

Psychedlic Gaelic: Mary Jane Lamond @Myrons

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During Mary Jane Lamond's performance at Myrons I came to the realization that beautiful music can be understood even if it is sung in an unfamiliar language. I could not possibly translate the words she sang, but at the same time I knew exactly what she was saying. Lamond's haunting vocals conjured up the spirits of lamenting lovers and mischievous fairies, and her

band's atmospheric arrangements heightened the ambience.

Lamond learned to speak Gaelic in the Celtic Studies program at St. FX. She told me that her interest in her roots was strong because she was born in Kingston, Ontario. She had a desire to learn about her culture in order to make up for what she missed by not growing up in Cape Breton.

Her approach to music is to take traditional songs and create

interesting soundscapes behind them that don't take away from the song itself, keeping it fairly traditional. Her own tastes influence how the songs sound. She listens to a lot of world music and manages to fit African and Indian percussion into her songs.

She performs Celtic songs with contemporary arrangements because she loves it. It is not her intention to save the tradition, but



photo by Andrew Mac Naughtan

MARY JANE LAMOND

the fact that it gives the language more profile is an added bonus. She said the crowds she plays for are growing in certain areas but the Maritimes is a challenge because of the lack of venues. She prefers playing in small theatres as opposed to clubs.

I asked her how traditional

Gaelic singers react to her versions of ancient songs, and she said they like her music because she doesn't change the songs too much, but they prefer them to be sung accapella. She finds that as long as she does a good job with the songs, most people don't have a huge problem with it.

Everyone who caught her appearance at Myrons would agree that she is definitely doing a great job with the songs. She has one of the best back-up bands in Celtic music to help her out. Her show is a thoroughly entertaining experience of music, story telling,

Lan Duil - Mary Jane Lamond (7)

Mary Jane Lamond's follow up to Sues e! is trippy and uplifting album much like her last one. Lan Duil is very experimental and successfully blends modern sounds with traditional songs. Drum machines and samples sound almost organic as they are mixed with fiddles, guitars and Lamond's beautiful singing. Nothing seems out of place on this CD and that's quite an accomplishment considering most