

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Jazz artist returns to Carlson's

■ *Quintet's music mixes structure and improvisation*

BY ALYSSA BURNHAM

TIMES REPORTER

Lorna MacLachlan's job as a music teacher at Western Canada high school in Calgary demands a lot of time and attention, but when the final bell rings and summer vacation begins, it's all about honing and showcasing her own skills.

On Saturday, the singer/songwriter will perform with her quintet at Carlson's on MacLeod.

Those who saw her at the bar's Jazz Night in February know her music is 100 per cent original and well worth a listen.

"I think of it as being in the jazzier vein," MacLachlan said of the quintet's soothing sound. "But I think it also hits a bit of a folk market."

MacLachlan writes all of her own music and arranges each piece played by the quintet, which consists of MacLachlan on vocals and piano, Rich Harding on saxophone, Robin Tufts on drums, Keith Smith on guitar and the most recent addition, Simon Fisk, on bass.

The lyrics and melodies come simply from day-to-day life, personal relationships and world issues, MacLachlan said, noting the skill comes to her quite naturally.

"I'm a singer/songwriter in a natural way, but I think the idea of being able to develop that so that I can write instrumental works that are thought-provoking and well composed," she said. "Teaching is a pretty demanding job, so I can get frustrated in that I don't get to spend as much time writing as I'd

like to.

"Writing, singing and playing the piano — they all take a certain amount of work, so if I go long periods of time where I can only focus on one thing it tends to be writing. So, my summer holidays are dedicated to getting my skills back up."

Later this summer, MacLachlan will head to the University of Toronto to study with Juno-award winning composer David Braid.

MacLachlan's background is in classical music. She holds a graduate degree in musical composition and theory. Though she's strayed from the classical genre, its influence in her gentle music is evident.

"When I graduated, I had a huge interest in how to use improvisation in something that is pretty structured," she said. "In my music, there's quite a bit of structure, but there's a lot of improvisation because it provides these spots where there's all kinds of freedom within that structure."

The resulting sound can be heard on MacLachlan's newest CD *Telegraphy*, released in October 2008.

The disc contains a mix of instrumental and vocal compositions, including "Water Music," a piece commissioned by the architect of the new City of Calgary Water Services building.

"I know the architect. He has come out to my shows before and has always supported my music," MacLachlan explained. "He used to commission a piece of visual art to give to somebody he was building a building for, and this time he decided that instead of a visual piece of art, he wanted an auditory/oral piece of art."

"Water Music" and a wide selection of other MacLachlan originals can be heard when the Lorna MacLachlan Quintet takes the stage at Carlson's on MacLeod tonight at 9 p.m. For tickets and information call 403-601-8774.

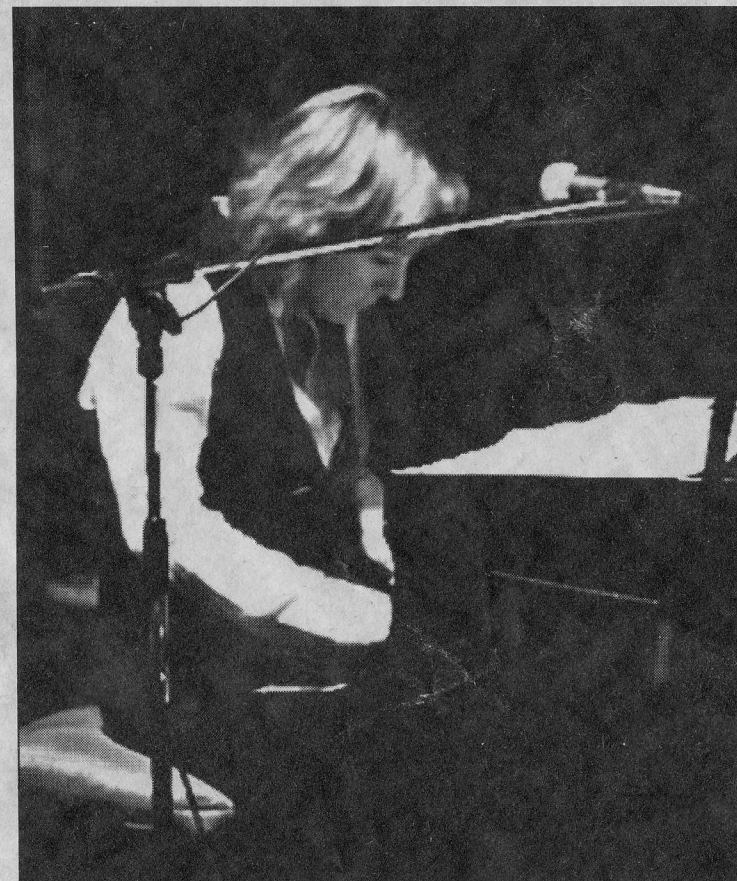


Photo submitted

The Lorna MacLachlan Quintet will play at Jazz Night at Carlson's on MacLeod in High River on Saturday.

**Chill Out!**

*Read*

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