

MALIA BURKHART

Malia plays a variety of instruments, including piano, drum, accordion, and guitar. In the Twin Cities, Malia is known as a puppeteer, visual artist, and dancer. Only recently has she been "coming out of the closet" as a musician and songwriter. In describing her songwriting process, she compares it to writing in a journal: "When world events or life circumstances weigh down on me, I sing. In our struggles toward justice, peace, and healing of the earth, it's easy to become depressed or overwhelmed. I believe music and art, have potential to transform this energy, and to speak directly to the heart." Malia expects to release her debut CD this year.

Recent projects include the creation of a giant lantern snake and a life-size whale for the Barebones Halloween Show at Hidden Falls Park, "Remembering Rachel Corrie" at the Center for Independent Artists' Adventure Festival, and "Creation Stories from Around the World", a puppet show for kids. Coming up next with In the Heart of the Beast Theater is "Reinvigorating the Common Well" -- sounding the alarm over water privatization and shortages, and calling us to protect our common water sources. Malia will also be part of the 2007 May Day Parade. See www.hobt.org for info. Join Malia's email list for updates about her puppet shows, performances, and CD releases at puppetmochi@yahoo.com.

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BRIAN JUST - Review by Rob Van Alstyne

A talented guitarist with a slightly throaty yet tender tenor, Just's gently plucked melodies make for a perfectly warming musical balm. What the five tracks on Just's new album *Every Tree and Every Stone* lack in tempo is more than made up for in melody. Starting things off with a mesmerizing acoustic guitar slide pattern before melting into a flurry of flutes and ambient keyboard squiggles, album opener "The Pieces We Put Together" is arguably one of the finest folk songs I've heard this year.

PIGS IN A PEN

Pigs In A Pen is a four piece string band hailing from Northfield and Minneapolis. Aaron Cross plays the fiddle, Carl Haskins pounds it out on the bass, Aaron Hagenson strums the guitar and belts out the vocals, and Jake Stroup plays the mandolin and sings. PIAP is starting to play out more in the Twin Cities area and up-to-date gigs can be found at www.myspace.com/pigsinapen.

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