

New mother singer-songwriter performs in Edmonton

BY TOM MURRAY, EDMONTONJOURNAL.COM JUNE 2, 2011



Carrie Catherine, playing the Haven on Friday.

Photograph by: Supplied, edmontonjournal.com

EDMONTON - There's much more to touring with [Carrie Catherine](#) than there is with your average folk singer-songwriter.

Unpacking at the venue, verifying drinks and meals and setting up accommodation amounts to much the same as with anyone else, but Catherine also has a 10-month-old baby to factor into the equation when playing out-of-town gigs.

"Everything becomes complete chaos during sound check," laughs Catherine over the phone from the Saskatoon home she shares with baby Eliot and her husband Curtis, who also doubles as sound person, lighting tech and roadie.

"Curtis and (drummer) Hal (Schrenk) will be unloading gear and setting up, and I'm in this weird space between being a mom and a performer.

There are moments onstage during sound check when I'll be going 'OK, can I get maybe more guitar in

the monitor, and some reverb on my vocals, and oh, could you change Eliot's diaper?' I'm doing both roles at once. Best of all is playtime at the back of venue, when we're rolling around on the floor. Those are interesting times of the day."

The two-week western Canadian tour that sees Catherine performing an early show at the Haven Social Club came about after a number of smaller jaunts, where the couple got the feel of travelling as a family. Catherine acknowledges that those first few shows were exhausting, but for this road stint, she'll be employing the services of her mother to watch over Eliot during the concerts, including Friday's stop at the Haven Social Club.

"I've had Mom on the road before. She's done short stints with me on long drives, like to Toronto, basically just to keep me company. I think she's probably looking forward to this."

Catherine and her husband are prominent members of the Saskatoon music scene, not just as performers but also for the house concert series in their home, a renovated grocery store called The Hayloft. Considering the amount of promoting she does in town, it's astonishing that she's had time to release three acclaimed albums (Out the Car Window, produced by ex-Captain Tractor member Brock Skywalker here in Edmonton; Venus Envy and Green-Eyed Soul). Her latest, Wilderness, was overseen by producer and guitarist Colin Linden in Nashville, with musical help from much of Emmylou Harris's band, as well as legendary harmonica player Charlie McCoy (Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley.)

"Saskatoon can feel isolated to a certain point, and I wanted to work at being a better songwriter. I started putting out there that I wanted to take it to the next level, and people said that I had to start co-writing. I've never been very successful at that," she admits, "but I thought that the place to go would be Nashville."

After some loose conversations with Linden about possibly working on an album, Catherine contacted a label owner she knew in Nashville, and made the decision to travel there. She showed up alone and somewhat disoriented, but was impressed by the musical community she found there, one that judged songwriters on the merit of their work, not their connections.

"It didn't matter how big a name you had, or your experience, or how many hits you had. All they cared about was if you could write a good song. If you could prove yourself, the rest was moot. I co-wrote a couple of songs on the new album with Vince Melamed, who wrote Trisha Yearwood's Walk Away Joe, and it worked out so well. The scene was easy and fun, and the business side never entered into it."

Concert preview

Carrie Catherine

With: Paul Bellows and Daniel Huscroft

When: Friday at 6 p.m.

Where: [Haven Social Club](#), 15120 Stony Plain Rd.

Tickets: \$10 in advance at [yeglive.ca](#) or \$12 at the door

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