

MUSIC'S BEST KEPT SECRET...

Alexa Wilkinson

This 20-year-old female singer-songwriter just released her debut album "Lullaby Appetite" (DNK Records, Josh Kelley's indie label) in July '07. She's been touring all over the US since last April, performing in famous venues in major cities such as LA (The Viper Room, Hotel Café), Chicago (House of Blues), and NYC (Bitter End, Mo PitKins). Cove Magazine recently caught up with the rising star to talk about her upcoming tour and to find out what it's like being an 'indie' Artist.

Welcome to Cove Magazine, how are you today?

I'm great. Just got off an airplane coming back to beautiful Los Angeles, and enjoying some rest.

So, what was it like growing up?

I was a fortunate kid in the sense that I got to grow up in two different places at two very important parts of my life. I was born in New Jersey and moved to Park City, UT when I was 12. So I got to experience two very different parts of the country, and identify with both. I have a wonderful family, and had a pretty normal experience as a child.

How would you describe your type of music?

I would describe my music as a mix of every genre with a cohesive pop element. I played jazz for 8 years, which had an incredible influence over my writing, but I also become inspired by folk, bluegrass, rock, pop and classical. I try to mix everything

in to keep it original and to highlight the lyrical aspect of each song.

What inspires you to write?

This is a hard question for any musician or songwriter. Life always inspires art, and art inspires life. I try to remain balanced when I sit down to write a song. I like to use my own life experiences, mixed in with other peoples, and sometimes make things up completely. I get most of my inspiration when I'm doing something like driving, or flying or cleaning my apartment or something. Something to preoccupy the hands and not the mind.

What can fans expect from your album, "Lullaby Appetite"?

They can really expect to see a show case of my songwriting over the course of three years. Some songs on the album I wrote when I was 17 years old, some when I was 20. If anything, this album is a perfect introduction to many things I'm going to be doing in the future. I'm very proud I finally put out a full-length album, especially with how many talented people that con-

tributed to its completion.

"I would love for the world to listen to my music, but I will never stop doing what I love and sacrifice [my] identity for a couple extra bucks."

-Alexa on crossing over to commercial success.

Can you tell us why you gave that album title?

I choose the title when my manager called me and asked me out of nowhere what the album should be called. We (Ben Carter and I) were walking down 27th St. in Chelsea, NY and we looked at each other and just went, "why not Lullaby Appetite?" It is my absolute favorite track on the album and it means so much to me. It encapsulates what the album is all about to me.



Was Josh Kelley a huge influence on the album? Did he help carve out that sound he was looking for?

-Josh Kelley had a lot to do with some of the major songs on the album. I spent a good portion of time with him in the studio on some of the earlier tracks, and then again with "Lullaby Appetite" Josh did an amazing job with that song and "Of Graves" (which is my other favorite), and I truly believe he got the sound he was searching for when it was still in its pre production phase.

I really love your song "Of Graves" and "Waterline". You really have that smooth, appealing voice. What's the story behind those songs?

"Of Graves" and "Waterline" are not only both Josh's production, but were written with him, or around him. I wrote "Waterline" with Josh the first time I ever went to LA, and "Of Graves" was written by Ben Carter and I while we were recording at his Nashville studio. Waterline is about that time when you decide what you're going to do with the rest of your life (to put it plainly) and "Of Graves" is about a relationship of mine that took some time to get over.

We've heard of a little upcoming tour your doing with The Samples and Shannon McNally this Fall. What can you tell us about it? Are you excited?

I can tell you how excited I am! I am very honored to be going on tour with such an established band, which has shared the stage with some of the world's most amazing musicians. I'm also very excited to tour with Shannon McNally, she's an amazing singer and guitarist.

Is this your first tour?

No. This will technically be my third. I think your first tour is like freshman year. Always looked back on as a learning experience, but never forgotten. When I was on tour with Josh I made incredible friends and learned a lot.

Have you started rehearsals as yet?

Whether I'm at home, playing a show or actually rehearsing? I'm always rehearsing. So yes, I have haha.

As an Independent Artist or "Indie" as we call it, what are some of the advantages and disadvantages of being that type of Artist?

Being and independent artist has MANY advantages. But I haven't had the experience to really sit here and debate the pro's and con's. Many of my friends on major labels or on affiliate labels have a lot more change in their pocket and the resources of a label for advertisement, but I'm doing pretty well with the ability and freedom to be true to my own style and really work out what works best for me.

Would you like to cross over to be a commercial Artist one day?

I don't want to mistake commercial with widely popular. I would love for the world to listen to my music, but I will never stop doing what I love and sacrifice identity for a couple extra bucks.

What's the most unique experience you had since being inside the music industry?

What's unique about this side of the industry is seeing the other side of things from an artist's perspective. When people go to a show, they see the "completed" product of a lot of work. A lot goes into making a show a success, and it's very, very cool to be a part of that.

Who would you love to work with in the future?

I would love to work with as many artists as possible. I want to produce one day, so I want to work with anyone that aspires to be a songwriter that's reading this right now. A dream of mine though is to work with Joni Mitchell.

What's in your digital player right?

Right now I can't stop listening to The Weepies, Jose Gonzalez, Joe Purdy, Tangle Eye, Meiko and Emilliana Torrini. Amazing artists. My iPod is stuffed full though.

Thanks so much for your time, best of luck with the new album and tour. Have a lovely day

No no, thank you!!!



Alexa new album, "Lullaby Appetite" now available, myspace.com/alexawilkinson

