“SHADOWS” SINGLE BIO

Kate Bollinger’s songs tend to linger well beyond their run times, filling the negative space of ordinary days with charming melodies and smart phrasings. She writes them at home in Richmond, Virginia, letting her subconscious lead sessions on guitar, an open-ended exercise she likens to dreaming. From a chord progression appears a line, maybe a syllable will start to stick, enough to pursue, but she says sometimes they don’t even feel like hers, these words, more like shapes that form in the mind’s sky. While many are personal and deal with the emotions that surface with finding her place in the world, she’d prefer they be whatever you’d like them to be, to connect with listeners in their own way. Bollinger’s musical universe is relaxed, tender, and unassuming; within lives a timeless sensibility, a songwriter’s knack for noticing the little things and their counterpoints. Darkness and light, pain and pleasure, reality and escape.

Her project is collaborative; she shoots music videos with her friends and colors each of her folk-pop songs with her band. An agile group of players with backgrounds in jazz, they recorded her first EP, I Don’t Wanna Lose, as live takes in a single day, then slowed it down to build out her 2020 EP, A word becomes a sound. Bollinger sings fast at times; she jokes that can get her into trouble when it comes to playing live, “some of these songs are going to be a mouthful.” She’s always been drawn to singers in that free-flowing style and got into the habit of writing quickly while watching her longtime collaborator John Trainum work with rappers in the studio. Ah

Forced to finish her last EP in lockdown, Bollinger, Trainum, and bandmates excitedly returned to sessions in the spring of 2021 to explore a new batch of songs, the first of which to emerge is “Shadows,” written with Trainum and guitarist Chris Lewis. Warm and languid melodies mingle with pointed lyrics; there’s an air of mischief sweetened by a surreal, fish-eyed video directed by Bollinger’s childhood friend, Kia Wassenaar. “Maybe the last year made me want to hide a little,” says Bollinger, referring to the song’s abstract nature. Her verses and chorus bounce along stuttered percussion; augmented with swirling flourishes, the arrangement is as much ‘60s psychedelia as it is beat-infused contemporary pop. Then, with the flip of a switch there is a misty chord change in the final minute and we are sent softly tumbling down a lullaby daydream trapdoor. The outro broadcasts from somewhere softer, the afterglow of self-examination or perhaps the antidote to the introspective sting.