



Composer and vocalist **Kat Reinhert**, a native of rural Wisconsin, has studied with Ken Schaphorst at Lawrence University, with vocalists Peter Eldridge and Jane Monheit at the Manhattan School of Music in New York City and earned her Masters in Music/Jazz Pedagogy at the University of Miami. She has released 2 previous CDs in 2001 and 2009 under the name of Kat Calvosa.  After returning to New York City several years ago, she formed a band with **Perry Smith** (guitar), **Sam Minaie** (bass) and **Ross Pederson**(drums); they are featured throughout her new recording "***Spark***" (self-released), an impressive collection of 13 songs (all original save for a splendid rearrangement of Rush's "***Limelight***") produced by **David Cook** (who appears throughout on piano and keyboards).

It's obvious from the opening notes of "***Walk Into The Rain***" that these musicians have put time in on this music.  The interaction of bass and guitar push the piece forward while Pederson dances beneath. Cook's electric piano adds quiet colors but Ms. Reinhert is the focal point. She makes sure you hear each word, articulating her story.  There are moments when the music has an airy feel, such as on the country-ish "***My Arms***" (1 of 3 tracks that feature **Julia Pederson** on electric bass) but, if you listen closely, the vocalist gives credit to her parents for teaching how to be an adult. The playful nature of "***Naked***" is not just about nudity but also shows the artist's strength to be her own person.  Cook take a brisk solo over the thick bass lines but it's Smith's crackling guitar that underpins the vocals.

A touch of Americana and psychedelia enters into the mix of "***Little Compartments***", a track that features the 2 bassists and a trio of background vocalists that include Ms. Reinhert's contemporaries, **Jo Lawry, Shayna Steele**and **Sarah Tolar**. The vocal trio returns on on "***Without A Fight***", a sweet ballad that opens with just voice and guitar.  Nudity enters this track as well but the piece is really about what one really wants out of life.  The angelic voices appear on the top of each chorus.  Ms. Lawry is the only "extra" voice on "***Paper Bag***", yet another reminder of how hard it is to get through certain day and how one needs to dig deep.  Cellist **Jody Redhage**makes the first of her 2 appearances on the track strictly in a supportive role beneath the voce on the chorus.  Her "deep" tones are more noticeable on "***Prison***", blending with the stark piano chords and synth moans.  The "country" feel of the piece comes from the fine slide guitar work of Smith.  He's the unsung hero of the program - Cook's keyboard work is quite good as well but the guitarist often is the one who creates or interprets the mood of the song and of the vocalist.  Minaie and Pederson is the rhythm section Smith worked with on his 2013 debut on BJU Records so the familiarity breeds freedom (knowing the musicians have each other's backs).

Over the course 13 tracks, **Kat Reinhert** reveals much about the lot of a contemporary artist as well as how one deals with relationships in hectic lives.  One of the strengths of this album is that one has to listen a number of times to hear the stories, the intelligent arrangements, the plethora of fine solos (bassist Minaie stands out as do the afore-mentioned Cook and Smith), and the fine vocals. Though the sparkler Ms. Reinhert holds out on the CD cover will burn out quickly, the music contained on "***Spark***" will last much longer.