

Holly Taymar - WAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

(GenieCake Records)



York-based Holly's one of those self-assured singer-songwriters who's difficult to categorise: the acoustic indie nu-folk tag doesn't do her any justice. Unlike some s/s of that persuasion, Holly's not at all precious: she's very personable - so much so that you feel easily drawn into her world even though she's mostly writing about relatively trivial, even mundane experiences that you wouldn't expect to be caring much about.

She displays a real delight in sharing them with you, and there's an almost childlike simplicity to her no-longer-entirely-innocent communication of those experiences through her songs - Toes, for example, with its companionable reminiscence of the sheer effort of simply trying to get risen up and out of the house, and the opening Bush Song which is not a political rant about the USA but instead a cheeky ode to a patch of greenery being cut down in its prime. 7am is directly concerned with Holly's fragile relationship with her neighbours, while 24 Hours may state the obvious but it does so with a freshness and charm that proves irresistible.

Holly's own brand of wistful reflection produces some cannily-formed jewels of song that stick in your mind beyond that crucial first hearing, but her work does (if gently) demand your close attention. For by and large, on this collection of 10 new songs and one live track (making up her second full-length CD), young Holly naturally and effortlessly escapes the potential charge of ephemeral insubstantiality and making something out of nothing, as much through the beautiful and truly seductive immediacy of her vocal delivery as through the unpretentious and accessible poetry of her actual songwriting.

Economy, and a sensible refusal to make a meal or a mountain out of a mere molehill (as it were) is a virtue, and a talent that fewer songwriters actually possess than claim - and Holly's one of those natural bearers of that skill.

Perhaps the only drawback is that almost all of the tracks weigh in at a broadly similar tempo, a gentle and unforced ripple that can seem a little unvaried after ten songs. One could also argue that the delicately managed backings are a

touch too twinkle-toed; they employ Holly's regular collaborator (and producer) Carl Hetherington as well as Mark Mellack and Dave Hartley, the soft-textured palette including telling smatterings of guitar, piano, banjo, dobro, glockenspiel and minimal percussion.

Even so, and although Holly may consider waking up hard to do - and making a CD even harder! - she's certainly managed to deliver on this enchantingly personal and admirably under-produced collection.

www.hollytaymar.com

www.myspace.com/hollytaymar