

Lone Raven Review Excerpts

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"We are so glad you had fun and that the night was such a huge success. We also heard many compliments, and more than one person said you guys could have played on any stage in the world that night. My feet haven't touched the ground since the sound check. Thank you for bringing your friends and putting on such an incredible show."

-Mike Loughley/Shamrock Club

"Thank you! Thank you! Absolutely the best concert of the year!"

-Vita Marinello/Grandview Library

"Thanks a million for the great concert last night! Everyone loved the show, and we had comment after comment."

-Ron Emoff/OSU

Lone Raven with the father-daughter duo of Craig and Kara Markley is an extra-special delight. Once Upon a Winter Moon is a rich tapestry, from the elegant cover art to the drop-dead gorgeous content. This is an amazing CD on so many levels. The instrumentation is diverse, richly textured, and bursting with a joy. Four of the 12 pieces are breath-taking instrumentals. On the vocal numbers, Kara Markley's voice is remarkably warm, welcoming, confident, sweet, and brimming with passion. Finally, the Markleys are gifted songwriters--daddy Craig contributes three fine tracks and daughter Kara provides one more. What an incredible package!

Putting this album on your audio system is akin to opening a treasure chest; jewel after jewel tumbles out. The 12 tracks all shine, though most will be unfamiliar to the average listener (the extensive liner notes provide very helpful lyrics and comments). It is somewhat unfair to hang the Celtic label on the Markleys' sound; the music reaches further and deeper than that. For example, "Lay Down the Burden" has a definite country sentiment, ending with the most excellent a cappella harmonies. The opening "Once Upon a Winter Moon/Gaudette" has mesmerizing rhythms, exquisite vocals, and an exotic feel. The haunting "Evening Song" has tremendous lyrics and a melody that stayed with me long after the song had ended.

Best of all, however, is Craig Markley's absolutely wonderful "Christmas Day Is Here," sung by his extremely talented, now-grown-up "little girl." What a jubilant, well-written piece! Kara tells the story of being wide awake at 6 AM on Christmas Day--"So I get out of bed and give a big cheer, Christmas day is here!" You follow her through the Christmas morning experience; in the end, she celebrates "Christmas day is here, Christmas day all year." Kara's voice is innocent and exuberant. I replayed the song five times the first time I heard it and will remember it for many Christmases to come.

Once Upon a Winter Moon put a huge smile on my face from start to finish. So sweet! Thank you, father and daughter, for an exquisite holiday package that will have Celtic/folk aficionados everywhere giving a "big cheer"!

-Carol Swanson/christmasreviews.com

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“.....the young violinist/singer, Kara, was kind of like a Celtic Alison Kraus. I can't think of when we've gotten a better audience response. Many positive comments and applause.”

-Borders Books and Music Cafe

“I can't tell you how much I enjoyed your performance. The crowds here at the library enjoyed you as well, and we had comment after comment.”

-Richland County Library

“This CD knocked me on the floor. I'm still there. Buy it. I have not stopped listening to this drop-dead gorgeous CD. It's great listening, honest, and devoid of flashiness and gimmicks. Just great songs, lovingly and skillfully played. This recording has heart. I could go on. I love this CD and I highly, highly recommend it.”

-Chiff and Fipple

“Really, really enjoyed seeing and hearing you today. You had the honor of having a large crowd and then keeping them for the entire afternoon. That is indeed a rare occurrence. Some of our HOO fans who were there were quite impressed with the event.”

-Highlands of Ohio

“His self-penned tunes including the title track and The Breeze on Lake Ainslee are both evocative and musically sensual. Boba's Bounty, a set of Breton tunes, emerges with an exotic almost Eastern aura, and songs like Mother Beware and Our Father's Garden display a sensitivity of touch and thoughtful sentiments expressed with a quiet eloquence. Though predominantly music for quieter moments The Lone Raven is certainly not somnambulant- it is highly articulate and expertly crafted.”

-Folk Roots

“Every attendee with whom I talked thought all of you were fantastic, and a musician member of our extended family repeatedly commented about how superb Kara was on the violin (We think her voice is excellent as well).”

-Washington Courthouse

“The music is beautiful and the CD sounds great. I enjoy everything on the recording and love the pipes, whistles, all of the percussion instruments, not to mention Kara's gorgeous voice and fiddle. I am a huge fan of traditional music forms; the CD made my day yesterday and I want to share your music with a few of my friends.”

-TransAmerica Audio Group

“Your performance was fantastic. You all work together so well, and bring forth such musical quality and harmony. Kara's voice was a pillar of strength.”

-Jeff Mavis