

Mp3 Cletus Kennelly - Thread



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Modern urban folk with elements of melodic pop and modern rock on 12-string guitar, phonetic phrasing and word-play to accompany a rhythmic and percussive style of guitar playing, while creating vivid character portraits. 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, POP: Folky Pop Details: Washington, DC-based Cletus Kennelly is a five-time Wammie winner (Washington Area Music Association awards) in the categories of "BEST NEW ARTIST", "SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR", "BEST CONTEMPORARY FOLK VOCALIST" (twice), and BEST CONTEMPORARY FOLK DUO/GROUP (for "Cletus Kennelly Lori Kelley"). His eclectic music incorporates contemporary urban folk with elements of melodic pop and alternative rock. He accompanies his clear, passionate vocals with both the power and the delicacy of his 12-string guitar. His songs create vivid character portraits as they explore the gamut of human emotions, while using phonetic phrasing and word-play to accompany his rhythmic and percussive style of guitar playing. His work has earned him numerous songwriting awards, as well as Washington Area Music Award (Wammie) nominations. Aside from winning the five Wammie Awards, Cletus was also nominated for Wammies in the categories of "BEST DEBUT RECORDING" ("Thread"), "BEST CONTEMPORARY FOLK RECORDING" ("Thread"), "BEST CONTEMPORARY FOLK INSTRUMENTALIST", "SONG OF THE YEAR" (for the song "Looking Up") and Best CD Design ("Thread"). In the songs, we hear observations about life and humanity, some social commentary, and most of all we meet real people-- some actual, some fictional, but all real. "Some of the best feedback I've received", says Cletus, "has been when someone has said, 'I feel like that song was about me', or about someone else in their lives." "But", Cletus continues, "poignant lyrics with a forgettable melody or groove often don't get heard, because people haven't been drawn into the song. "And, for me, it's boring to perform a song like that. I think a songwriter needs to draw people into a song with the music, to invite them to listen to the lyrics.

Once they're in, you can tell your story." "Songs are never background sound to me. "When I have music on, I listen to it. I can't help it. I love being engaged by music, I always have. So when I write, I try to write songs that engage me. "Many songs I have written remain unfinished or unperformed simply because they don't engage me enough. "I love powerful lyrics, but I'm also engaged by the sounds of words. I can be pulled into a song well before I know what the lyrics are saying. I'm drawn in by the phonetics, or by the chords, the groove, the rhythm, the instrumentation, the passion of the vocals. There's a lot going on in a song."

AWARDS AND HONORS Cletus' songs are highly crafted, alert and contemplative. Aside from receiving five Wammie Awards and 15 nominations, he has also received 30 songwriting awards, including 2nd Place Awards in the 2001, 1999, and 1997 Mid-Atlantic Song Contests, 3rd Place Awards in the 2002, 2000, and 1998 Mid-Atlantic Song Contests, and a 4th Place Award in the 1995 Louisville Area Songwriter Competition. The range of categories in which he has received awards (Folk, Pop, Modern/Alternative, Adult Contemporary, and Rock) displays the stylistic breadth of his music. Perhaps his greatest honor was being selected to perform at Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center Millennium Stage (Labor Day, 1999).

RECORDINGS After success as a songwriter, Cletus began working with guitar legend Pete Kennedy, releasing a self-titled seven-song recording . After that, he followed up with his debut CD "Thread", which along with Pete Kennedy, was produced by Washington Area Producer of the Year Marco Delmar (Lisa Moscatiello, emmit swimming). The CD features some of the D.C. area's finest musicians and songwriters, including Pete and Maura Kennedy, Lea, Morgan Rowe, Richard 'Dahl, Audrey Morris, Ray Ruskin, and drummer Tamir Eid (formerly of the band emmit swimming). Five songs from the CD, nearly half of the recording, have received awards in the Mid-Atlantic Song Contest. The CD itself garnered three Wammie nominations (see above). After the 9-11 tragedy, Cletus wrote the song "Looking Up", which was nominated for a Wammie Award for "SONG OF THE YEAR", and was released on a two-song 9/11 Fund benefit CD.

REVIEWS Chris Slattery of the Gazette Newspapers writes, "Cletus Kennelly has a way with words. [He] takes only the finest words -- the most honest and expressive. "He painstakingly crafts them into finely wrought phrases, and coaxes them into verse." " [Songwriting] is a gossamer art, especially in Kennelly's capable hands." "[He] is able to pan for nuggets of lyrical gold." "As simple and as complicated as life itself, 'Thread' is that and much more." Cliff Johns of the Old Town Crier describes Cletus as "a powerful artist", and the CD as "genre-crossing music of great power". "[Thread] is a strong, emotionally engaging record!" "Thread will wake up the listener; it is truly worthy of your

attention." "His player collaborators add to Kennelly's rich talent and accomplishments to make a truly rich, memorable CD for all of us to enjoy and be inspired by." Says Eric Brace of the Washington Post, "Cletus Kennelly wields a mean 12-string acoustic and writes a moving tune...the earnest and true kind." Producer Marco Delmar states, "I think this CD, for Cletus, was an adventure in how he wishes to express himself. In the studio, the sky's the limit -- and he had a broad palette to paint with." "It was fascinating to watch this develop. Now we'll see how high he can fly." Ray Ruskin, proprietor of the Kensington Coffee House Concert Series, had this to say about Cletus and the musicians who worked on the recording of "Thread": "What makes Cletus great is Cletus. He has a way of connecting to the audience directly, and the rich quality of his voice is so effective, he doesn't need a band behind him. That he has such a good one is a bonus." BACKGROUND Cletus can't remember a time when he wasn't moved by music. Neither can his parents. After becoming attached to his father's old Herb Albert and Al Hirt records, he began playing the trumpet in junior high. His real love, however, was a few years off: the acoustic 12-string guitar. After receiving a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Notre Dame, Cletus joined a volunteer service program which sent him to Arizona. There he worked at a small counseling agency with "at-risk" youths and their families, at a homeless shelter, and spent some time doing carpentry work. It was at this time that he began to focus on guitar playing and songwriting, and performed with various other musicians at clubs, coffeehouses, bars, shelters, and benefits concerts. After eight years in Phoenix, Cletus returned to his hometown of D.C. and has further dedicated himself to songwriting and pursuing a solo career. NAME-DROPPING SECTION Cletus' CD "Thread" was mastered by multiple Grammy-Award nominee Bill Wolf, and features the following Wammie (Washington Area Music Award)-winners: Pete Kennedy (Nanci Griffith, Mary Chapin Carpenter, The Kennedys), Maura Kennedy (Nanci Griffith, The Kennedys), Tamir Eid (emmit swimming), Marco Delmar (Lisa Moscatiello, emmit swimming) Arthur Loves Plastic, and Wammie nominee Lea. Cletus Kennelly is a member of the Washington Area Music Association, the Songwriters Association of Washington, ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers), and the OK Caf Songwriters Cooperative.

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