

AVAILABLE LIGHT RECORDS

Artist Bio - Carrie Newcomer



Carrie Newcomer has been described as “a soaring songstress” by Billboard, a “prairie mystic by the Boston Globe Rolling Stone wrote that she asks all the right questions.” One of the definitive voices of the heartland and progressive spirituality, Newcomer has the ability for sharp observation of the world. Newcomer has attracted a devoted following with her warm voice, exquisite melodies, and an irreverent yet spiritual view of the world. As in the work of poets Mary Oliver and Wendell Berry, Newcomer’s songs are based in the ordinary, and infused with images from the natural world.

On April 1, 2014, Available Light Records, distributed by MRI/Sony RED Music, releases a new album of Newcomer’s music entitled *A Permeable Life*. On this album, Newcomer’s signature deep voice takes on a quiet conversational tone, close and intimate. Open and elegant arrangements showcase lyrics that balance introspection and

interior monologue with love and fascination for the shared human story in songs. The result is a resonant soundtrack for a world that is both sacred and ordinary, reflective and forward-thinking.

A COMPANION BOOK OF POETRY AND ESSAY COLLECTION

Newcomer’s songs have always reflected a literary leaning, and she has long been considered a “writer’s writer,” evident in her many collaborations with celebrated authors such as Parker J. Palmer (*The Courage to Teach, Let Your Life Speak and Healing the Heart of Democracy*), neuroscientist Jill Bolte Taylor (*My Stroke of Insight*), theologian Philip Gulley (*If Grace is True*), environmentalist Scott Russell Sanders (*A Private History of Awe*), Rabbi Sandy Sasso, Barbara Kingsolver and more. So it makes sense that her latest music offering is accompanied by Newcomer’s first book of poetry and essays *A Permeable Life: Poetry and Essays*. This collection features works that were the starting point for many of her most beloved songs.

TOURING AND TRAVELS

Over the course of her career Newcomer has seen a lot of the world. In the 2009 and 2011, Newcomer toured India as a cultural ambassador for the American Embassy. As a result of her time in India, in 2011 she released *Everything is Everywhere*, a collaboration with masters of the Indian classical sarod, Amjad, Ayaan and Amaan Ali Khan. A beautifully created fusion of East and West, the album was released as a benefit album for the Interfaith Hunger Initiative. In 2012, Newcomer visited and performed in Kenya, performing in primary and secondary schools, hospitals and clinics. In 2013, she visited the Middle East working with organizations dedicated to the arts and non-violent conflict resolution. Newcomer appears to have no performance and touring boundaries, as she seamlessly moves from country to country

, performing in concert halls, acoustic clubs, colleges, churches, synagogues and convents; conducting workshops on vocation, arts, creative writing and progressive faith at universities, seminaries and high schools, writing and performing in theatrical productions, and volunteering for environmental and social justice fundraisers. She’s comfortable as an artist and speaker in venues as diverse as concerts at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and London’s Royal Festival Hall, a humble rural school in Africa, a women’s cooperative in India, a Quaker meeting house in Ramala, a performance for at-risk juveniles inside an Ohio courtroom (with judge, parole officer and parents present), and playing and conducting a workshops inside of an Indiana women’s penitentiary.



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AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS Prior albums include the critically acclaimed Everything is Everywhere and Kindred Spirits: A Collection, Before and After (featuring a song with Mary Chapin Carpenter), The Geography of Light, Regulars & Refugees, The Age of Possibility, The Gathering of Spirits (featuring a song with Alison Krauss) and The Betty's Diner Collection on Rounder Records. In 2003, Nickel Creek recorded Newcomer's "I Should've Known Better" on their gold-selling, Grammy-winning album This Side. She was listed as one of "the 50 most influential folk musicians of the past 50 years" by Chicago's WFMT and she has been Folk Wax artist and album of the year twice.

NEWCOMER ON OUR CULTURAL OF BUSY AND SACRAMENTAL LIVING

"Our culture reasons that because we feel there is not enough time, we should increase our pace, multitask, and fit more into our already overbooked days. But perhaps the more effective response to the limits of time is to live more fully in the moment, to savor it and expand it out in all directions."

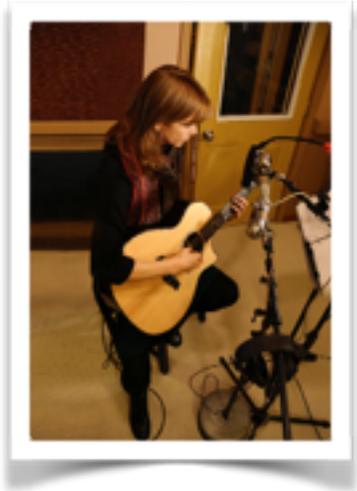
"I am one of a growing number of people that do not want to put the sacred in such a small container."

NEWCOMER ON WRITING

"Something good happened to my writing when I stopped being afraid to do something simple, for the fear that people might think I couldn't do something more complex. Don't be confused by the word simple. Simple is not easy, it is clear voiced, and fearlessly elegant. That kind of elegance can only happen on the other side of complexity. You learn how to play a lot of notes, write a lot of words, so that the notes and words you choose to use are the right ones and nothing more."

WORKSHOPS AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Carrie nationally and internationally facilitates workshops and presents keynotes on the topics of songwriting, spirituality and vocation at colleges, universities, and spiritual communities, retreat centers. Newcomer, a Quaker, cuts across secular and spiritual boundaries. In recent years, she has emerged as a respected and recognized artistic voice for the progressive spiritual community.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

In keeping with her Quaker roots, Carrie has been a strong voice for social justice. She has supported organizations involved with hunger, universal health care, accessible mental health services, environment and sustainability. She is a co-founder of The Soup Bowl Benefit raising over a million dollars over the past twenty years for Indiana's hungry families. Recently she partnered with Freedom Indiana, endeavoring to oppose an amendment the Indiana state constitution banning same sex marriage, civil unions and domestic partnership benefits. She participated in a public interfaith service presenting an alternative voice from the spiritual community and led songs at the state house before sessions.

AT HOME IN THE MIDWEST

Carrie was raised in the Midwest on the Indiana side of the Chicago region. She has a degree in visual arts, but decided to pursue a career in the more secure profession of folk music. She paints, sculpts, knits, has a big garden and cans salsa in the summer. She lives in the woods outside Bloomington Indiana with her husband, Robert and two shaggy rescue dogs.

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