



Sweet Claire-ity

Kathryn Claire celebrates new solo effort

Her grandmother's trove of weaving treasure inspired Kathryn Claire's new album. *Homespun*, the Circed

By Hounds guitarist, fiddler and songwriter's third solo album, is different from her last, which was much more produced and featured 11 guest artists. *Homespun* is just the lass,

her guitar and voice, for a very personal feeling she says was partly inspired by inheriting her grandmother's weaving studio. Claire traveled to Ireland and Europe last spring, "trying to find out where my compass is," she says. "The songs are really an ... exploration for myself of home and my relationship with my partner [Matthew Hayward-McDonald, her CBH comrade] whom I'm getting married to. I don't play my own music with a band, and it's really exciting to have something representative of what I do. Because it's so stripped down, when I listen to it, it feels much more like storytelling or poetry to music."

In Claire's voice you can just discern an old world charm that informs the Irish songs she sings with Circed By Hounds. She is able to capture the romantic essence of a traditional song as well as give her own songs a distinct edge. Claire proves herself an able

guitarist, filling out deeply set rhythms which her voice grasps onto and sets soaring. On "Home To Me," Claire's voice and guitar

form an aching partnership, revealing lessons about loneliness. "Lordy Me" has a haunting, rural quality, punctuated by unusual percussion. Throughout *Homespun* Claire blends in

unexpected vocal and musical textures just when you think you know what's coming next. While her songwriting may be a reflection of her personal life, the songs are expansive, mature and worldly. The songs aren't obviously about her but seem to impart the thoughts and experiences of people she knows intimately. Her voice is the star, and she gains strength with each note. Fans of acoustic folk or traditional music in its many forms will find lots to love.

Claire moved to Portland from Nehalem on the Oregon coast five months ago, a move she's still getting used to. *Homespun's* cover image was inspired by a print of a weaving that her aunt had done for her grandmother, which she discovered in her grandmother's weaving studio. With her own art represented on the CD, *Homespun* is a portrait of the many threads of home and family we all weave into our lives. **ew**

Kathryn Claire
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