



ANJULIE

With her unique voice, disarmingly frank lyrics, melodic gifts, and exotic good looks, singer and songwriter Anjulie announces herself as a commanding new presence on the music scene. On her self-titled debut album, the Los Angeles-based songwriter comes across as a confident young woman who examines her life, loves, obsessions, and heartbreaks with fearless introspection. "I think what separates me from other artists is that I write from a really intimate place," Anjulie says. "This album is like me opening the door to my bedroom, literally. I come off as being pretty put-together, but my songs are the one place where I can pull the string and unravel. They're where I can be vulnerable, insecure, jealous, silly, and childlike. It's too scary to do that in real life. You have to feel safe. I only feel safe with headphones on."

The youngest of four children, Anjulie grew up in the Toronto suburb of Oakville, Ontario, raised by immigrant parents from Guyana — a South American nation culturally influenced by its Caribbean neighbors to the north. As a result, her household was filled with everything from Afro-Caribbean calypso, reggae, and South American Latin music, to the pop and rock emanating from her older siblings' radios. The *mélange* has definitely influenced Anjulie's debut — a sophisticated blend of indelible pop smarts, hip-hop edginess, and world-music spice, topped by Anjulie's sultry vocal stylings that she created with her producers and songwriting collaborators Colin Wolfe, who has worked with Dr. Dre and Monica, and her longtime collaborator Jon Levine, keyboardist for Toronto's funk-pop combo The Philosopher Kings.

Anjulie and Levine first met when then-17-year-old Anjulie, already a multi-instrumentalist, songwriter and performer hustling to catch a break, was doing an internship at Metalworks recording studio in Toronto. "I was basically cleaning the studio and getting coffee for people," she says. "Jon came in and he was in a famous band, so I knew who he was. He asked me to have some lunch, but the people who work behind the desk are not supposed to hang out with clients, so I got fired." Despite that minor setback, the story has a happy ending. Levine was intrigued enough to accept an invitation to hear Anjulie perform at an open mic night, which led to their current creative partnership. In 2005, the pair wrote two songs for actress-singer Emma Roberts' debut album *Unfabulous and More*. Anjulie's other songwriting credits include co-writing a track on the Philosopher Kings' 2006 album *Castles*, and penning "Don't Call Me Baby" — a *Billboard* Top 10 hit in Canada for EMI recording artist Kreesha Turner.

"Anjulie's songwriting is strong and confessional, but with a real pop sensibility," Levine says. "As an artist, she is never satisfied to dole out the same empty pleasantries that most singers do. When we were making her record, I always believed what we put down on tape. Sometimes we'd have a song completely finished and we'd both be happy with it. Then the next day, she'd come into the studio with an entirely different verse written.

She wanted to make sure it truly resonated and wasn't just hooky. It's that kind of determination that makes an artist great."

The confident and eclectic mix of songs on Anjulie's debut explore a wide range of moods, a sign that she is an artist with a lot of range and versatility. The slinky opening track "Boom," works a dark, Nancy Sinatra-esque '60s vibe, while "The Rain" is a sleek, flamenco-flavored urban gem. Anjulie gets steamy on the feverish "The Heat," the obsessive "Addicted2Me," and the provocative "Some Dumb Whore," before entirely switching gears on the uplifting acoustic-driven "Same Damn Thing" and the lovelorn piano ballad "Crazy That Way."

"We were very particular about creating certain colors with the sound," Levine says. "Most of the time it was a process of building a track up and then stripping away as much as we could till we found the bare essentials, or the heart of the track. We were really into carving out a lot of space to give the music a dark, open feel."

It's not surprising that Anjulie's debut is as eclectic as it is, as the singer cops to a host of musical influences, everyone from confessional singer-songwriter Alanis Morissette and the always-enigmatic Annie Lennox, to hip-hop mavericks Kanye West and Lauryn Hill. "When you listen to *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*, it's so unbelievably personal," Anjulie says. "The songs are like snapshots of her life. I'm totally blown away by it."

That honesty is something Anjulie strives to emulate in her own music. "I think I have something to say lyrically," she says. "My background is in songwriting, so I'm really invested in melodies, song structure, and payoff choruses, but on this record, I tried to loosen up and just express myself how I wanted to. I really write for myself. I always tell people if they want to know about me, just listen to my music because I really do put it all out there."

While she gears up for her album to be released by Hear Music in early 2009, Anjulie is looking forward to putting a band together and taking her music out on the road. "Being onstage performing is definitely a high point for me," she says. "It's so euphoric to perform live; you can really feel the energy from the crowd. I admire people who have the whole package and can really put on a show. That's what I strive to do."

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For more information:
Aleix Martinez- Girlie Action
Aleix@girlie.com
(212) 989-2222 ext 136

Joel Amsterdam- Concord Music Group
joel.amsterdam@concordmusicgroup.com
(310) 385-4206