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Rose Cora Perry: Musician, Media Personality, Role Model

By Alex Riese

Photos from Mystery Man Photography



Rose Cora Perry and the Truth Untold. From left to right: bassist Jeremy Sieberer, singer and guitarist Rose Cora Perry and drummer Tyler Randall.

singing rock [as opposed to singing classical].”

That band helped Perry gain an interest for alternative forms of music. During college, she broadened her horizons by taking courses about the foundations of jazz music and the history of rock’n’roll. It was during this time that she gained a sound knowledge and appreciation for the diversity of modern music. It was also during this time that she fell in love with jazz music.

“I think it’s safe to say that during your formative years, the foundations of your musical tastes are determined by what your parents or friends listen to,” she said. “None of my friends listened to jazz, so I started discovering that on my own. So when I was in my late teens and early 20s, I fell in love with Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday, and I thought to myself, ‘how was my life deprived of this beautiful music?’” After releasing their first album *Straight From the Loft* in 2003, HER disbanded before they had a chance. After releasing a solo album entitled *Feisty* in 2004, Perry got right back into the industry with a band called *Anti-Hero*. The band released their first album, entitled *Unpretty*, with a major record label in 2005. Unfortunately, due to drug problems and interpersonal issues between members, *Anti-Hero* was forced to disband.

“I’ve actually witnessed...several good friends of mine overdose because of drugs, so I really don’t need a reason to embrace that lifestyle. I see the damage and the destruction and the death that it causes...Aside from that it’s a waste of money. You’re basically paying to toxify your body and die earlier, and I can’t understand that mentality.”

-Rose Cora Perry, lead singer for The Truth Untold

Five years later, after concentrating on other projects and a fight with depression, Perry released her debut solo acoustic album, *Off of the Pages*. Along with this release, she founded a not-for-profit organization called *MusicSaves*, meant to highlight the role music can have in overcoming depression. All the proceeds from *Off of the Pages* went to this organization.

While writing another album, Perry started trying to add other elements into her music that would become impossible to perform in her current solo acoustic format. Upon realization of her desire to re-enter rock music from acoustic music, Perry placed

Since 2003, punk singer Rose Cora Perry has been one of the most socially vocal and well-rounded members of Canada’s indie music scene. And on July 9th, the self-styled “musician, media personality and (role)model,” according to her official press bio, will be bringing her talents to the Kitchener Cherry Festival.

Musician

Though she first impacted the music scene with a punk band called HER, Perry’s earliest musical aspirations were set on Broadway. Her parents enrolled her in classical voice lessons at the age of four - which she stuck with for 14 years - and she performed live for the very first time shortly after her enrolment. It wasn’t until age 15 after being approached by a guitar player acquaintance interested in forming a rock band that Rose became interested in rock music.

“It was not my initial aspiration whatsoever, but I ended up going along with it because other girlfriends of mine were involved with the project,” she said in a phone interview. “I discovered that I had an ability for it [and] that I liked...the freeing aspects of



an ad in a London-based newspaper looking for like-minded musicians to form a punk trio. After a while of searching, she formed The Truth Untold with Jeremy Sieberer on bass and backup vocals and Tyler Randall on drums. Their debut album *Onto the Floor* is set to be released sometime in 2016.

Media Personality

Through her musical endeavours, Perry realized a passion for journalism. When she formed her first band at the age of fifteen, Rose got her feet wet in the music business by becoming the band's primary publicist. Shortly after taking the media reins for her second band Anti-Hero, Perry decided to write a column providing independent artists working in the Canadian music industry with realistic perceptions of what to expect.

"At the time, I was studying public relations, so it tied into my studies as well as what I was experiencing in the industry," she said of the column.

The column was a hit. In its final year of syndication, it amassed 100,000 readers. Following the rampant success of the column, Rose decided to pursue another avenue of the journalistic trade when she made the transition from print journalism to broadcast journalism in 2012. She became the host of two RogersTV shows called "London's Driven" and "Mosaic." Of the transition, she said it was driven largely by her appearance on the other side of the broadcast interview spectrum.

"I had been in the interview hot seat many times, and I kind of figured I'd have a decent idea of what would constitute good questions and good interactions," she said. "I ended up auditioning for a TV show, and I got a second gig out of that doing co-hosting."

Though her primary focus is her music with The Truth Untold, Perry is still involved with the journalistic trade. In 2010, she launched a blog called "Call Me Old-Fashioned But..." which reflects on a simpler, anti-corporate way of life. One year later, she introduced "Psych Your Mind," a psychology blog reflecting on her philosophy of positive psychology.

(Role)Model

When thrust into the public eye, many would forget their responsibility toward the people that put them where they are and instead act to satisfy their own needs. Perry went in the opposite direction. In 2005, Perry was named as a Youth Mental Health Role Model by MindYourMind.ca. Since then, she's dedicated her time to various not-for-profit and humanitarian causes.

In 2009, Perry decided to become vegan.

"Initially [the lifestyle change] was for health reasons. My stomach just decided that it wasn't going to tolerate dairy or meat any further, and being somebody who believes in living in harmony with oneself, I wasn't going to challenge that decision," she said. "It was a difficult transition...and honestly, it's been one of the best decisions of my life. I feel better, and the more I learned about what the veganism movement was all about...it reinforced my decision and it made sense to me."

In addition to her other causes, Perry is vehemently straight-edged, citing her experiences with previous band members as inspiration for that lifestyle.

"I've actually witnessed...several good friends of mine overdose because of drugs, so I really don't need a reason to embrace that lifestyle," Perry said. "I see the damage and the destruction and the death that it causes...Aside from that it's a waste of money. You're basically paying to toxify your body and die earlier, and I can't understand that mentality."

Even the most selfless of people have to take some time for themselves. Therefore, throughout her career, Perry has built and maintained a presence as a fashion model. Citing her enjoyment of human beauty and the power of good photography, Perry has built a modelling portfolio with images that have graced the covers of magazines, got her named as Nashville Rock's "Rock Babe of the Week" in 2003 and gotten her voted as one of UMM Magazine's "72 Hottest Babes in Canada."

In 2010, Perry graduated with honours from the University of Western Ontario's social psychology program, giving her an insight into the machinations of our society and helping her better understand the social issues about which she became passionate.

Perry volunteers her time to emcee various special events, such as London's annual Vegfest. Additionally, she traveled around various colleges and youth organizations, giving guest lectures about her time in the music industry and her experiences with the glorification of the sex, drugs and rock'n'roll lifestyle.

"Even though I present this...badass, rock'n'roll image, and even though I play rock music, [it's important that the kids] know for certain that I'm not part of that...I'm trying to show people that music is about art...and it can help people get through experiences and it can turn bad experiences into positive ones," Perry said. "Part of my mission in this world is to try and help people in whatever way that I can."

