

# Volkskrant

**2 Foot Yard** - concert on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
Bimhuis - Amsterdam - The Netherlands

## **2 FOOT YARD GENTLY GRABS YOU BY THE THROAT**

So far, mixtures of jazz and pop mainly resulted in smooth soul and dance music. And there was the vigorous world of fusion, not a name to connect music with today because of its outdated flavor. But in the past few years we find more and more bands in which intelligent rock music and creative improvisation meet. Trio 2 Foot Yard with violinist and vocalist Carla Kihlstedt took it a step further on Thursday at the Bimhuis and thanks to the setting with cello and drums she also lightly touched the realm of classical music. Did that create pretentious, halfhearted fiddling? Absolutely not. Everything is to the point with 2 Foot Yard. The band performed a concert that had the intensity of an event by the rock group Radiohead.

The little, short haired Kihlstedt is a classically trained violinist but besides her obvious control of the instrument this is not something that dominates her style. She plays violin without any period aesthetic display. No theatrical vibrato but also no contemporary scratching. Kihlstedt plays efficiently with maximal expression without wanting to please. Next to that she has a fantastic voice that she uses simultaneously but independently from her instrument. She sings in a wordless thin, high voice, sometimes moaning, and sometimes rocking, spitting out the words with a little poison. An enormous palette that sounds as natural as her compositions. They are often miniatures, modest and performed in a highly personal way, leaving you in awe.

Together with cellist Marika Hughes and drummer Shahzad Ismaily (who was deliciously free rocking on bass guitar with Marc Ribot earlier this month) Kihlstedt created a special atmosphere at the Bimhuis in which enchanting and heavy moments went hand in hand with sober relativism. The accessible songs revealed an extra dimension by the fragile, sensitive interaction between the musicians. This subtle dynamic is an unusual quality in pop music. Where most bands would break free at the end of a climax, 2 Foot Yard would draw back and add a small nuance in the harmony of violin, cello and the tickling and beautiful part-song of Kihlstedt and Hughes that made the musical orgasm even more intense. The songs of 2 Foot Yard actually are "about" something, according to their politically involved comments on the side. They can bring this across without being pushy or heavy but by tenderly grabbing you by the throat. And that feels great.

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