

Mp3 Kate Mcdonnell - Where The Mangoes Are



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The latest CD by the crystal-voiced, award-winning contemporary singer-songwriter and "upside-down and backwards" guitarist. 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, FOLK: like Joni Details: When folk guitar virtuoso Leo Kottke told Kate McDonnell, "Stop doing that, you're giving me a headache!" he wasn't really trying to discourage her from performing. After all, her original songs have earned her a first place win at the 2002 Mountain Stage NewSong Festival songwriting competition (among other awards), appearances on the syndicated Mountain Stage and World Caf radio programs and at the Newport Folk Festival, praise from critics and fellow musicians, and an international following during her dozen years as a solo performer. It was only the sight, not the sound, of righthanded Kate playing her acoustic guitar lefthanded and strung upside-down that left him facetiously befuddled. And no one has any complaints about her abilities as a singer-songwriter - no less an expert than Tom Paxton has said Kate's music "has grace, intelligence, warmth and more." Kate's songs and vocals are as distinctive as her self-taught guitar technique. "Where the Mangoes Are," her first CD for Appleseed and fourth solo release overall, continues her ascension into broader public recognition with twelve songs, all but two of them originals, that showcase her clear, tender soprano voice, her vulnerable but resilient lyrical outlook, and crisp, fingerpicked guitar playing. Two songs on "Where the Mangoes Are," "Mercy" and "Softhearted Girl," have both already won first place honors in the Plowshares Songwriting Competition and the Susquehanna Songwriting Contest in 2004; a third, "Go Down Moses," won the 2002 Mountain Stage NewSong Festival competition, and a fourth, the darkly seductive "Lemon Marmalade," was a finalist in the 2003 Mid-Atlantic Songwriting Contest. An earlier recording of "Mercy," co-written with friend Anne Lindley, as were seven other "Mangoes" songs, also received enormous folk show airplay prior to the recent U.S. Presidential elections for its troubled view of "people pinned to the wall by a crazy man's

knife" and a society in which her "neighborhood gets smaller as Bush comes to shove." While "Mangoes" opens with the breezy road song "Tumbleweed," driven by Marc Shulman's electric guitar fills, much of the material on the CD concerns the rollercoaster of love -its highs ("Go Down Moses," "Lemon Marmalade"), lows ("Softhearted Girl," Steve Earle's "Goodbye Song"), and in-between terrors ("Mayday," "Fires"). Other aspects of the human experience - troubled friendships, death - are addressed in "Hey Joe," "Luis," and "5:05." For additional seasoning, there's a cheerful acoustic-blues arrangement of the traditional "Railroad Bill." Sympathetic accompaniment in styles ranging from fresh acoustic pop to personalized Americana by the CD's producer, multi-instrumentalist Scott Petito, lead guitarist Shulman, and Mindy Jostyn (accordion, violin, harmonica, backing vocals), and drummer Sam Zucchini illuminates and burnishes Kate's own deft guitarwork and beautifully expressive voice on this understated but memorable embodiment of the contemporary folk/singer-songwriter genre at its finest.

About Kate McDonnell Kate McDonnell's introduction to folk music was conventional, if precocious - as a four-year-old, she heard a Joan Baez album in her mother's collection. Her reaction was somewhat less conventional: she picked up her mom's guitar, taller than she was, and started to teach herself how to play the instrument, strung for a righthanded player, lefthanded - "upside down and backwards," using her stronger right hand for chording and ignoring the customary positioning of the guitar strings. Armed with her unusual guitar style and crystalline soprano voice, Kate teamed with her twin sister to perform as "Katie and Anne McDonnell" around their Baltimore hometown during their high school and college years. After a four-year sabbatical from performance in the mid-'80s, during which time she moved to New Haven, CT, and worked at editing and AIDS social service jobs, Kate returned to music by partnering with guitarist Freddie Tane, at one time a member of Bill Haley's Comets. McDonnell-Tane cut two self-released albums in their 3-1/2-year career and opened shows for touring stars such as Bob Dylan, Willie Nelson, Judy Collins, Arlo Guthrie, Leo Kottke, and Kathy Mattea. Kate also found time to join an all-female trio, Colossal Olive, which gigged in the New Haven area. In 1989, Kate started writing her own songs and, not coincidentally, began racking up serious critical recognition in the early '90s, when she was named a New Folk Finalist at the wellknown Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas and a finalist at the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival Showcase in New York State. In 1992, she released her self-produced debut album, "Broken Bones," on her own Dog-Eared Discs label (reissued by Waterbug in 1994) and was voted the #1 singer-songwriter in New Haven in the New Haven Advocate's poll. The CD was praised in

prestigious folk periodicals - Sing Out! called her a "strong vocalist and guitarist [with an] outstanding ability to write excellent first-person songs," and Dirty Linen described "Broken Bones" as "a striking showcase for her skills as a songwriter and performer" and called Kate's voice "flexible, adventurous and moving" and her songs alternately "playful . . . and profoundly moving." More gigging, acclaim, and recordings were to follow. Kate's first of seven European tours to date came in 1998, coinciding with the release of her second album, the appropriately titled "Next," on Waterbug. Folk radio airplay and fellow musicians helped spread her name: Jonathan Edwards called her "one of the premier female solo acoustic acts around," and Bill Staines dubbed her "one of the finest writers and performers I've heard in a long time." In 1999, Kate appeared on the internationally syndicated "World Caf" radio show and performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Another career highpoint followed in 2001 with the release of "Don't Get Me Started," her third CD on Waterbug, when Kate performed at the folk world's premier event, the legendary Newport Folk Festival. The Village Voice predicted in its review of the CD that "you get the feeling you may see others covering her tunes in the future, as she is a gifted writer..." The Swiss label Brambus Records picked up "Don't Get Me Started" for overseas release and it was soon on the top five list for U.S. and international folk airplay. Following her first-place win at the 2001 Mountain Stage NewSong Festival Competition, subsequent Mountain Stage radio performance, and other honors detailed earlier, Kate (now based in New York State) has continued her upward trajectory into the top echelon of the modern folk scene by signing with Appleseed Recordings and recording "Where the Mangoes Are" for February 2005 release.

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