

“...cool and quirky... clearly with her own sensitivity and sensuality.”  
~ *Penguin Magazine / Chris Martin*

“[S]he shows the kind of vocal agility that only the greatest possess.”  
~ *CtrlAltCountry.be / Benny Metten*

## KARYN ELLIS ~ BIOGRAPHY

Karyn Ellis is the name to watch for in the upcoming year in music. “**Eloquent and original**” (Kerry Doole, *Tandem Magazine*), the Toronto-based artist has emerged on the Canadian roots pop scene with her brand new full-length album *Even Though The Sky Was Falling* as her impressive calling card.

Released in November 2009, *Even Though The Sky Was Falling* is already garnering attention, appearing on **CHARTattack Staff Top 10 Album Lists For 2009**, campus charts in Ontario including **CIUT** Toronto’s top-30, and National **CBC** programs such as **Radio 2 Morning** and **Deep Roots**.

*Even Though The Sky Was Falling* features ten original songs rife with catchy melodies and smart lyrics that are at once deceptively whimsical and profoundly resonant. As Karyn describes it, her music “cracks open melancholy and infuses it with sweetness.”

Brought over as a babe-in-arms from the UK, Karyn Ellis grew up in Ontario in a household steeped in jazz and classical music. She studied two years of opera in University and through high school played trumpet in the marching band. She spent hours singing along to records by her favourite classic singer-songwriters such as Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, and she was also a devout fan of David Bowie and the Beatles. These influences gave her a solid, eclectic musical foundation and enriched her distinctive style.

As a performer, she exudes an energy and presence reminiscent of Sam Phillips, Regina Spektor, Sarah Slean, while her voice has drawn comparisons to Feist and Norah Jones. Comparisons aside, Karyn Ellis is immediately and recognizably her own artist. Voted “**Most Original New Voice**” in 2007 by Humber College songwriting faculty that included artists **Danny Michel**, **Dahmnait Doyle** and US songwriter, **Jules Shear**, Karyn Ellis was shortlisted in 2009 for the **Colleen Peterson Songwriting Award**, administered by the Ontario Council of Folk Festivals and Ontario Arts Council.

The arrangements on *Even Though The Sky Was Falling* offer many inventive delights for the ear including performances by a dozen and a half top Toronto musicians and singers who add acoustic and electric guitars, piano, vocal harmonies, finger snaps, hand claps, banjo, glockenspiel, a trio of strings as well as orchestral horns arranged by Creaking Tree String Quartet’s **Brian Kobayakawa**. The album stays cohesive under the creative watch of Karyn Ellis and award-winning co-producer **Don Kerr**, known for his work with **Ron Sexsmith**, **Peter Elkas** and the **Rheostatics**.

*ETSWF* is galvanizing not only the music community’s interest in Karyn, but also fan support for this determined indie artist. She raised over six thousand dollars in the first

few weeks of her “Fundraisin’ the Roof” campaign for the record. To do this, she invited people to “sponsor” the record in increments of fifty dollars and / or pre-order the CD to help cover costs of tracking the record. Over six months before its scheduled release, people from across North America and as far away as Germany responded to the request, expressing keen desire to make sure the record got made.

In November 2009, Karyn played a series CD release concerts to full houses across southern Ontario to release *Even Though The Sky Was Falling*, starting the groundswell for her new album; she follows up late spring 2010 with a second launch tour. Karyn has toured across Canada several times with her previous album *Hearts Fall*, which saw substantial **CBC** playlisting both nationally and regionally on programs such as **The Vinyl Café, Bandwidth, Here and Now**, and **Radio International**. Her roosty live off-the-floor album charted nationally on campus Top-50 and folk/roots/blues Top-20 charts and spent six months on campus radio charts across Canada including five weeks on CIUT Toronto top-30 topping at #3 and reaching #18 on CKUA radio Network (Alberta).

Her music has appeared on playlists as far as Australia and across Europe, receiving high praise in several of Europe's online music magazines as well as a Top-Ten DJ pick for album of the year from a prominent alt-country website 3voor12 webradio in the Netherlands. Here in Canada Karyn has shared stages with **Hawksley Workman, Jill Barber, Geoff Berner, Little Miss Higgins, Annabelle Chvostek, Justin Rutledge, Luke Doucet and Madison Violet**, to name a few, and she has lent her voice to a number of recording projects including those by **Treasa Levasseur, Rob Szabo, Evalyn Parry** and **Kerri Ough** of **The Good Lovelies**. Karyn has appeared at the New Waves Festival in conjunction with Luminato, Edmonton’s NextFest, Waynefest and The Peterborough Music Festival Main Stage.

Several of her songs have been placed in TV and films including “Robson Arms” (Omni Productions) aired on CTV, Bravo and the Comedy Network; UK filmmaker Gareth Griffith’s “Happy Fridays”, which appeared at Cannes Film Festival Short Film Corner in 2008; and Stand Alone’s “What is Indie” by filmmaker Dave Cool distributed by the National Film Board of Canada.

Fans of roots music have already embraced Karyn Ellis’ previous two recordings, and this new album will continue to please those listeners. Packed with strong, memorable songs such as “Bittergrasses”, “Be My Girl”, “Little Grey Sparrow” and the title track, “Even Though the Sky Was Falling (One Beautiful Day)”, *Even Though The Sky Was Falling* promises to crossover to a wide audience, engaging old and new fans alike. Expect big things from this album, and from this emerging artist as the new record circulates in 2010.

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# KARYN ELLIS ~ SELECT QUOTES



**“I can't get your record off repeat, but that's on purpose. It's astounding!” ~ Stephen Pitkin (Elliot Brood)**

**“Flawless songs, an entirely fantastic voice, musicians that put themselves completely at service of the songs, and on top of that, with Don Kerr a great producer on board – we cannot think of what else one could wish for. A fantastic disc! 4.5\*\*\*\*\*” ~ CtrlAltCountry.be / Benny Metten**

**“The sky might be falling, but Karyn's ten celestial tunes on “Even Though The Sky Was Falling”, her second full-length release, are sure to send this songstress's star on a rapid rise.” ~ Iearshot Magazine / Allison Brown**

**“Brilliant. Karyn Ellis's *Even Though the Sky Was Falling* grabbed my heartstrings immediately and hasn't let go... playful and refreshing... I highly recommend that everyone check out this unique and truly gifted Toronto songwriter and take a listen to this beautifully crafted album... Attending [Karyn's CD Release Party in Toronto] is a must!” ~ NeNW.ca / Rozalind MacPhail**

**“[Karyn Ellis is] sweet and ferocious all at once and her album reminds me intensely of Hawksley Workman's *Treeful of Starling*. It's a celebration of the mundane...the stuff we're all too hard-bitten and realistic to talk about in front of our friends. The stuff the Romantic poets wrote about. I'm in for the long run with Ellis.”~ ericmalette.wordpress.com / Eric Malette**

**“Smart and Beautiful. \*\*\*\*\* (5 stars) This album is a total surprise. Karyn brings her beautiful sound to life with playful lyrics that spark playful memories. I loved it from the first listen.” ~ iTunes Customer Review of “Even Though The Sky Was Falling”**

**[*Even Though The Sky Was Falling*] is ornate and beautiful and just wow.” ~ in an email from Tyler B., Ann Arbor, USA.**

**“Her songs are easy to listen to – some, loaded with lots of lyrics, others, very simple – but all were united by a certain melancholy nature. As one audience member opined, ‘Yeah, it's sad, but it's so beautiful.’ I will...definitely listen to her unique music again.” ~ Beat Magazine / Tamara Chapman**

KARYN ELLIS - SELECTED QUOTES - CONTINUED

**"[Karyn] Ellis... was a revelation.** Every bit as gifted as Leslie Feist, she offered poignant songs of the heart, whether the tender mercies of first love or the deep mercies of a woman dying with a heart full of love. **Beauty, indeed.**" ~ *The Record / Robert Reid*

**"...eloquent and original..."** ~ *Tandem Magazine / Kerry Doole*

**"...then you find someone like sexy acoustic goddess Karyn Ellis, and you think, "of course I want to love again!"** And some have fallen in love with her latest, *Hearts Fall*. To be in love, and even better, to have an album at number forty-nine. Karyn Ellis, helping us learn to love again." ~ *Earshot-online.com ~ Inside the Chart / Bryndis Ogmundson !Earshot Charts Editor*

**" [Karyn's] voice is lovely, the arrangements are simple & clever,** and there's an almost rustic quality to the record-likely from being recorded live off the floor-that makes it extra sweet." ~ *CBC Radio 1 / Amanda Putz BANDWIDTH re: Hearts Fall*

**"Her voice dances along the line between cool and quirky** without falling onto the wrong side. She comes across rather like Victoria Williams but **clearly with her own sensitivity and sensuality....[Hearts Fall]** is the sort of disc you are likely to buy several of to spread among friends." ~ *Penguin Magazine / Chris Martin*

**"If you haven't heard this woman sing, you are missing out... what a refreshing new voice!"** ~ *NewMusicCanada.com / CBC radio 3*

**"The acoustic instruments are playfully expressed** all the while serving the personal, colourful nature of her voice. **Her poetic sensibilities add depth, and together they make a beautiful, balanced whole.**" ~ *RealRootsCafe.com / Rein van den Berg*

**"4 out of 5... Hearts Fall is a first class album that grows more beautiful with every listen;** it hasn't stopped growing on me yet. A CD to cherish. **An enormous must-have, and without a doubt one of the best CDs in this genre.**" ~ *Rootstime.be / Frank Celis*

**"From the first notes - you'll be head over heels in love...[Karyn's] tunes are unbelievably charming because they are organic and simple - but layered with elements of the sweetest pop conventions ever** - conjuring up immediate reminders of what we love about musicians like Tanya Donnelly, Hope Sandoval, CocoRosie and Martha Wainwright. Except Karyn Ellis does it her own, clever, beautiful, introspective and quirky way. The songs are both **hilarious and lonely. Carefree and nostalgic.**" ~ *Upfront Magazine / Dan MacDonald*

**"Pert and amusing** singer-songwriting **(8 out of 10).** *[Hearts Fall]* is **sheer indie delight.** ... there's something very engaging about her sweet n sour soprano [She] shows a Norah Jones softness... **there's intelligence and poetry in the lyrics, not to mention gentle humour. This is not a happy record. But it is one where misery is beautiful, raw and crisp.**" ~ *americana-uk.com (UK) / Lynne Pettinger*

**"4 out of 5...** You simply have to delight in Karyn Ellis' fragile and sometimes oddly girlish voice. Her high tones and jazz-like melodies are reminiscent of Joni Mitchell, but minimal instrumentation and **unexpected musical turns in otherwise straightforward songs are just as connected to the contemporary sound of free-style folk.**" ~ *Kindamusik.net (Netherlands) / Maurice Dielmans re: Hearts Fall*

**Karyn "can envelop you in the warmth of that voice and break your heart at the same time."** ~ *Indie-Music.com (USA) / Jennifer Layton*