

Nicole Edwards Sends a Message in Joy Seeker

Once again I find myself listening to a CD by a talented artist who is dealing with a life health crisis.

Nicole Edwards has created a five-song CD entitled *Joy Seeker*. The title and the title tune from the CD show how she has reacted to this personal setback.

I've always felt that musicians are able to explore and express in a way that is not available to many others.

Right from the first track the lyrics go right to the heart of the matter. Edwards doesn't shy away from her problem. She doesn't moan about her situation. She tackles it head on and with a great deal of stoicism. The track is called *What If* and while it could be taken in a universal way, this is Edwards' personal statement. She asks herself what if she could never play guitar again. It is obvious to the listener that she takes great joy in being able to create and perform music. She shows this in her vocals. Her voice shows an enjoyment that cannot be faked.

Imagine if you suddenly had one of the great joys of your life



Joy Seeker is how Nicole Edwards faces personal adversity.

taken away and never to return. How would you react?

In the case of Edwards, it is with a positive outlook that shows how the human spirit can endure and overcome the trials that life can bring.

Edwards, in these five tunes, shows that courage and per-

sonal character. The titles alone show that side of her. *Joy Seeker*, *Beautiful Man* and *I've Got a Feelin'* are all positive titles and the lyrics unfold each story in an uplifting manner.

These tunes were a pleasure to listen to and had an easy-going feel that moved me to a happier place.

Some songs take repeated listening to fully appreciate and others, such as Edwards', are more immediate. By the second listen I got hooked into her style. The lyrics gave me something to think about and the music lulled me in with its soft yet strong character.

When it comes to the music, these tunes are not easy to classify. A touch of blues, a touch of folk and even a touch of contemporary are all mixed in to give the listener a feel of recognition while still seeming fresh.

Bob Johnstone gives his usual spectacular drumming while Ivan Zenovitch gives an unusually restrained guitar to two of the tracks.

Others helping out are Paul Stephens and Carlo Felice on bass, Annie Avery on the organ, Barb Chamberlin with some vocals, Cory Chouinard on percussion, Don Bishop on trumpet and Jay Burr helping out with all sorts of things.

Edwards's voice is a pleasure to listen to and it is wonderful to think that no matter what else she may have to deal with, her

voice will always be there for her.

One of the tunes is sung in French and has a great lyric that is explained in the liner notes. It is the simple phrase "we laugh". I think that sums up a lot of what Edwards is all about. When faced with trouble or joy, we laugh.

Due to the nature of her illness it is possible Edwards may not be able to perform often if at all in the future, so I urge you to check out this CD and others she has done in the past.

Till then, listen and enjoy.

If It Walks Like a Duck ... It May Not Be a Duck



A conversation a friend had at work was recently relayed to me and it got me thinking about misconceptions and how the gay community can be so misunderstood.

The conversation was about lesbian women in our community and this co-worker stated that she did not understand why gay women were attracted to masculine women if they were rejecting men; in her mind she thought that gay women should be more attracted to feminine women because that is the antithesis of males.

This is a good example of how people's pre-conceived notions can be so wrong. Lesbian women are not attracted to other women

because they are rejecting men ... they are not rejecting men ... it has nothing to do with men ... they are simply attracted to women just as straight women are attracted to men.

It has been one of the most glaring misconceptions that lesbian women are man haters; it simply isn't true.

Society has always created ideals for masculinity and femininity. Effeminate gay men are often subject to ridicule even within the gay community. However, there seems to be a distinct shift happening in society towards blurring gender lines. The emergence of the so-called "metrosexual" male is a good example. It used to be the bane of women that they were

required to shave and pluck and ex-foliate and generally put themselves through a torturous routine in order to be viewed as feminine. The new metrosexual male is a new breed of heterosexual that is now feeling the societal pressure to do the same thing in order to be considered attractive.

Gay women are not rejecting men but are rejecting the stereotypes that have been placed on women to be soft and feminine for a more authentic expression of themselves which often translates into short haircuts and non-gendered clothing. They are less inclined to worry about appearing attractive to men for obvious reasons and other women find the authenticity of this expression attractive.

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