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“Fans of the soul-searching poetry of Leonard Cohen or Kate Wolf will love Lila Nelson.”

Performing Songwriter Magazine

“Great songs with poetic tendrils that cling...”

Loudon Wainwright III

M A D E L I N E M U S I C

Lila Nelson

New Release **Letter Home** features the co-production and string talent of Freddy Koella (Bob Dylan, k.d. Lang) and Kenny Edwards (Linda Ronstadt, Warren Zevon).

3 Minutes with Lila Nelson

Very likely, Lila Nelson is home right now, sitting quietly, with a big net, some big ideas, waiting impatiently for some words to fly low. Or perhaps she is on stage serving up saucy silliness between sometimes sad songs. And lucky you if you are the butt of one of her gig digs. She wants YOU. You are her music army. We caught up with Lila as she was getting ready to move from her long time Humboldt County CA home, south to the Bay Area.

Us: Are you moving for fame and fortune?

Lila: In part. Humboldt is very lovely and small and the fame, if not the fortune, here has gone to my head entirely. There's nothing like anonymity to free up the artistic wanderings of the soul and whet the performance appetite. I can't wait to reuse jokes and songs on the new hoards. Also, my long time gravy train has a job down south.

Us: How long were you writing before you started performing?

Lila: Years. I mean... I was about 11 when I first felt the itch to write songs. Many of them ditties with siblings. I wrote a lot between then and 17 or so, when I first hit the stage. There was a coffee shop in town [Fallbrook, CA] where the guy from The Rugburns, who produced Jewel's first record, used to hang out. I remember thinking “this is where dreams are made.” But, by the time I really got my bearings and was gigging a lot, Jewel was already doing feminine razor ads for BIC.

Us: Of all of your many talents, what brings you the most joy? And the most suffering?

Lila: Well, thanks, first...Uh...Joy, hmmm. You know, I oscillate quite a bit between loving being on stage and hating it. I think I have that bug that comedians get. They spend most of the time hating themselves so that they can be funny for a few minutes on stage every now and then. The songs,

themselves, feel inevitable. They are joyful like solving a riddle or putting a puzzle together is joyful—or occasionally like insects to catch, inspect and then throw back into the wind. The singing has always been scary to me. Especially live. Vulnerability is most noticeable in the human voice. That is a never ending learning curve, though—that involves learning how to be relaxed and comfortable, which I am learning how to do always—so THERE's the suffering. [Laughs

loud]. I am primarily a writer, a singer-wrong righer. Playing becomes much more fun as I give up trying to be a guitar or piano virtuoso and let the instruments be what they are for me—songwriting tools. That's not to say I can't play a mean-ass C chord, even over and over if I damn well please. But I worry occasionally that I am not a metro-nome-toting maestro, sure.

Us: Letter Home came out late in '08, what are your recording plans for the future?

Lila: I try to spend time recording all the time—whether that means throwing down a demo, or getting a good take. It's a different beast than performing live, so it's best to maintain the skill. Otherwise, you get in the studio and it's like having a camera pointed at you while you are trying to eat noodle soup with chopsticks. Oh, but for the music army, the minions, the fans? I'll have something out in late 2009, or early 2010.

Us: What are the new songs about?

Lila: Oh geez. What AREN'T they about? There are some BIG songs on there. Some of them speak to geologic time. Like all the records so far, though, I am recording some songs that are quite ancient to me. I had a friend ask me to dig up some goodies from when I was a teen, for a rock project. The project never got off its feet, but some of the songs did...

