

## MARIE-LYNN HAMMOND – BIOGRAPHY

Marie-Lynn Hammond is acknowledged as one of Canada's premier songwriters. In the mid-90s, she had mostly withdrawn from the music scene when her music was discovered by a folk fan and sound engineer, Richard Hess. In 1999 he founded Vignettes Media to release Marie-Lynn's out-of-print albums. While Marie-Lynn still performs only rarely, she released a new CD, *Pegasus*, in February 2003, featuring some of her strongest work to date.

### thirty years in music

In 2001, Marie-Lynn celebrated her 30th year in music. Back in 1971, she and Bob Bossin founded the legendary Canadian folk group Stringband. Tirelessly criss-crossing Canada for 15 years, they also made international forays including Japan, Mexico, Great Britain, the former USSR, and the USA. Their 30th anniversary was marked by two Stringband reunion shows on CBC's *The Vinyl Café*, followed by appearances across the country in 2002–03.

### eclectic solo career

Along with her Stringband work, Marie-Lynn has enjoyed a parallel solo career that began in 1978 and includes appearances at every major folk festival in Canada. In the early 1980s her songs about her family grew into a play, *De Beaux Gestes & Beautiful Deeds*, which garnered critical acclaim and several productions, the most recent in the spring of 2004. She has written or co-written four more plays and a screenplay (all produced), and has hosted two national radio shows for the CBC.

### quintessentially canadian

Half English, three-eighths French, and one-eighth Aboriginal (Abenaki), Marie-Lynn embodies the amalgam that is Canada, and she writes and sounds like no one else. The range of her work, in both official languages, is astonishing: her art touches your heart, your mind, and your funny bone. From the anthem-like “La Tête anglaise, le coeur français” to “Omaha,” a poignant ballad about losing her sister, to the satirical wit of “Not Another Benefit,” she isn't afraid to be personal – or provocative. Her writing provides fascinating vignettes of Canadian life as seen through her sharp, yet compassionate, eyes.

### something special

Marie-Lynn Hammond currently lives in Toronto, where she also works as a writer and editor, but is plotting her escape so she can more easily enjoy her latest passion, a little black horse named Beau. Beau belongs to a rare breed called the Canadian, or *cheval canadien*, which developed from the horses sent to New France by King Louis XIV. Despite being named Canada's National Horse by an act of Parliament, the breed remains little known and under-appreciated. In fact, two lines from the song Marie-Lynn has written about the colourful history of this horse (recorded on *Pegasus*) could well apply to her and many of her peers in the Canadian folk and singer-songwriter community: “*Ain't that just the Canadian way it goes/To have something special and no one knows...*”



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