

KERI NOBLE BREAKS FREE ON TELARC DEBUT

Self titled release due in stores February 3, 2009

Sometimes, finding the inner voice that speaks the greatest truth can be a long and challenging process. For singer-songwriter Keri Noble, the Detroit native who has made her home in Minneapolis and has made her creative mark on both sides of the globe with two critically innovative and critically acclaimed recordings, the search has paid off.

“I’ve come this far to get to a place that feels like a beginning,” says Noble, who will make her Telarc debut with the February 3, 2009, release of her self-titled album.

With that new beginning comes a sense of freedom. Hampered in the past by the preconceptions and unrealistic expectations of record executives and marketing operatives, her transition to Telarc puts her in a place that feels much more empowered, much more free than she’s ever felt in the four years since her recording career began.

“I feel different now than I’ve ever felt at any other point in my career,” she says. “I feel in control of the things that I can control, and I’m totally aware of the places where I have no business trying to exert control. I’m excited to be able to create again after being in a place where I didn’t feel a whole lot of joy about the process. I’m generally not one of those annoyingly happy people you often run into, but right now, when it comes to my music, I do feel very happy about where I am.”

Noble’s new-found sense of optimism is evident throughout the record, even in those moments where the overriding message isn’t entirely upbeat. The set opens with the midtempo “Watch Me Walk,” a defiant statement about regaining one’s sense of identity and purpose in the face of a failing – if not failed – relationship: “This is the part where I start taking over / Why should I let you decide? / Life is too short, you blink, and it’s over / So now you’re going to watch me walk out of your life...”

Emancipation is a recurring theme throughout the eleven tracks, as seen in the quiet and pensive “Ooh Oh,” a fan favorite in Noble’s live performances. The song takes its title from an emotional refrain that taps into a place that goes deeper than words. “It’s pretty sad in its portrayal of a relationship that’s formed out of dysfunction,” Noble explains, “but at some point in the song, the lyrics are saying, ‘I’m ready for something more than this.’ Even in those small moments where it sounds melancholy, there’s still this theme going through it about how it’s time to change, time to move, time to take care of myself.”

In a world that’s seldom if ever black and white, Noble is keenly attuned to the simultaneous coexistence of both the light and the dark, and conveys them in terms that are as universal as they are simple. Songs like “Remember My Name” and “Last Warning” veer close to the edges of desperation and even tragedy, while much more rousing and inspirational tracks like “Born Again” and “Go Proud” harken back to her upbringing in the soul- and gospel-drenched sounds of her native Detroit.

“There’s a lot of good that comes out of the church experience,” says Noble, the daughter of a Christian minister. “To live in Detroit, there are some aspects of the church culture that you just can’t escape. It’s more than just religion. It’s an emotional experience. I love gospel music. If you go to a black church and open yourself up to the music, you feel something, regardless of what your belief system might be.”

This emotional quotient is perhaps highest in the smoldering closer, "Life #9," a live track recorded at a show in Minneapolis in the summer of 2006. In addition to Noble, vocalists Kathleen and Rhonda Johnson – along with the responsive live audience – add extra layers of emotional and personal conviction to the track.

"I wrote the song when I was watching a VH1 show about the wives of various hip-hop artists," says Noble. "All these women were saying, 'Yeah, I know he cheats on me, but in the end, he comes home to me.' It just seemed crazy to me. So I ended up writing the song, and I played it for my backup singers, and we said, 'Let's just see what would happen if we worked out a simple arrangement for the show.' It just became this magical thing. It's a pretty rough recording, but the magic transcends the rough edges."

It's no accident that Keri Noble's third release is the first to be named after her. More now than at any other time in her career, her voice is her own, and she's able to declare exactly who she is and what she's about. "I feel free to be the artist that I am, and also the artist that I can be," she says. "I don't feel any pressure to try to fit into some mold. I just feel very free."

Keri Noble's self-titled Telarc debut (CD-83688) is due at retail on February 3, 2009.

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