

## **Karine Polwart: This Earthly Spell** **(Hegri CD04, March 10<sup>th</sup> 2008)**

The bittersweet, cascading harmonies of “The Good Years” sets the tone for Karine Polwart’s new album **This Earthly Spell** (Hegri04). And it’s been a good year indeed for The Scottish Borders based singer, who gave birth to her first child in 2007, and still managed to record enough material for not one but two new albums on her own label imprint Hegri Music.

Following the fireside intimacy of Scottish traditional collection **Fairest Floo’er** (Hegri03, Dec 2007), **This Earthly Spell** reinforces Polwart’s reputation as a humane and perceptive songwriter who draws on indie and roots influences as much as folk traditions.

The chiming opening track, a gorgeous vocal setting of a lyric by eminent Scots poet Edwin Morgan, gives way to the steely, swampy “Sorry”, whilst the delightful jazz inflected whimsy of “The News” contrasts the anti-nuclear political bite of “Better Things” and the incisive “Painted It White”.

Unsurprisingly, for a new mum, three songs deal with motherhood. The poignant understatement of “Firethief”, which Polwart wrote originally for HIV/AIDS documentary “The Enemy That Lives Within”, one of BBC Radio 2’s Radio Ballads, unravels a mother’s loss; whilst she wrote the tender and delicate “Rivers Run” for her own son.

But it’s the eerie and atmospheric parable “Tongue That Cannot Lie” that, most of all, betrays Polwart’s background as a former philosophy teacher, and her ongoing fascination with moral ambivalence. Inspired by the supernatural legend surrounding thirteenth century Scottish Borders poet and prophet Thomas The Rhymer, it also distinguishes her as an ambitious and captivating storyteller.

Most of the album was recorded just a few miles away from her Borders home at the beautiful Heriot-Toun visual arts studio which she and her live band, with producer Calum Malcolm, transformed into a unique and intimate recording environment. But despite the rural influences, there’s nothing escapist or sentimental about this collection of songs.

It’s three years since Polwart scooped a trio of BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards, including “Best Album” for her debut **Faultlines** and “Best Original Song”, an accolade she won for a second time in 2007. In the meantime, she’s released two further solo albums, **Scribbled in Chalk** and **Fairest Floo’er**, and collaborated with the likes of Roddy Woomble and cult Glasgow indie outfit Future Pilot AKA. And she shows no sign of slowing down:

“More and more I feel like an album captures just a wee slice of time. I’m already working on new ideas and will be making new songs available through my website on a monthly basis this year for people who’re interested. I think it’s more and more important now for songwriters like me to offer something more than just a static piece of work.”

[www.karinepolwart.com](http://www.karinepolwart.com)

[www.myspace.com/karinepolwart](http://www.myspace.com/karinepolwart)

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**KARINE POLWART "THIS EARTHLY SPELL"  
TOUR DATES MARCH/APRIL 2008**

**MARCH**

- 6 KENDAL, Brewery Arts Centre  
122A Highgate LA9 4HE  
WEB: [www.breweryarts.co.uk](http://www.breweryarts.co.uk)  
TEL: 01539-725-133  
TICKETS: £12.50
- 8 MORECOMBE, The Platform  
Station Buildings, Central Promenade LA4 4DB  
WEB: [www.lancaster.gov.uk/platformanddome](http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/platformanddome)  
TEL: 01524-582-803  
TICKETS: £12.00
- 11 NORWICH, Arts Centre  
St Benedicts Street NR2 4PG  
WEB: [www.norwichartscentre.co.uk](http://www.norwichartscentre.co.uk)  
TEL: 01603-660-352  
TICKETS: £12.50 adv/£13.50 door
- 12 POCKLINGTON, Arts Centre  
Market Place YO42 2AR  
WEB: [www.pocklingtonartscentre.co.uk](http://www.pocklingtonartscentre.co.uk)  
TEL: 01759-301-547  
TICKETS: £14.00
- 13 BURNLEY, Mechanics  
Manchester Road BB11 1JA  
WEB: [www.burnleymechanics.co.uk](http://www.burnleymechanics.co.uk)  
TEL: 01282-664-400  
TICKETS: £13/12 adv & £15 door
- 14 PONTYPRIDD, Muni Arts Centre  
Gelliwasted Road CF37 2DP  
WEB: [www.rct-arts.co.uk](http://www.rct-arts.co.uk)  
TEL : 01443-485-934  
TICKETS: £14.50
- 15 COVENTRY, The Herbert Cafe  
Jordan Well CV1 5QP  
WEB: [www.theherbert.org](http://www.theherbert.org)  
TEL: 024 7683 2386  
TICKETS: £12.50

- 16 PETERSFIELD, The Studio @ TPS  
The Petersfield School, Cranford Road GU32 2LU  
WEB: [www.stiffpromotions.co.uk/tickets.htm](http://www.stiffpromotions.co.uk/tickets.htm)  
TEL: 08700 600 100  
TICKETS: £12.50
- 17 EXETER, The Phoenix  
Brandninch Place, Gandy Street EX4 3LS  
WEB: [www.exeterphoenix.org.uk](http://www.exeterphoenix.org.uk)  
TEL: 01392-667-080  
TICKETS: £13/11

#### APRIL

- 8 LONDON, Bloomsbury Theatre  
15 Gordon Street, WC1H 0AH  
WEB: [www.thebloomsbury.com](http://www.thebloomsbury.com)  
TEL: 0207-388-8822  
TICKETS: £16.50
- 9 SHEFFIELD, Montgomery Theatre  
Surrey Street, S1 2LG  
WEB: [www.ticketline.co.uk](http://www.ticketline.co.uk)  
TEL: 0114-272-0142  
TICKETS: £13.50
- 10 NEWCASTLE, Journal Tyne Theatre  
Westgate Road NE1 4AG  
WEB: [www.thejournaltynetheatre.co.uk](http://www.thejournaltynetheatre.co.uk)  
TEL: 0844-493-9999  
TICKETS: £16.00
- 11 PEEBLES, Eastgate Theatre  
Eastgate EH45 8AD  
WEB: [www.eastgatearts.com](http://www.eastgatearts.com)  
TEL: 01721-725-777  
TICKETS: £13.50
- 12 BANCHORY, Woodend Barn  
WEB: [www.woodendbarn.co.uk](http://www.woodendbarn.co.uk)  
TEL: 01330-825-431  
TICKETS: £13.50
- 13 EDINBURGH, Queens Hall  
South Clerk Street EH8 9JG  
WEB: [www.thequeenshall.net](http://www.thequeenshall.net)  
TEL: 0131-668-2019  
TICKETS: £13.50

- 16 DUNFERMLINE, Carnegie Hall  
East Port KY12 7JA  
WEB: [www.carnegiehall.co.uk](http://www.carnegiehall.co.uk)  
TEL: 01383-602-302  
TICKETS: £13.50
- 17 GLASGOW, The Fruitmarket  
Candleriggs G1 1NQ  
WEB: [www.glasgowconcerthalls.com](http://www.glasgowconcerthalls.com)  
TEL: 0141-353-8000  
TICKETS: £13.50
- 18 STIRLING, The Tolbooth  
Jail Wynd FK8 1DE  
WEB: [www.stirling.gov.uk/tolbooth](http://www.stirling.gov.uk/tolbooth)  
TEL: 01786-274-000  
TICKETS: £13.50
- 19 INVERNESS, Eden Court 2  
Bishops Road IV3 5SA  
WEB: [www.eden-court.co.uk](http://www.eden-court.co.uk)  
TEL: 01463-234-234  
TICKETS: 313.50
- 24 WAVENDON, The Stables  
Stockwell Lane MK17 8LU  
WEB: [www.stables.org](http://www.stables.org)  
TEL: 01908-280-800  
TICKETS: £15.00
- 25 OXFORD, Carling Academy  
196 Cowley Road OX4 1IE  
WEB: [www.oxford-academy.co.uk](http://www.oxford-academy.co.uk)  
TEL: 0844-477-2000  
TICKETS: £12.50