

Arts & Leisure



EVEKODIAK

Music for a labyrinth, and for the season

BY JANE EKLUND
Monadnock Ledger-Transcript Staff

Imagine music that takes the shape not of a maze, that tricky quagmire, but a labyrinth, a path that leads you inevitably toward a center, and then just as inevitably out. "Mazes lose you," Eve Kodiak writes in the liner notes to her new CD. "Labyrinths help you find your way."

Kodiak, a musician and kinesiologist from Temple, found her way to a new project when she improvised on the piano last New Year's Eve. She was on stage at the Peterborough Town House, where the famous Chartres labyrinth had been recreated on the floor of the meeting hall.

"I played holiday tunes and wove them together, and there was something very profound about it," she remembers.

The music, the labyrinth, the people walking contemplatively through it, the light of dusk filtering through the tall windows transformed the hall into a sacred space.

Kodiak returned the following day and played some more. And then, over the next 10 months, she put together 75 minutes of music arranged in the shape of a labyrinth. The result, a CD called "Meditations for a New Year's Day: Reflections on Christmas, Chanukah and the Solstice," has just been released. Kodiak will perform it Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at the Pine Hill Waldorf School's Auditorium in Wilton, where a labyrinth will be set up for people to walk through before the concert and at intermission, and Dec. 30 at 7:30 p.m. at the Peterborough Town House.

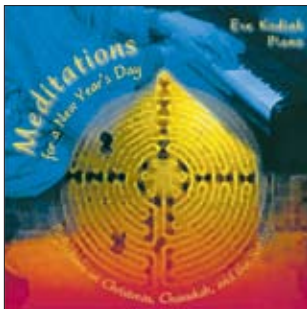
"Labyrinths transform you," Kodiak writes in her liner notes. "In the Middle Ages, those who could not afford the trip to the Holy Land could instead make a pilgrimage to a cathedral. Walking its labyrinth to the center, they spiritually entered the Holy City. The labyrinth is also the womb of the Great Mother, and to walk its intricate folds is to experience a birth."

What is the shape of a labyrinth? Walking one has three

parts: following the path in, settling in to the center and following the path out. Kodiak's musical labyrinth is also divided into three parts, which she calls "Spiraling In," "The Center" and "Spiraling Out."

When entering a labyrinth, the idea is to focus on a particular question or preoccupation. In the center, open yourself up. "I think of it as emptying out and letting the universe take over," Kodiak says. Walking out is a re-entering of the world with new information, which you may not have even processed yet.

"Spiraling In" has three sections. A medley of Christmas songs, including "Coventry Carol," "Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella"



la" and "We Three Kings of Orient Are," make up the first part. The second section is a medley of Chanukah songs — "Chanukah, Oh Chanukah," "S'vion, Sov Sov Soy," "Mi Y'Malel" and "Rock of Ages." The third section, titled "Navidava: The Migration," is a medley that, as Kodiak writes, "celebrates some of the myriad aspects of Latin culture as it migrated over different parts of the world."

"The Center" pays homage to various composers, classical, jazz and traditional. Kodiak performs riffs on music by David Darling, Charlie Parker, Claude Debussy, Bill Evans, Jacqueline Schwab and Jerry Holland, Bach and African slaves who played thumb piano.

"The Labyrinth form is a template for problem-solving," Kodiak writes. "As we begin to walk its spiral patterns, we hold a question in our hearts. When we reach the

Music for a labyrinth

► KODIAK..... (from page 9)

center, we open ourselves completely to that question. We trust the universe to answer it for us, in ways that we cannot ourselves imagine."

And so "The Center" asks a musical question, which is then pondered from six perspectives, mimicking the six-petaled rose at the center of the Chartres labyrinth (on which the Peterborough New Year's labyrinth is based).

Part 3, "Spiraling Out," balances

a more extroverted feeling of leaving the center with the internal qualities suggested by winter. The section is, really, about death, says Kodiak, who incorporates pieces of "In the Bleak Midwinter," "Old Lang Syne," "Deck the Halls," "I'll Fly Away" and more into three medleys.

"We start with birth and end with death," she says.

The music is lovely and haunting, both new and familiar — a reinvention of memory or, as in a labyrinth, a transformation of memory. It's just right for the season, with its mixture of Christmas, Chanukah and Solstice music, and its New Year's theme of death and rebirth.

Saturday's concert is a benefit for Pine Hill Waldorf School; admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children or \$25 for families. The Dec. 30 concert, by donation, benefits War Child U.S.A. and inaugurates the annual Labyrinth Walk on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

MEDITATIONS FOR A NEW YEAR'S DAY

www.evekodiak.com

To order *Meditations for a New Year's Day*, or for more information, contact:

Eve Kodiak
Sound Intelligence
P.O. Box 13
Temple, NH 03082
603.878.4726