

honey, and maybe a complimentary loofah the next morning.

Hailing from Austin, Minnesota, 26-year-old Larson is the daughter of a Baptist minister who began singing with her church choir when she was five, picked up guitar at 15, and studied classical voice at Northwestern College in Roseville. Unlike many of her local female singer-songwriter counterparts, Larson's gospel-tinged vocals

the Bees Knees, is an alt-country heartbreak album infused with sophistication and a strangely bouncy sadness. It's 36 minutes of soulful southern twang that leave you wanting 40 more. But for all the album's merit, it's clear that *When We Reach the City* is just the beginning for this why-are-they-still-a-secret local band. Bethany Larson and her Bees Knees are not even close to their pinnacle, and it's that seduc-

## BETHANY LARSON

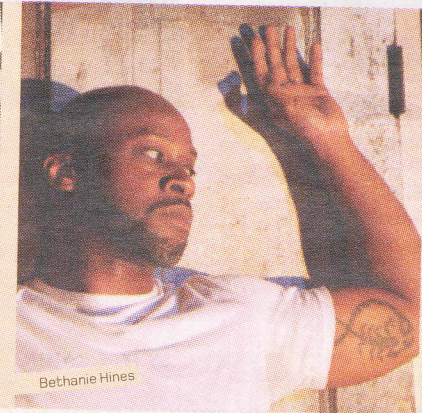
BY REGAN SMITH

**Y**ou know that moment in a really great song when the lead singer's voice absolutely rips through the space around it, reaching the exact right pitch at the exact right volume for exactly the right amount of time? That moment you listen to over and over again, that you will sit through five minutes of shitty distortion and mumbled lyrics for because it's just that damn satisfying?

Local songstress Bethany Larson takes that moment, makes it her bitch, then sends it home with a care package of flowers,



Walter Horishnyk



Bethanie Hines

allow her to avoid the "yodel-y girl with a ukulele" pigeonhole, earning comparisons to Neko Case and Ella Fitzgerald. She has the type of voice that leaves you feeling boozy, charmed, and a little bit envious, wondering what the hell it would be like to open your mouth and have *that* come out.

*When We Reach the City*, Larson's first full-length release with new backing band

tive promise of what's ahead that makes them just as deserving of recognition as everything they've accomplished thus far.

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