

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

Olivia Jane Lands “Between Earth and Air”: Life as an Indie Musician

by Justin Hoenke

Listening to Olivia Jane’s debut album, **Between Earth and Air**, you would think that being a songwriter was something she’d been doing all her life. “I never thought of myself as a writer. I grew up as an actress. My job was to illuminate what other people write, not write it myself,” said Olivia in a phone interview. Olivia’s dive into songwriting is a recent one and by the sound of her nine-song debut album, it has been quite productive period recently for Olivia.

“Just a few years ago I was in Philadelphia doing a show. I sat in my room playing piano, thinking about heritage, homeland, and sacred ground, and the next thing I knew was that I wrote my first song, “The Fisherman” (Track 9 on **Between Earth and Air**). What became the song that ends her stellar debut album with a bang was actually the first one written.

The other songs that make up **Between Earth and Air** tell of a “tried and true collaboration” between Olivia and writer/producers Robert Davis and Nathaniel Cox. When asked about “Dream To Live In,” the album’s fifth song and emotional centerpiece, Olivia opened up about working with Cox on the song. “Most of it was by Nathaniel, wanting to write something telling the stories about immigrants. But we had this middle section and I just said that I wanted to write this bridge, so I went away and focused on writing the melody and lyrics to that part. What you hear on the album is what we all came up with together.” Despite the writing duo being “skeptical of the song at first because it was so different than the others,” it made the final cut, where it sits nicely in the middle of the album giving listeners a closer look at the emotional intensity Olivia puts into her work. “My goal as a writer is to relate to everyone. I like to hold a mirror up to nature,” she comments.

Between Earth and Air will easily find a place in the hearts of fans of Fleetwood Mac and the singer/songwriter genre. Full of jangling guitar, soaring melodies, and introspective lyrics telling tales about love, family, and life, the album has a quality about it that allows it to be easily relatable to everyone. Having grown up listening to the music of her parents’ generation, Olivia feels **Between Earth and Air** has an organic and natural sound that calls back to music of the past yet remains modern day sensibilities. “My sound is nostalgic. It’s not exactly a pop sound . . . it also has a classic rock sound to it, and I wanted to keep that sound when we were writing and recording the album.”

Going the indie route was a conscious choice for Olivia. “I felt like this was the right time to stay indie. I am still cultivating my sound, my brand, and my writing. What I found very precious about this process is that I still had control over what went into this record. If I was with a label I was worried that it might get muddied a bit. I’m still in development as a songwriter and performing musician.”

Between Earth and Air is available through streaming services such as iTunes, Spotify, and Amazon. “These days the streaming game is the way that artists get the most traction, so I’ve been pushing that first, but I’m in the process of setting up an online store for music and merch on my website (oliviajaneofficial.com) so that my fans can get the album on CD and vinyl.”

The future holds a lot for Olivia. In between her work as a songwriter and performer, Olivia still finds times to dive into acting work. She recently wrapped up filming a part for season six of the television show *Major Crimes* and continues to be what she calls “actively creative” in her day to day existence. “The more I sing, the more my soul is open to receiving those artistic moments in life.”

With her debut album **Between Earth and Air**, singer/songwriter Olivia Jane brings together a nine song set that is full of soaring melodies, jangly guitars, and introspective lyrics that tell the tale of personal growth. The album really picks up the pace on the third song, “A Way Out,” a song that sounds like it would be right at home in a blockbuster film. Tracks like “The Fisherman” and “Amsterdam” show the personal side of Olivia Jane as a songwriter, presenting the listener with songs with characters who seek growth, change, and never ending inspiration. The production on the album is top-notch and features contributions from tried and true musicians such as guitarist Waddy Wachtel and Bernard Fowler (backing vocalist for The Rolling Stones). On “Dream To Live In,” the fifth song and the emotional crux of the album, you can hear Olivia Jane and Fowler riffing off each other at the end and creating a beautiful sound that makes a wonderful song just that much better. Fans of well-written music produced with great care will enjoy this album.

