

You Kihl Me

By [Sam Prestianni](#)

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If confidence and creativity are the cornerstones of sexy, then violinist/vocalist Carla Kihlstedt is the sexiest woman in the avant-garde. In any of her regular gigs -- with Dada rockers Sleepytime Gorilla Museum, eclectic chamber group Tin Hat, or various free-improv combos with forward-jazz leaders like Satoko Fujii -- she conveys power with her world-class instrumental technique, compositional vision, and stage presence. No wonder SFJAZZ chose her newest group, **2 Foot Yard**, as the local headliner in its must-hear "Discovery Series." Kihlstedt's collaboration with Charming Hostess cellist/vocalist Marika Hughes and multi-instrumentalist Shahzad Ismaily distills the progressive essence of its frontwoman's kindred spirits (from Paganini to Coltrane to Bjork) into accessible pop songs. On *Borrowed Arms*, the trio's second recording, every tune is magic: the melodies crystalline, the harmonies supple and complex, the rhythms offbeat and groove-deep. The title track, a dreamy waltz, embraces the listener with angel wings, while "Crisis," a bent homage to self-empowerment, entrances with its epic arrangement. Then there's "Red-rag & Pink-flag," an alt-pop torch song of sorts, on which Kihlstedt teases with e.e. cumming's words: "Some like it in the twot." The lyrics, tone, phrasing, and melody are pure seduction. Kihlstedt dares you to resist. 2 Foot Yard celebrates its CD release at SFJAZZ's "Discovery Series: Eclectic Alchemy."

Iron & the Albatross opens.

Sat., March 8, 8 p.m., 2008