

ANDREA SIMMS-KARP

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ABOUT

After spending nearly her entire life fighting with the frigid winters of the Ottawa Valley, songwriter Andrea Simms-Karp finally gave in to the tempting calm of hibernation. It was in this mindset that her new album was born: cocooned away from the storm with instruments for company. As she puts it: "Extreme weather makes a great muse."

Simms-Karp is an indie roots powerhouse, drawing on folk, pop and classical vibes to create a sound both fresh and familiar. The Ottawa native grew up taking classical voice lessons, singing in choirs, and getting steeped in folk music. She's been stunning local audiences with her clear voice and unique style in live shows for over a decade.

In 2004, the Ottawa Folk Festival recognized her talent by awarding her the Beth Ferguson Award for songwriting. With her debut album *Sleeper*, however, she garnered national attention.

Powering through album charts at campus and community radio stations, Simms-Karp then won the hearts of people across the country with an appearance on Stuart McLean's Vinyl Café in September 2009. On the show, she debuted her then-unreleased song *Whiteout*, which has since found a home on her new album, *Hibernation Nation*.

Hibernation Nation promises to deliver more of what people love, and then some. Soaring harmonies, a sweet banjo sound, and finely-tuned storytelling make this an album to anticipate. As the title intimates, it's an album for people holed up, watching fierce winter weather from inside. It's an album borne of wind and snow, of a deep appreciation for the stillness that comes with frigid weather.

"I am just after your heart," whispers coyly the Ottawan folkie on One Lane Highway off her consummate sophomore outing Hibernation Nation. Recalling a young Alison Krauss, unmannered and ethereal, Simms-Karp seduces through her ability to arrest without showing off nor creating superfluous melodramas. There's already tragedy galore in her prose – "How do I rescue you from the sea?" on Timoneer – and the musicianship showcased here, magnified by Dean Watson and the singer's economical production, boasts nice surprises: Magpie's galloping accordion, Northern's solemn banjo and violin. With Hibernation Nation's fine, fine assortment of intimate and swaying songs, Simms-Karp may just as well have accomplished her mission: stealing our hearts.

Guillaume Moffet, Ottawa XPress

PRESS PHOTOS



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Photograph by Sarai Strikefoot



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