

# JULIE CURLY

## ***The beginnings - A passion for all kinds of art and music***

Since my teenage years, I have a tremendous passion for all kinds of arts. At 18, I began film studies, earning a master's degree, while learning the guitar. I started playing Nirvana and sang the hits of Celine Dion and Alanis Morissette in my bedroom. Strumming some guitar chords, I discovered my own voice and took singing lessons for more than 6 years with my teacher Monique Dumas. Even if I was still in cover bands, love singing Top 40 and the hits of yesterday. Doing my own original music has always been there, as a way of expressing myself. Music is a powerful tool in which you can infuse and explore your own feelings. When it gets to someone else's ears, and it touches their hearts, it becomes universal. It's both rewarding to the artist & their team, as well as for the listener. For me, it's the same as movies, telling a story & touching people with it. That's why I love to think that my music is coming alive in the form of stories and short films.

## ***The Process - Past musical experiences paved the way***

In my twenties, I began to perform as a singer & songwriter, in Montreal bars and in various singing contests, becoming a finalist at the *Montreal Idol / Mix 96 and CTV* (2005) contest, semi-finalist at *Trois-Pistoles en Chansons* (2010), and finalist at *Chante en Français, Montreal* (2010). Long-time choir lover, I was a member of several vocal ensembles, in addition to performing in the first steps of the Gospel Challenge (2006). I love gospel and the power it generates through singing. *Amazing Grace* is a song I performed for many years and it always transcends me. I must say, Aretha Franklin is one of my idols. I also gave my voice to the song *Humanity*, official anthem of the Montreal Gay Pride in 2008. I've never hidden my colors and having more LGBT models in music can be beneficial and positive, in making the world a better place. While on a European trip in 2012, I presented some of my original songs, performing in both France & Belgium. An amazing opportunity to meet and discuss with the European crowd, enabling me to hone my musical skills. I learn a lot from this experience. It made me grow as an artist, finding my own voice, and led me to great musical collaborations.

## ***The album Confessions, or the joys of being an independent artist***

In January 2013, I began a musical partnership with the talented composer Gilbert Cantin, bass player and guitarist, having performed alongside of professional musicians for years. We played in the same tribute band and the chemistry in musical creation evolved naturally. Then we gave birth to *Confessions* in 2014, a self-produced album. It was born from the fruit of multiple influences and mutual experience, and I think that being an independent album, it gave us the power of freedom, the freedom of speech & thoughts in creation. At the end, *Confessions* is a really personal album, pop/rock & jazzy songs about relationships and reflections on life. This 12 tracks album is in French, my first language. With all the production and promotion steps, it was a long (but exciting!) creative process; and everyone, even if we are a very small team, has embraced the project. So then, for the launching of the CD, we had very talented musicians: Jean-Yves Cardin (keyboards), Didier Renaud (bass), Robert Massé (drums), Anne-Marie Kirouac & Jenny Kuca (percussions) and, of course, Gilbert on the guitar. Since the launching, we are all together, touring, rehearsing & composing new songs, and having the chance to make music with great musicians is amazing. It creates a musical microcosm where I can express myself, and this is priceless; this is the reason why I make music. For me, making great music is having great ideas and sharing them with passionate people and great musicians. It's a privilege to make music and have people come to my shows to listen to my music. I never forget or take it for granted! Still, putting your emotions out there - and personal thoughts and feelings - for the world to listen, may sometimes be a scary thing... but having people responding positively to your work while on stage, it's priceless! If exposing your creation to the world is in itself a challenge, I would say that the most challenging thing is to get heard out there! There is so many talented bands - and so much noise - out there, that's it's difficult to get heard by the right people to make it in the business. Seriously, for me, being an independent artist, is like being a Shredded Wheat... you know the breakfast cereal? Made from whole wheat, one side is frosted sugar, and the other remain whole wheat. So the frosted side is in the creation process, cause art doesn't emerge from constraints, but from freedom, the freedom of speech and thought. In fact, I may be a Flower Child - or let's say a hippie, for the creation process (in fact *Flower Power* is one of our songs in preparation...) For the music business side - or the wheat side if we stay in the Shredded Wheat metaphor, I'm a really down-to-earth person, very organized; for me, that's what it takes to be an independent artist. Working hard and making it work, with an amazing team! As far as sounding too humble, for me the team is everything. They help you spread the word about your musical universe.

## ***Can you imagine? (The Killing of John Lennon) - Making a move, from language of Molière to Shakespeare***

I was born in Montreal, on a snowy day, and still live there (but not because of the snow!) What I love about my city is the bi-cultural, let's say bilingual, reality. Even if my first language is French, and always love the Molière language to express myself through songs, I also love writing in English. A decade ago, when I studied at Concordia University, I was already writing songs in English. So it's kind of a natural path to make some songs in English (even *Confessions* has some songs in Fran-lish, if I must say, like *Carences* and *Technicolor*). My first video single in English is called *Can you imagine? (The Killing of John Lennon)*. This unique musician, poet and peacemaker is my main influence, not only in music, but also in his vision of life. Did I mentioned I was born in a precarious premature condition in Montreal, the same time John Lennon died in New York? And that my mother was a Beatles fan? This is the story of *Can you Imagine?*, and I sang it for the first time live, when launching my first album. The song and the video was recorded live (putting afterward, in the editing process, some shots of a Montreal snowy day). I thought it made sense that I could pay a tribute with this song to John Lennon and my mother, since they both have a tremendous influence on my life. The lyrics of this song are important to me, as well as the music, composed by the talented Monique Dumas, who was able to translate my universe as well as pay tribute to the sound of The Beatles. As well as the other songs on the album *Confessions*, heartfelt s) *Can you imagine?* won prizes such as an Akademia Music Award (California) for best live performance and finished number one with more than 4000 viewers on the Beat100 (Britain) Music Video Charts in 2015. Being humble toward success, I still love to think that my songs are touching people... And if they do, mission accomplished, cause it's the reason why I make music.

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