

Kris Delmhorst - Bio

Kris Delmhorst was raised in a musical family, in Brooklyn, N.Y., and the cello became the youngster's chosen instrument from an early age. Convinced that the constraints of the classical music world were not for her, after gaining a studio art degree at College, Kris abandoned her thoughts of becoming a professional musician. And that would have been pretty much it, had she not sprained her ankle, one winter, partway through the closing decade of last century. Finding a guitar and a fiddle in the attic of the Maine log cabin she was visiting, she began practising on the instruments. Along the way Delmhorst also hitchhiked round Ireland taking instruction on fiddle playing from old-timers, and worked on a seagoing schooner.

A move to Boston and her discovery of the burgeoning acoustic music scene, found Kris begin playing at open mics. A self-released tape titled **"Swim for It"** followed, and five of the songs from that recording appeared on her, eleven song, debut CD **"Appetite"** which was released in September 1998. Produced by Alan Williams (who has worked with Dar Williams, Patty Larkin and Cry Cry Cry), it featured guest performances by Jennifer Kimball, Catie Curtis, bassist Mike Rivard (Paula Cole) and drummer Billy Conway (Morphine). Delmhorst also became an in demand session player for other local performers, when they cut their own albums. Never intended as a serious musical project, Sean Staples, Ry Cavanaugh and Kris, The Vinal Avenue String Band, began playing bluegrass and old-timey music together just for fun. Their weekly gig at an Irish pub, eventually led to the recording and release of **"Live at Tir na nOg"** [1999], a collection that featured songs by Gillian Welch, Lester Flatt, Bill Monroe and Son Volt.

Named Album of the Year 1999 by Billboard Magazine, Delmhorst was an associate producer of the **"Respond"** songwriter compilation, the profits of which support survivors of domestic abuse in the Boston area. Kris contributed her song "Weatherman" to the 2CD recording. The following year Kris issued a seven track, *live* recording titled **"Oddlot."** In addition, in November that year, for one night only, she joined the cast of Faith Soloway's spoof opera **"Miss Folk America."** Kris played "Miss Somerville - Davis Square." The cast also included Catie Curtis, Mary Gauthier, Jennifer Kimball, Faith Soloway, Meghan Toohey and Merle Perkins. A "Miss Folk America" video and CD are available through Soloway's web site. Delmhorst won first place in the 2001 Telluride Bluegrass Festival Troubadour Competition, and rounded the year off with the release of, what is really, her sophomore CD **"Five Stories."** Co-produced with Billy Conway, and recorded at his Hi-n-Dry Studio in Cambridge, it was released by Catalyst/Signature Sounds. The collection featured twelve songs, eleven of which were Delmhorst originals. Kris has toured the States and parts of Europe with artists such as Dar Williams, Chris Smither, Catie Curtis and Mary Gauthier. Since becoming a professional musician, six Boston Music Award nominations have come her way.

In early 2003, Delmhorst performed throughout the UK with Peter Mulvey and Jeffrey Foucault and the package was titled, The Chautauqua Tour. In the process the threesome became close friends. The trio reconvened for three, 11 hour long recording sessions in mid-August at Mark Olson's house in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. Foucault is also a Fort Atkinson resident. Gathered around a single microphone, they performed some four-dozen songs, mainly old country numbers and standards. The trio, tentatively called Redbird, toured the UK again in early 2004, having self-released the **"Redbird"** album in November 2003. Concurrent with the Redbird sessions, Delmhorst's fifth solo recording **"Songs For A Hurricane"** was released by Signature Sounds. The **"Redbird"** album was issued by Signature Sounds during early 2005 and that summer the trio toured the U.S.A. appearing at a number of major summer festivals. Kris Delmhorst and Jeffrey Foucault were married during 2004.

In early June 2006 Delmhorst released the twelve-track collection **"Strange Conversation,"** on which she penned the music to poems by Lord Byron and Edna St. Vincent Millay. Elsewhere on the collection were songs where Kris has adapted the words of poets Browning, Whitman, Eliot, Masfield and more. Released in early 2008 **"Shotgun Singer"** saw Delmhorst return with a conventional collection of original songs. Produced by Sam Kassirer, keyboard player in Josh Ritter's band, the recording sessions took place at his Great North Sound Society Studio in Parsonsfield, Maine.

Discography

with The Vinal Avenue String Band : **"Live at Tir na nOg"** [1999] :

with Redbird : **"Redbird"** [2003] :

Solo : **"Swim For It"** cassette only [199?] ; **"Appetite"** [1998] ; **"Oddlot"** mini album [2000] ; **"Five Stories"** [2001] ; **"Songs For A Hurricane"** [2003] ; **"Strange Conversation"** [2006] ; **"Shotgun Singer"** [2008] :

Arthur Wood

Kerrville Kronikles 10/01& 08/03, 11/03, 03/06 & 03/08

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