

Jess Klein

“Quite simply one of the most gifted performers this area has produced” – *The Boston Globe*

“A major talent” – *Billboard*

“*****Five Stars...moving and intense” – *MOJO*

“Jess Klein's *City Garden* has the best sound of any roots album I've heard this year...primal, raw, sassy, and sensual...This is an essential roots album” – *Roots Music UK*

“An intense, focused performer who early in her career has already amassed a compelling body of songs which she fully inhabits while she delivers them as if she is writing them on the spot.” – *The Berkshire Eagle*

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A native of snowy Rochester, NY, Jess Klein picked up the acoustic guitar and started writing songs while living as a student abroad in Kingston, Jamaica in her late teens. Her first songs reflected a bittersweet culture shock as well as the warmth and musical vibrancy of these new surroundings. While shopping for cassette tapes of dub poets Mutabaruka and Linton Kwesi Johnson, fate put her in touch with the MC of a weekly dub poetry and music session, who took an interest in her talent and encouraged her to audition for a guest slot. Upon hearing the first song Klein had written, the host, locally renowned author Lady Elean Thomas declared, “She have soul, mon.”

Klein returned to the states, moved to Boston, and began performing locally. After independently releasing her first two albums, winning the Telluride Troubador Songwriting Contest, and garnering several Boston Music Award nominations, Klein was spotted and signed to Rykodisc in 2000 by then-president George Howard.

Her first release for Ryko, *Draw Them Near*, [3.5 stars, *USA Today*], launched Klein on a worldwide tour where, among other highlights, her relaxed confidence and rootsy soulfulness wowed 70,000 attendees at the Fuji Rock Festival in Japan.

Klein returned to the U.S. and joined the songwriter collective Voices on the Verge, along with Erin McKeown, Rose Polenzani, and Beth Amsel. The foursome was featured on Good Morning America performing Klein's song 'Little White Dove', and brought crowds in small theaters across the U.S. to their feet nightly with their blend of harmonies and eclectic styles.

2004 saw Klein move to New York City to find some more grit. The result was 2005's *Strawberry Lover* [Ryko], produced by RCA recording artist Marc Copely. Working with Copely brought a rock n' roll edge to Klein's work, highlighting the influence on her writing of 70's songwriter albums like Bruce Springsteen's *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, Elvis Costello's *My Aim is True*, and Patti Smith's *Horses*, and incorporating those influences with her ongoing childhood love of Motown and soul music.

Strawberry Lover debuted as the Number 1 most added album at triple A radio a week before its release, was given four stars by *MOJO*, a plug from the nearly 80 million readership *Parade*, and within weeks of its release, the emotive and sensual title track was named one of the 'Top Ten Sexiest Songs of the Moment' by the *NY Daily News*, alongside Fifty Cent's 'Candy Shop' and Destiny's Child's 'Soldier'.

While touring for *Strawberry Lover*, Klein immersed herself in Chicago 60's era blues albums by Buddy Guy, Junior Wells, Howlin' Wolf and songwriter Willie Dixon, where she could hear examples of a pop/rock sensibility mixed with heartfelt and sensual performances. Also produced by Copely and recorded in New York, *City Garden* puts Klein's soulful, passionate voice up front, and with lyrics that alternate between searing and heartbreakingly vulnerable, and a gritty production style, conveys the kind of emotional intimacy that caused the *Boston Globe* to describe her as, 'Quite simply one of the most gifted performers this area has produced.'

City Garden was given ***** 5 Stars by *MOJO Magazine* and described by *Roots Music UK* as having "The best roots sound of any album I've heard this year."

Klein now makes her home in Austin, TX, where, between tours of the US and Europe, she is delving further into roots music and writing new material for her next album.