

An Interview and Artist Spotlight with Rose Cora Perry & The Truth Untold

Originally published by: The Arrival Magazine

Written by: Ross Barnes

Hot off their Los Angeles debut at the legendary Whisky a Go Go, award-winning Canadian rock trio, Rose Cora Perry & The Truth Untold, are giving hometown and international audiences alike a taste of their high energy and refreshing modern rock style this spring/summer.

The beginning to what the group has deemed their 2018 "Canadian Invasion" tour in support of Perry's latest album, "Onto the Floor", confirmed boastworthy appearances include: Vans Warped Tour (Toronto), International Pop Overthrow (Chicago), Jersey Shore Festival (New Jersey), East Coast Music Conference (Norfolk VA), along with their North Carolina debut at Twin City RibFest.

Founded in 2005 by promoter Allen McDavid, Twin City RibFest prides itself on offering a "whole 'nother type of 'cue; something beyond Lexington style BBQ." Designated as the Triad's premier BBQ festival, the Twin City affair annually attracts thousands of BBQ enthusiasts with its champion pitmasters, marketplace, kiddie attractions and outstanding live music.

All ages are invited to attend and admission prices are adults: \$8, seniors & active military: \$6; children (12 and under): free. This 2018 RibFest runs from Thursday June 7th beginning at 11:00 am until Sunday June 10th ending at 7:00 pm at Winston-Salem Fairgrounds ([421 27th St NW, Winston-Salem, NC, USA 27105](http://www.winston-salemfairgrounds.com)).

Noted in this interview is interviewer Ross Barnes (Ross); singer, guitarist, and songwriter Rose Cora Perry (Rose); drummer Tyler Randall (Tyler); and bassist/backup vocalist Amber Gorham (Amber). This interview took place on May 24th, 2018 over email correspondence.

Ross: How did you first create Rose Cora Perry & The Truth Untold? How did you all meet, and have you played in musical groups before this current project?

Rose: The Truth Untold was formed in 2016 in conjunction with the release of my sophomore solo album, “Onto the Floor”.

I had been working on the cd for a couple of years and throughout that process the sound and direction of it evolved considerably. Accordingly, when it was all said and done, I didn’t feel doing a solo tour with only an acoustic in hand would do the material justice.

That’s when I first recruited Tyler via a local musicians group on Facebook. We clicked right away in terms of musicality and band direction and toured as a “reverse White Stripes” –esque project for just over a year.

Amber came into the picture when she was hired to do our live sound for a charity performance in our hometown. We adored her professionalism and working with her so much that we asked her to become our live sound tech and took her on the road with us to our Nashville Summer NAMM debut as well as when we opened for SmashMouth in Pittsburgh last year.

It didn’t take long for us to realize we wanted her as a permanent fixture in our band family.

We had sampled a rough demo of her vocal capabilities from her previous band one day coming home from a gig and I immediately knew her voice would mesh well with mine. We figured it didn’t make much sense for her to merely sing backups so we took it upon ourselves to teach her to play bass. Her third gig was at The Whisky a Go Go this January during NAMM week. No pressure right?

Prior to this band, I found success as the frontwoman for two rock projects: HER (an all-girl pop rock band formed with high school friends) and Anti-Hero (a grunge/alternative quartet).

Anti-Hero got a snazzy record deal and performed at major events including Vans Warped Tour in the early 2000s. I'm beyond excited that The Truth Untold is picking up just where that band left off and will be taking to the Warped stage too this summer.

Tyler: I have played in several musical groups before this band: One as a bassist and in the others as a drummer. I previously toured the East Coast with my last project. There were many good times to be had, along with many beautiful places to be seen.

Amber: While working as their live sound technician, after a grueling gig Rose asked me about my own experience as a musician and a singer in past bands and if I had any audio recordings. I did have a demo that wasn't quite finished but she liked my vocals in it, and they decided to ask me if I would be interested in learning a 13th instrument.

I said, "Sure but I've never played bass before and I don't have any gear." Right away they said that was a non-issue and we started practicing, with them teaching me bass and Rose coaching me on vocals.

There's always going to be good and bad experiences of joining and collaborating with musicians. You get to know their quirks and styles and you start learning "who" they are as people and opening yourself up to them. But it's a really beautiful thing connecting with someone through music and I'm grateful I was able to join Tyler and Rose as a member of The Truth Untold.

Ross: How long have you all been playing together? How has your time together playing as musicians developed your synergy and your stage performance?

Rose: Tyler and I have been playing together now for about two and a half years while Amber is still the "band baby", having just joined the project officially (and picking up the bass) about eight months ago.

Working with Tyler and Amber has honestly been a dream come true. I've been in previous bands with talented individuals, but a lack of professionalism, egos and/or a focus on the WRONG things over music (namely drugs and groupies) has always gotten in the way of my former projects reaching their full potential. I honestly feel this time I've got it right and I can say with absolute certainty working with both of them has made me a better musician and vice versa.

Tyler is 100% to blame for reigniting my love of distortion, while teaching and coaching Amber on bass and vocals has allowed me to hone my crafts further too. The most important part though is that we all genuinely like each other as people and are equally passionate about music. I believe that that shines through tremendously in our performances.

Tyler: I think we help each other grow as musicians and push each other to be better.

Amber: Our synergy and stage performance has been developed in our time spent rehearsing and figuring out what worked and what didn't with our live arrangements.

Playing together is a very positive time for each of us and has allowed all of us to not only find what works for us as individuals but as a band. It's a great experience and we love that our energy as a band leaks out and reaches the audience so they can feel what we feel.

Ross: What is the process through which you write your songs? Is it a collective effort where music and vocals are written simultaneously or do instruments come first or do vocals come first?

Rose: It always starts with a melody and a hook. As a singer first and foremost, I deliberately structure my songs around my vocal lines. Once I have a tune that sticks in my head, I put pen to paper and start brainstorming lyric ideas.

My lyrics are inspired by my mood and personal experiences and/or events that have struck me emotionally. Songwriting, for me, is a very organic process and I never force a song if it's just not there or if it's not ready to be completed. Equally, I don't believe in being confined by "structure".

If I'm feeling a random tempo change in the middle of a song, so be it. If I want to write an epic 7 minute ballad, damnit I'm gonna. Art is about inspiration in my view and I don't think it should ever be anything but genuine, raw and authentic.

The last individual step in my songwriting is charting out the chords on guitar. Once that's figured out, the other instruments come into play and collectively arrangements are created in which we play off of each other's strengths and ideas.

Ross: Who are your musical influences? What artists inspired you to get into music?

Rose: Being a classically trained vocalist who once aspired to be on Broadway but instead found herself inadvertently recruited into a rock band has led to - as I'm sure you can imagine - quite an extensive and diverse musical library. From Metallica to Loreena McKennitt to Norah Jones and Madonna, I listen to it all and am influenced by it all. I've gotten a ton of Alanis comparisons (perhaps because of the Canadian connection) and I'm TOTALLY okay with that as she was definitely a big influence growing up and is a tremendous vocalist and songwriter.

During my formative years of vocal training, my biggest inspirations by far were Sarah Brightman and Loreena McKennitt. Their voices are flawless and their tones are pure and beautiful. Anytime I listen to either of them, I'm completely spellbound. I hope to be that good one day.

When I became an angsty teenager searching for my rock sound and identity, I was absolutely taken by Nina Gordon and Louise Post of Veruca Salt. From the first moment I saw the music video for “Volcano Girls”, I was like “I wanna do that. I wanna be like them.” Equally, Nicole Hughes of Scratching Post (a killer band from my hometown) was one of my major teen idols for not simply her rock’n’roll badassery but further because she became a mentor to me as I began to teach myself the ins and outs of the music industry.

I feel honoured that we’ve remained in touch to this day and I still greatly admire what she’s accomplished for herself and the band she presently manages, Courage My Love.

Tyler: Currently my musical influences are: Travis Orbin, Mike Mangini and Intervals among many others. There weren’t really any artists that inspired me to pick up an instrument. Instead, it was in part due to my friends playing around me and me getting the “musical itch”... not to be confused with other types of itches.

Amber: There's a wide range of artists from across all genres that have influenced me: from the classics like Beethoven and Mozart, to Celtic artists, rock artists and metal acts. Great storytelling and connecting through music has always been what inspired me to pick up and start learning to sing or play an instrument - the lyrics and the emotion behind every note.

Artists like My Chemical Romance brought me out of my shell by relaying that there are others just like me out there and to not be ashamed. They gave me inspiration to play even when facing rejection and to constantly learn so you can be that guiding light for someone else out there.

Ross: Do you have any favorite shows you have played? Least favorite? Have you had any nightmare shows while playing on the road? If so, how did you overcome them?

Rose: I think we will all likely respond with the same answer to the first part of your question: that performing at The Whisky a Go Go in Hollywood this past January was the most incredible experience of our musical journeys to date and it was a sincere honour to be accepted as equals among rockstars. We are so very honoured that we had this once-in-a-lifetime experience and it goes without saying that playing a club like The Whisky is on the “bucket list” for any indie band.

There have definitely been some “dubious” performances along the way but bad gigs are simply the nature of working in this industry and are something that everyone - whether signed to a major label or indie - goes through. Even the best bands in the world playing at the best venues in the world can have off-nights or off-experiences.

Promoters stiff you. Other bands on the bill can be assholes. Tech problems abound. You show up to your gig where you were promised a relaxing hotel stay prior to taking the stage, only to discover said “hotel” is nothing more elaborate than an ice fishing hut with zero ventilation (it’s 30+ degrees out) and is located so close to the sound system that it vibrates every time anything remotely musical occurs...oh and that soundcheck will be taking place at 6 am, one hour after you’ve arrived from driving through the night... Not that I’m speaking from personal experience or anything but I’ve heard about such things happening ;) Lol.

I think the most important way to combat the “unpredictability” of gigs is to always prepare for the worst: what that means is that you should be so tight as a band that it doesn’t matter if your drummer’s kit sets on fire and your bassist gets tangled in her patch cords you will be able to keep playing.

Secondly and perhaps MORE importantly, professionalism is key. Even if everything goes wrong and you are somehow allotted with the blame, be courteous, nice and willing to try and solve the problem. Just cause someone is being unreasonable toward you doesn't mean you need to return the "favour" nor will doing so help you in the long run. It sucks, but sometimes you gotta just "rock past it".

Tyler: My favourite show so far was probably The Whisky a Go Go. There have been a few lousy shows for sure, although I don't want to get into the nitty gritty of it.

I think if a band is tight enough, they should be able to compensate for most things that can go wrong in a live setting.

I try to have backups of equipment items that are more prone to breaking as a strategy. Should you find yourself playing live and something breaks, in my opinion, it's best to finish the song before venturing off to look at the damage.

Amber: The Whisky a Go Go would be one of the gigs that comes to mind that just made me go, "Wow. I want to be like this all the time. I want to feel like this and constantly play like this." It was amazing.

There are always good and bad experiences with equipment but we make the most of it and practice so that we can play consistently and help inspire others. We know we have each other's backs and that's what helps us get through trying gigs. But the bad experiences – as much as they may not be ideal at the time – are also what make the great gigs that much more memorable.

Ross: When you hear your music, how would you describe your vibe? Describe a scene where one of your songs would be the soundtrack. For example, a lake in the middle of a forest; a late night in a bar with friends ready to part ways; chaos of a busy city.

Rose: The unappreciated, overlooked, beaten down and underemployed masses in a totalitarian regime realize their worth, unify their efforts and revolt.

Tyler: Night time scenes driving through a city or maybe a chase scene in an adrenaline-pumping action movie.

Amber: I would have to say it really depends on the song. Each one evokes so many different emotions through their melodies, but "hope" is a theme that is heard throughout...so something "hopeful" :)

Ross: This one is for each member of the band. Name your three favorite musical artists you've ever played with or seen live.

Rose:

Played With: Scratching Post, Priestess, Jakalope

Seen Live: Norah Jones, Big Wreck and ACDC (original lineup!)

Tyler: Intervals, Sonata Arctica and Big Wreck for best live bands I've seen and all of the awesome artists at The Whisky a Go Go for best bands I've played with.

Amber: I'd have to say my three favourite performances all incorporated some sort of theatrics. My Chemical Romance I got to see a few times and watching the Black Parade album played live was

amazing. Alice Cooper and Rob Zombie had themes and props that went along with the soundtracks of their tours as well. Telling a story is what brings these artists to mind.

As far as favourite bands we've played with live? We've really enjoyed making friends and sharing the stage with some incredible US acts recently including Wayfaring Soul, The Shrieks, Seconds to Live and The Poynt.

Acclaimed one of the Top #10 talents across Canada, Rose Cora Perry & The Truth Untold are sure to fit the bill when they take to the Twin City Ribfest stage on Friday June 8th at 9:30 pm.