While embracing the art of production on **The Wedding Singer & The Undertaker**, the heart of this album remains in Couture's vocal and guitar and what is captured in her live performance. From her signature guitar picking, the range of her voice from whisper to wail, to the conversational lyrics delivered with a wink of an eye and the wetting of lips that keep audiences in rapt attention, all are paid justice in the lush and diverse production that reiterates the strong creative pairing of Couture and Futcher as co-producers.

Over thirteen tracks, Couture covers a lot of territory – evidence of the intensity of her life experience in the past few years. You get a hint of her inspirations, which include Ani DiFranco, Joni Mitchell and Tom Waits. Yet Couture is decidedly her own unique artist alongside contemporaries such as Regina Spektor, Joanna Newsom and Catherine Feeny. The closing track *Sweetheart* ends on an unresolved lyrical note, a hanging question; Couture doesn't dictate any answers here despite the stripes she's earned. She simply presents her experiences as a mirror for the listener, both seeking and offering solace.



Release date: May 20, 2008

All songs © Christa Couture (SOCAN) 2008
Produced by Futcher & Christa Couture
Arrangements on 1, 3, 7 & 13 by Aaron Joyce

*"...an artist at the top of her field...
Noticeably wise while still sounding
excitably youthful"*
Vue Mag Edmonton

*"thoughtful and graceful stuff
comes from Couture"*
Brad Wheeler, Globe and Mail

*"...an emerging force
who won't be buried under
other performers of her ilk"*
Shannon Whibbs, Chartattack



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