

# Singer lessens her 'Carbon' footprint with new CD release

ERIN HATFIELD

[erinh@insidetoronto.com](mailto:erinh@insidetoronto.com)

When it came time for singer/songwriter Monique Barry to dedicate her latest CD 'Carbon', she did so in honour of the two people, she said, motivate her to be more responsible and kinder — her seven-year-old daughter Emma and five-year-old son Charlie.

It's a fitting inscription considering the social and environmental attention paid not only in the songs, but in the production of the disc. 'Carbon' is the third CD for Barry who is classically trained in both voice and piano.

The song Carbon, for which the album takes its name, is a social commentary of sorts, as are many of the songs on the album.

"It's about how we are living this wonderful lifestyle that we all have right now, but we are having to use carbon to fuel it," Barry said. "There are other themes on the album, there is a song about war...and there are a lot of elements of isolation on the album, because I feel that the more we become a computer society, we have a tendency to become isolated."

Barry, who lives in the area of Queen Street West and Ossington



MONIQUE BARRY

Avenue, said she is discussing the way society is living right now as opposed to just being green. The environmental element of the album is in the distribution.

"We are trying not to put any plastic product out there so we didn't do the cheap duplication of it," she said.

When Barry and her husband, a graphic designer by trade, started to look into the eco-friendly packaging some bands are coming out with these days they found it to be really expensive.

"It's beautiful, but a lot of us independents can't afford to do that," Barry said. "So we really researched a way of packing it as cheaply as we could, but also as environmentally as we could."

They had only 100 CD sleeves printed and scored. She is liter-

ally burning the discs and folding the sleeves herself. Beyond those 100 copies, Barry is really trying to encourage people to buy the album online.

"If you are going to listen to it on your computer or on your iPod then we want people to buy it online," Barry said.

"If you want a CD, which is totally cool, then you are going to get a handmade CD. Which is kind of nice in this day in age."

It took considerably longer to produce 'Carbon' this way, but in the end, Barry said she feels a lot better about it. Barry doesn't label herself an environmentalist but is motivated to be responsible.

"My whole life I have been a little freaked out that we don't grow our own food and we don't take care of our own waste," Barry said.

"It is kind of a weird thing to just put something on the curb when we don't really know where it goes."

The CD release party was held last week at the Cadillac Lounge, where Barry also hosts a songwriters' expo on the last Sunday of every month. She plays the Cameron House (408 Queen St. W.) this Saturday.

All dates and details about the album can be accessed through her website [www.moniquebarry.com](http://www.moniquebarry.com)