

Nature's Value is Intrinsic

An interview with Corvallis musician Siobhan.

Corvallis singer/songwriter Siobhan (pronounced Shovan) taught herself to play guitar after realizing music is a great way to share her poetry. Eleven years into her craft, Siobhan plays regularly around town, has one album out and is creating another.

During a phone conversation, in between her work as a massage therapist and yoga instructor, I was struck by the strength of Siobhan's voice and her beliefs, which enhance the soft melodies of her first album, *Love Lives in the Earth*. Siobhan's message of universal love, healing and the sacred earth punctuated our conversation. She is a woman with a mission — healing the planet — and she hopes her music will inspire others to walk that path.

EW: Tell me about yourself.

S: I want to share with others that we are not superior to nature, as many religious and scientific systems have told us. At the same time, I do not label myself an environmentalist. I care for humanity and do not want to separate myself from anyone, logger, oil driller, no one. The message of my music is compassion for one another, all beings, and supportive healing of ourselves. And healing has to come from the individual's sense of

compassion for oneself.

EW: How has the Oregon land influenced your work?

S: The salmon spawning, the majesty of the landscape, the diverse ecology from oceans to desert to mountain, the amazing water systems ... the remaining wilderness is really valuable, beyond a resource extractive system. The value of nature is intrinsic — it is valuable because it *is*, not because of something we put onto it.

EW: In your song *Touch Tenderly* you share a positive sensual experience you had with another person. The lack of romantic angst throughout *Love Lives in the Earth* is striking. What are you ex-



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pressing about human relationships in this song, and can we expect more?

S: In *Touch Tenderly*, I am trying to express the importance of touch in our lives as a way to maintain contact with one another. Touch is a form of non-verbal communication and it is incredibly healing.

Love Lives in the Earth is definitely a concepts CD. It is talking about things as a whole, rather than my personal relationships. That has already been sung. On my next album, I am more personal. Of course, the pronouns of my new songs are my grandmother, my best friend, as well as my life partner.

Music is an avenue to get my message across, the lyrics are my message. And each song is like a journal entry, capturing a certain experience, a certain time, a certain place, a certain relationship. My songs are love songs to the world — other creatures, humans, the planet.

EW: Who is your audience?

S: My audience is everyone, each human being.

EW: In what ways do you attempt to live eco-consciously as a musician?

S: That's a good question. By not

over-consuming electricity. I donate a portion of my album proceeds to international conservation efforts. Making the theme of my album one of Earth consciousness was an important choice. To be honest, I get overwhelmed by this issue, so I just do what I can do, take time to heal and rest.

EW: In the song *Endangered* you say, "Wake up to the beauty/ don't let her die away/ Act as a steward/ to guide her fate." How do you suggest environmental activists respond to the destructive actions you sing about, such as the proposed oil drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge and deforestation?

S: Vegetarianism is the number one thing you can do — eating a plant-based diet means having compassion for animals and biodiversity. Limiting electricity usage, not taking long showers, not driving as much. It's important to create a lifestyle for yourself because each person is a ripple in this massive effect.

I have a deep respect for the people sitting in trees. I do respect everyone that's doing something. At the same time, and I hesitate to say this, I do not think that there is a place for violence in the movement. Monkey wrenching just makes us look bad. The most important thing to do is what is close to home — buying locally, understanding bioregionalism, making choices. And always seeking healing, for yourself and every person you meet.

EW

Siobhan will be performing at 2 pm Saturday, April 17, at Planet Goloka. She performs in Corvallis regularly.



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