**Kate Bush puts sound to the fall of the snowflake**

**Kate bush is one of the pop-world’s biggest cult-characters, perhaps even the biggest. She hasn’t toured for thirty-two years; she puts out a new record about every five years and between those, she lives a withdrawn life. DN got an exclusive interview.**

Kate Bush’s new album, her eleventh in total, is titled “50 words for snow” and has got the white snowflakes as the theme. Not the most obvious material for a pop-album, but the eccentric Bush seems to be completely guided by her musical instinct.

**And she is usually right.** No one at EMI, the record company that initially got the tip about Kate Bush’s talent from Pink Floyd’s David Gilmour, thought that “Wuthering heights”, the dark song on her debut-album inspired by Emily Brontës 19th century novel, was material for a single release. But Bush stood her ground and with that song, she became the first female British singer to top the singles-list with a self-written song.

She followed up the debut success with a tour in April and May 1979. Since then, she has rarely performed live on stage, the exception being some very special occasions. But she has kept on making music, albeit in a rather irregular pace. In the eighties, she had several album and single hits like “Running up that hill”, “Babooshka” and “Don’t give up”. But there was a twelve year gap between her 1993 album “The red shoes” and her last album “Aerial” in 2005.

**I have prepared myself** for an interview with what I thought would be a pretentious 53-year-old music legend of few words, but it’s an open and lively Kate Bush calling me from England. She starts by apologizing for being 15 minutes late.

* I dislike not being on time, she says and continues by asking me about the Swedish winter.

When I tell her, quite frankly, that the long winters the past couple of years have been a real pain, she is sympathetic.

* Wow, snow for 4-5 months? Good lord! It’s hard to imagine a long winter like that. I hope that doesn’t have a negative impact on what you think of my album, says Bush and laughs.

**Why did you choose to make an album about snow?**

* I guess it’s different for me here in England. Here, snow is almost exotic. But we have actually had a bit of winter here the last few years. Snow has such an impact on people in different ways. One of the things I like about snow is how it affects how things sound, not only the way they look.

**So the last years snowy winters in England has inspired you?**

* Yes, I suppose it has partly, but I have had thoughts about snow for quite some time.

Considering her sporadic album releases, 2011 is a unique year. It’s the year she releases two albums in the course of a few months. “Director’s cut” came last spring, which is a compilation of remade songs from her previous albums “The sensual world” and “The red shoes”.

**How come you are releasing two albums during such a short period?**

* Usually I’m so tired after having completed and promoted an album that I lose the focus I had in the studio. But with “Director’s cut”, I didn’t do very much promotion, so even though it was hard work making it, it was very nice to be able to continue in the studio almost instantly with “50 words for snow”. I was still in the same state from one album to another; I don’t think that has ever happened before. And “Director’s cut” was a lot harder to make than I thought, so to write new music after that felt like a freedom in a sense. I felt like I could do whatever I wanted.

**Why did you choose to remake your own songs?**

* It was like a private exercise. I rarely listen to my own music, but when we were remastering the old records I heard the songs again and some of my best songs are on those albums, and I thought it would be interesting to make new versions where I am in life right now, Kate Bush explains.
* But the main reason it think was to strip down the songs and let them speak more for themselves, and that process led me to the music and the mood on “50 words for snow”, she adds.

**The new album is partly** a journey back to the eighties Kate Bush with lyrics that paints up different worlds and where she even creates completely new words. The arrangements are sometimes stripped down to a minimum. The only musician she has used, besides herself as a singer and a pianist, is the phenomenal drummer Steve Gadd.

Kate Bush makes her music in her own studio and both “Director’s cut” and the new album are mainly done analogically, not digitally.

* I work in both worlds, but there is a wonderful quality in the analogue sound..

**Do you do most of the producing yourself?**

* Yes, even the tea-making, Bush says with a laugh.
* All jokes aside, I realized at an early stage that everything you hear at a recording is a part of the song. I think that the production process and how you can create different atmospheres with different instruments is incredibly interesting.

**How was “50 words for snow” made?**

* I wrote the music during quite a short period of time. Some of the longer songs are actually recorded right by the piano in a single take. Hopefully, I managed to capture the core of the songs that way.

**Steve Gadd and Kate Bush might not be the combination you think of in the first place. How did you come to work with him?**

* I worked with Steve Gadd for the first time on “Director’s cut”. It was a fantastic experience, so I had him in my thoughts when I wrote the music to “50 words for snow”. Some songs are very arrhythmic, complete nightmares for a drummer.

The new album opens with “Snowflake”, a seven minute story about a snowflakes’ journey from a cloud down towards the ground and the things that awaits there. On that song, Kate sings together with her 13-year old son Bertie.

* I wanted to get his voice on a record before he hits puberty. I think he has a beautiful and high voice.

She also does a duet with Elton John on “Snowed in at Wheeler Street”, perhaps one of the most accessible songs on the album.

* I have always been an Elton John fan. When I was young I played his records over and over, and he has a wonderful voice. If he would have said “no” I don’t know whom I would have asked. He said yes without wanting to hear the song in advance and I was really scared that he wouldn’t like it. Luckily, he did. It was a fantastic day here in the studio, says Bush.

**How do you keep your voice in shape without performing regularly?**

* I’m not the kind of person who walks around at home singing while cooking and stuff. And I never exercise my voice, maybe I should. I only sing when I make music really.

**I have to ask the question I’m guessing you get every time you talk to a journalist: Will you ever tour again?**

* Yes, I always get that question. I don’t have any plans on touring. On the other hand, I’ve never decided never to tour again. But with the years I’ve become a recording artist rather than a performing artist. I love making albums and being involved in that process.

**So, should we expect two album releases every year now?**

* Ha-ha, yes that would be fun wouldn’t it? I’ve always been teased for taking so much time making albums. To be able to do two in one year feels so wonderful! Maybe I should aim for three next year? Or why not one every week?