

MONICA LEE

MUSICIAN - SINGER SONGWRITER



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Discography:

"Feeling Fences," 1998

"Seasons Greetings," 2004 (EP)

"Live at the Libra Room," 2008 (available on iTunes,
streaming on Shazam, Apple Music and Spotify)

"Farewell," release date April 17, 2020

Genre: Adult Contemporary - Folk, Jazz, Country

WORDS WORTH HEARING

"..the sound of life!"

- Nathan Peekay of 4thrcrdMag

"Monica Lee is a fine musician and an excellent vocalist. Catchy melodies are everywhere in her music. But where she truly shines is in her lyrics. I've heard a lot of songs over the years (as have all of you), and I find words worth hearing to be quite rare."

- Stephen Drake of The Odds

MUSIC



2019 - SINGLE- SMOKIN'

Digging into her Prairie Albertan roots Lee drives home the long known truth; some days are just not the right days to quit smoking! Backed by some of Vancouver's hardest hitters, this song is the perfect sing along.

An earlier mix of this track is featured in the award winning web series Inconceivable episode 2. Now with all the bells and whistles mixing and mastering done, this track is ready for your playlists!

2020 - FAREWELL

RELEASED JULY 24TH



BIO

Vancouver-based singer-songwriter Monica Lee uses her powerful voice, sense of humour and poetic chops to warm our hearts as well as to share her pain. That's never been more evident than on her latest album, Farewell, containing 10 tracks that chronicle a tumultuous past decade in her life.

From bad break-ups to finding a soul mate, starting a family while at the same time losing loved ones, the songs on Farewell span the breadth of human experience but ultimately celebrate our ability to survive. All of that is reflected in Farewell's seamless blend of country, blues and jazz, co-produced by Jesse Waldman at Vancouver's Redlight Sound.

The late John Mann of Spirit of the West once compared Monica Lee to Joni Mitchell and it's easy to agree after hearing her ability to balance confessional subject matter with vivid observations of everyday life. Farewell is a statement both beautiful and soul stirring, a testament to following one's muse, as well as Lee's undeniable, natural talent.

LONG BIO

Vancouver-based singer-songwriter Monica Lee uses her powerful voice, sense of humour and poetic chops to warm our hearts as well as to share her pain. That's never been more evident than on her latest album, *Farewell*, containing 10 tracks that chronicle a tumultuous past decade in her life.

From bad break-ups to finding a soul mate, starting a family while at the same time losing loved ones, the songs on *Farewell* span the breadth of human experience but ultimately celebrate our ability to survive. "These songs are all about relationships," Lee says. "The album was sequenced to start with a feeling of letting go, then move through the various relationship stages and finally end with letting go once again. I really wanted the album to tell a complete story, and with that I relied on having songs simply come out of me and capturing them. Most were written in one sitting, often the length of time it took to write down."

However, recording *Farewell* took a little longer. Lee actually began the process with co-producer Jesse Waldman at Vancouver's Redlight Sound back in 2011, but the arrival of her second child soon after forced the pair and the album's diverse supporting cast to finish it in fits and starts over the ensuing years. She has never forgotten her friend Frazey Ford telling her at the time not to worry, that she would get back to making music when she was ready.

Taking the extra time isn't something Lee regrets, as it led her to deeply explore her creative process. "We had 24 songs from which to choose for the final album, and a lot of those were all over the place stylistically," she says. "I had to make some big decisions, but what it came down to were the songs that told the best stories."

Among these Lee is most proud of are the classic country-tinged "Only One," inspired by a couple's joyous reunion she once witnessed at an airport; "Mindbender," a tribute to a friend who became a well-known burlesque dancer in Vancouver despite enduring years of constant pain; and "Dark Angel," written in the aftermath of a friendship being destroyed by a breach of trust. Lee explains, "Songwriting has always been, and continues to be, what has guided me throughout my development as an artist. I think real life is pretty interesting, no need to make stuff up. There is so much to write about by just looking around at life and catching the songs passing by in my mind."

The late John Mann of *Spirit of the West* once compared Monica Lee to Joni Mitchell and it's easy to agree with that assessment hearing how she is able to balance confessional subject matter with vivid observations of everyday life. It was sometime in the early 1990s that Lee decided to take music seriously, using money she'd been saving for a trip to Europe to buy a viola instead. Some 15 years later, she quit her job as a chef in the film industry and, by 2006 was making her living from music. For such an accomplished musician—she plays piano, guitar and ukulele along with viola—it came as a shock to discover, early in 2019, that she had significant hearing loss, probably since childhood.

"I had no idea I was missing so much," Lee says. "I hear the songs in my head, and for me, crafting melodies doesn't seem to be affected by hearing loss. What I don't hear, without my aids, are soft sounds, and high jingling sounds. My tendency has always been to add more—more instruments, more voices, big choruses and strings and horn parts. Part of the journey in making *Farewell* was bringing all these ideas to life." Ultimately, since she began using hearing aids, new vistas of sound have opened that Lee never imagined. It is another reason why she is so proud and eager to share *Farewell* with the world. When listening to the freshly mastered tracks for the first time, it was an entirely new experience: the sound of the brushes on the drum; the high end of the guitar. In many ways, it was overwhelming.

We're now able to share that experience in our own way as listeners discovering Monica Lee's art. *Farewell* is a statement both beautiful and powerful, a testament to following one's muse, as well as Lee's undeniable, natural talent.