



photo taken by lara 05

Halcyon Records brings you its debut release **Up in the Air**; the quietly engaging new-folkish offering from Sydney singer songwriter Lara Stephen.

Lara's sophomore eleven track album visits new pop territories for the folk artist, with producer, engineer and musician - ARIA awarded *Richard Pleasance (Boom Crash Opera, Suzanne Vega, Augie March, Paul Kelly)* at the reigns, *Up in the Air* is at once old-worldly, and all-together fresh, taking you on a curious and gentle genre-bending journey.

Recorded over three weeks during winter 2005 in Daylesford, Victoria, the new recording is an intimate, poetic and dark foray into Lara's developing folk vision with a no-fuss pop sensibility.

From opening track *Something New, Something Old*, echos of the romanticism of 60's folk star Joan Baez meld with spooky new synth and electronic sounds and a precise poetic sense of lyric; the tone is set. *Hello*, the first single hints more to Lara's pop leanings, while showcasing the repeated lyrical motif of isolation and finding beauty in small things.

With a definite dark undertone, this album is not without fun and a sense of adventure. Songs such as *One Day* giving the subject matter of dying an almost celebratory feel, featuring the trumpet of Russell Smith (from Rene Gayer band) hint to a sense of re-invention while tracks such as *The Lucky One* take you into a smoky 1940's jazz bar.

"I would love to write music like Mike Leigh makes movies (*Secrets and Lies / The Crying Game*), they are kind of a gentle (no soap box) declaration of what we mostly see as averageness, you get this thrill from seeing something from a different angle and suddenly its beautiful" - Lara

Lara penned the eleven songs for this, her second album, over 2004 and 05 after a move from her home town in WA to Bondi

Beach, NSW. She has been writing for over seven years, but is newcomer to the songwriter scene, having only taken to the stage some six years ago. She has released one album *Deep Dead Blue* (2002) produced by David Hyams. This album was described by *The West Australian* as "Sometimes dark, often serious and richly poetic," and by *X-Press Magazine* editor Polly Cufous as "10 intimate, beautifully constructed takes on the hardships of the heart".

Prior to this Lara conceived, performed on and put together *The Living Room Sessions*, produced by Mathew De La Hunty (Tall Tales True), a live compilation of WA acoustic artists, showcasing the fountain of homegrown WA songwriting talent at the time.

Over the years she has performed at the Perth International Arts, Fairbridge, Surry Hills, Wintermoon, St Albans, Peats Ridge, Howl and Nannup Festivals and has been nominated for the 2002 Kiss My Wami Most Popular Local Original Folk Act. She has also made television appearances, taken out a placing in the National Songwriting Competition, written music for theatre including the Perth season of *Vagina Monologues* and Artrage play *What Happened Was*. Lara has shared the stage and supported acts such as Vika and Linda Bull, Jon English, Ember Swift, Zigzag, Things of Stone and Wood, Mick Hart, Coda, Fruit, Jodi Martin played at venues from the Rosemount in Perth, Vanguard and Basement in Sydney to the Troubadour and Government Hindmarsh in Brissy and Adelaide and has toured across Australia.

Lara recently toured overseas and took in close to 20 dates in England including the *Alnwick International Music Festival*. She will launch her new album in 2006 as the first release from her new independent label Halcyon Records.

More information telephone 0402 409 076
Visit larastephen.com or halcyonrecords.com.au