

Sue Medley on the line



by Carol Schneider

Last Monday I got the chance to have a brief but meaningful chat with Sue Medley. During this conversation I asked a few questions that had been gnawing away at the insides of myself and a certain other X-Press staff member.

Since I have neither the time nor the energy to turn this interview into a coherent article, I have decided to just give all those interested the transcript of my conversation with Sue Medley. She was a truly lovely person to talk to and very responsive to the questions I asked her.

Q- Your new album, *Inside Out*, seems to take a new direction. Why is that?

A- The only thing that changed was, I mean since the first record, (is that) I've grown a lot more, had a lot more experiences, written a lot more songs. And I think as time goes on, you just kind of learn things. The record just kind of took on a maturity, kind of like a natural progression.

Q- On this tour you are performing "unplugged". How does this compare to touring with the whole entourage?

A- It's just a totally different thing. Playing acoustically opposed to with a full band is just a totally different kind of thing. I enjoy them both. Right now I'm really enjoying the acoustic thing 'cause it's something I haven't done in fifteen years. I mean, when I first started playing, performing in coffee houses, I performed just by myself on acoustic guitar. I'm finding right now I'm doing this with another guitar player, who is from Nashville, who I've done some co-writing with. It's just the two of us on guitars. I find that it gives the audience a much, much clearer picture of what I do. I think it gives the audience a chance to hear my lyrics more, hear the songs and hear my voice, too, in a much better way since I'm not getting drowned out by-you know- six electric guitars. I think in that respect it really gives the audience a chance to have a much closer look at what I'm doing.

Q- What kind of crowds does your music usually draw?

A- My audiences vary from anywhere from young kids to people in their 20's to people in their 40's. I have a very broad age group as far as my audience goes, which to me is good.

Q- What is your connection to John Mellencamp?

A- I have recorded my last two records at Mellencamp's studio in Bloomington, Indiana and his guitar player Mike Wanchic produced both of my records and we used a couple of their players, a guitar player and a drummer on the last record. And when John Mellencamp performed at the Dylan tribute a couple of months

ago at Madison Square Gardens, he asked me if I would like to come up and be a part of the band and part of the back-up vocalists because one of their back-up vocalist, was out of town or in Europe or something. So, I mean, it was great because I know most of the guys in the band. I was comfortable with it and it was a lot of fun- just a great opportunity to be a part of a musical event like that.

Q- What singers do you find most influential in your own music?

A- Well, I think for me, my influences when I was growing up were The Rolling Stones, Joni Mitchell, Little Feet, Bonnie Raitt, you know so I think that those influences are definitely a part of my music somewhere in there because this is the music I grew up with, and Bob Dylan as well. When you grow up with a certain kind of music it definitely comes out in your own stuff as you get older.

Q- Of the people you've performed with thus far in your career, who's your favorite?

A- I think I would have to say John Mellencamp and the band. I really did enjoy that, it was great. It was great touring, I toured with Bob Dylan a couple of years ago, that was a great experience too. But I think for me just doing this Dylan tribute and being able to perform with the Mellencamp band was great and I mean it's such a great band. And that band has been together for 17 years and they're, you know, a real true rock and roll band. One of America's

true rock-and-roll bands. I really just felt that tightness and closeness with them and it was really great.

Q- What is your favorite song on *Inside Out*?

A- Boy, that's a tough one. I like them all for different reasons, but I think my favorite would probably be- you know I kind of like- Forget You. I kind of like the dry humor in the song, it's like a dark humor kind of song.



Q- Is there anything else you'd like to tell the readers at U.P.E.I.?

A- Well, just that we're looking forward to coming to the East Coast. It will be the first time that Billy Crain, my guitar player, has seen the East Coast, he was born and raised in Tennessee. So he's looking forward to it. And I'm looking forward to it because I've only played on the East Coast once and that was this last summer so I'm looking forward to doing it acoustic like this and getting a chance to connect a bit with my audience. ●