

Larkin, Kitchen put out new CDs

Patty Larkin's 10th CD pushes the envelope once again, reverberating with pop, Celtic and Middle Eastern influences, with literate, sweetly crafted lyrical soundscapes.

On "Red = Luck" (Vanguard, www.pattylarkin.com), the Wellfleet-based multi-instrumentalist examines life around her, from the migration of cranes, to a search for innocence or an examination of the way people act in their quest for love.

Larkin, who produced this CD with Ben Wittman and Bette Warner, shows she has lost none of the verve that has set her apart from other performers, as this CD's lyrics seek meaning from our complicated lives. Musically it calls on the talents of more than 15 other performers, from Jonatha Brooke to Duke Levine and Richard Gates.

"Too Bad," with its jangly electric guitars (Larkin and Mark Shulman) and harmonies from Willy Porter looks at lost love. Songs like "24/7/365" with its spacey reverb and whispering vocals delves into the fragile balance of full-time friendships, with pounding drums (Wittman), spicy slide guitar (Jeff Lang) and other-worldly cello (Gideon Freudmann).

The Iowa-born, Wisconsin-raised Larkin is no stranger to social issues, and in the past has written about an environmental disaster in Holbrook in her song "Metal Drums." On this CD, she tackles the injustice of the



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Patti Larkin will play a double set on Saturday in New Salem, in western Massachusetts.

working poor in "Birmingham," where "you're working for nothing / Making a living / Meanwhile the kingpins / Are making a killing."

Larkin performs a double set at the 1794 Meeting House in New Salem, for its Meetinghouse Musicfest at 5 p.m. Saturday. Call 978-544-5200 or visit www.1794meetinghouse.org. She also plays free Sept. 26 at Slater Memorial Park in Pawtucket, R.I. (www.pawtucketartsfestival.org.)

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Somerville-based Terry Kitchen sings about events, people and the human condition.

More than a half-dozen others contribute to Kitchen's lovely seventh solo CD, "That's How It Used to Be" (Urban Campfire Productions, www.terrykitchen.com), a

combination of folk, rock and just plain good listening.

Kitchen plays guitars, piano, bass, dobro, synthesizer and harmonica, with his acoustic guitar rising above it all in the contemplative "Plum Island Sand."

Kitchen, who has a soft tenor voice, sings of the plight of the Tibetan people. He chides the U.S. for its invasion of Iraq and lauds the anti-racist stand of a college football

team. In bossa nova style, he sings of a Boston lantern festival and later sings a richly blended a cappella version of the Beach Boys' "In My Room" – an extra track.

From Pennsylvania coal miners to the Wright Brothers, Kitchen's songs are lyrically intense and melodically beautiful. He remains one of New England's finest songwriters.

Kitchen will be performing at the Nameless Coffeehouse, 3 Church St., Cambridge, at 8 p.m. on Saturday. For information, call 617-864-1630 or visit www.namelesscoffeehouse.org.

He'll also be at the Joe Davies Folk Festival in Middleboro at 1 p.m. Sept. 19. For more information, visit www.soulehomestead.org/joe.htm.

— **STEPHEN A. IDE**

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